

Plagiarism

Key Terms

- **Bibliography**—a listing of sources that a student used to write his/her essay or report.
- **Citation**—is the identification of a specific idea or quote taken from a source.
- **Direct Quote**—is a quote in which the author uses words from a source exactly as they were written. The words are taken verbatim. A direct quote is indicated by putting the words in quotation marks (“ ”). A direct quote must be cited.
- **Indirect Quote**—is a quote in which an author paraphrases, or puts into his/her own words, an idea from a source. An indirect quote must be cited.
- **Works Cited**—is the name that MLA gives to a bibliography. It is the last page of an essay or report. It lists all of the sources the student has used in his/her writing.

What is plagiarism?

- If you have not given proper credit to your sources, you have committed plagiarism. Essentially, it is like you are lying to your reader. You have used someone else’s ideas without telling your reader where you took it from. Whether you have intentionally tried to pass off someone else’s ideas as your own or, through careless research, you unintentionally “forgot” to cite a source, the charge is plagiarism.

Who cares?

- As a writer, it is your responsibility to give proper credit to your sources. It is also very important that you give this credit in accordance with MLA style. If you fail to give proper credit to a source, you have committed plagiarism.
- You have a duty to your audience to tell them where you got your information from, so they know YOU know what you're talking about.

What does plagiarism look like?

- Exact sentences or quotes copied without any credit given to the source.
- Sentences copied with only a few words changed.
- Ideas presented like you came up with them, when you didn't.
- ANY ideas or words copied, especially when no credit is given to the source.

How do I avoid it?

- Basically, any idea or fact that you received from a source needs to be cited in the text and on a Works Cited page.
- Any idea or fact that is common knowledge does not need to be cited. For example, facts like the earth rotates around the sun or Abraham Lincoln was assassinated while in office are common knowledge and would not have to be cited.