**UNDERSTANDING AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is the use or close imitation of another person’s words or thoughts without permission;

the representation of someone else’s work as one’s own, by not crediting the source (*Dictionary.com*).

**To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use any of the following:**

* Another person’s idea, opinion or theory
* Any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings – any pieces of information – that are not common knowledge
* Quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words
* Paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words

“Plagiarism: What It Is and How to Recognize and Avoid It.” *Writing Tutorial Services*, Indiana University, 2019,

wts.indiana.edu/writing-guides/plagiarism.html. Accessed 25 July 2019.

**To avoid plagiarism, become familiar with the following terms:**

**Paraphrase**: using someone’s ideas, but putting them in your own words. Although you use your own words, you must still acknowledge the source of the information.

**Summary**: putting only the main ideas or main points into your own words. Although summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material, you must still acknowledge the source of the information.

**Quotation:** using someone’s exact words. When quoting, you must always put quotation marks around the passage and acknowledge the source of the information.

**Common Knowledge**: facts that can be found in numerous places and are likely to be known by many people. You do not need to acknowledge a source for generally known information (e.g., John F. Kennedy was elected President of the United States in 1960).

**Some Examples to Compare**

**The original passage:**

“Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes.”

Lester, James D. *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*. 2nd ed., Scott Foresman, 1980, pp. 46-47.

**An acceptable paraphrase:**

According to James Lester, students often quote excessively in research papers, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (46-47).

**An acceptable summary:**

Students should take just a few notes in direct quotation from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper (Lester 46-47).

**An acceptable use of a quote:**

To produce a quality paper that showcases your ideas, “probably only 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter” (Lester 46-47).

**An unacceptable plagiarized version:**

Students often use too many direct quotations when they take notes, resulting in too many of them in the final research paper. In fact, probably only about 10% of the final copy should consist of directly quoted material. So it is important to limit the amount of source material copied while taking notes.

**Plagiarism Do’s and Don’ts**

**Don’t**

* Don’t misrepresent another person’s work or idea as yours.
* Don’t make up fake sources, quotations, interviews, etc.
* Don’t think that changing every couple of words in something you copy means it is in your own words.
* Don’t cut and paste without citing the sources.
* Don’t reuse part or all of any assignment you have already turned in for credit in your current or a previous class, without express permission from your current teacher.
* Don’t procrastinate on assignments and homework so that you end up under too much deadline pressure and become tempted to take shortcuts.

**Do**

* Do expect to make mistakes managing and citing sources; do expect to correct them.
* Do use strategies to help you manage your sources (for example, put sources you’re quoting or paraphrasing in a different font and font color until the final draft so you don’t accidentally forget they came from another writer).
* Do have fun with sources, think of using them as weaving, building, playing with blocks, or any other metaphor that you associate with “taking what’s at hand and making something of it.”
* Do write before, while, and after you research, but especially before.
* Do have a clear idea of your thesis, purpose or argument so you can have a distinctive voice in your own essay and aren’t overwhelmed and intimidated by sources.

Adapted from:

“TechNotes Teaching Tip: Thinking and Talking about Plagiarism.” *Technology & Teaching,* Bedford/

St. Martin’s: English – Macmillan Learning, 3 Dec. 2001, www.google.com/search?q=bedford+

st+martin%27s&rlz=1C1CHBF\_enUS778US778&oq=bedford+st+martin&aqs=chrome.0.

0j69i57j0l4.10998j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8. Accessed 25 June 2019.

**Dishonesty and Cheating Include but Are not Limited to the Following:**

* Copying any in-class or homework assignment from another student or providing opportunity for another student to copy, regardless of intent.
* Any degree or type of plagiarism of printed or electronic sources; taking credit for someone else’s words or ideas from a book, magazine, journal, newspaper, internet, film, etc. or other student; not properly referencing appropriate sources
* Resubmitting some or all of an assignment done for the current or another class as if it is new work
* Using prohibited notes on a test
* Sharing or being in possession of test/quiz questions or answers or other unauthorized information
* Use of electronic devices when not permitted
* Altering scores, answers, or school records

“West High School – Guidelines for Academic Honesty.” *West High School*, Torrance Unified School

District, Apr. 2007, campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/prod/484005/2752018e-59b7-11e6-

943a-22000bd8490f/1869805/65a57ce4-fe5a-11e8-96d0-12ed1a058c70/file/Academic%20

Honesty%20Revision.pdf. Accessed 25 June 2019.