Avoiding Plagiarism

| Type your information in the space below. |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student Name: | Date: |
| Instructor: | Course: |

# About This DLA

## Important Note

All the activities (4) in the DLA must be completed in their entirety before receiving credit for completion. Students are welcome to meet with a tutor if they need help, but please be aware that students might need a second appointment for review and signature in that case. If your instructor wants evidence of this completed DLA, return this form to him or her with the tutor’s signature included.

## Learning Outcomes

Through computer and other independent work, you will learn about plagiarism and how to avoid it.

## Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

# Understanding Plagiarism

It is very important for you to understand the rules regarding plagiarism that apply in college. These rules are often very different from what was acceptable in high school or another country.

It is important for every writer using sources in an assignment to understand plagiarism. It should be clear to the reader which information is borrowed and which information is your own. On the whole, readers assume that all of the language and ideas of an essay belong to the writer, unless the wording is in quotation marks or the paraphrase is cited. Using sources clearly and honestly should be the central goal.

## What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is using someone’s words or ideas as your own and is a serious offense. Using someone else’s ideas or information without saying where it came from is plagiarism. It should be clear to the reader which information is borrowed and which information is your own.

* Use quotation marks around exact words and make sure you name your source.
* Use the name of the source when you restate an author’s words in your own words.

# Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

## 1. Learn How to Avoid Plagiarism

Go over the [PowerPoint presentation on “Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism,”](https://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/Understanding_and_avoiding_plagiarism_ppt.pdf) available under the DLA tab on the [Writing Center webpage](http://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/) at http://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/.

## 2. Plagiarism Review

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is plagiarism?
2. What is common knowledge?
3. Why should plagiarism be taken seriously?

| Write your answers in the space below. |
| --- |
| 1. Write your analytical thesis for letter a here. |
| 1. Write your analytical thesis for letter b here. |
| 1. Write your analytical thesis for letter c here. |

## 3. Common Knowledge Review

To test your understanding of common knowledge, please select the correct option under each statement.

1. *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* has been running on television since 2017.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

2. Ruth Bader Ginsburg served as a justice on the Supreme Court for 27 years until her death in 2020.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

3. Over the past 1,400 to 1,500 years, large earthquakes have occurred at about 150-year intervals on the southern San Andreas Fault.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

4. The sitcom, *The Office*, was named the best TV series by the American Film Institute in 2006 and 2008.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

5. Direct health costs attributable to obesity have been estimated at $52 billion in1995 and $75 billion in 2003.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

6. Geologists believe sea levels could rise between seven and 23 inches by the end of the century if current warming trends continue.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

7. The world will invest some $20 trillion in new energy research over the next twenty-five years in an attempt to slow the effects of global warming.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

8. The United States is 245 years old as of 2021.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

## 4. Apply What You Have Learned

Read each scenario and answer the questions, deciding what is plagiarism and what is not plagiarism. Be prepared to defend your answers.

**Scenario 1**: Ursula has been working on her essay with a tutor in the Writing Center. She has been going to the Writing Center as often as possible, and she has noticed that the tutor offers a lot of good advice for her essay. Sometimes the tutor writes suggestions for Ursula during the tutorial session. When this happens, Ursula copies these sentences and phrases down and later puts them into her essay. If Ursula turns this essay into her teacher, is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

**Scenario 2:** Because of her busy schedule, Minyiputs off writing a research paper until the night before the deadline and, as a result, doesn’t take the time to identify the sources of borrowed words and ideas in her paper. Is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

**Scenario 3:** David has a friend read his essays. The friend mostly helps David organize his paper. On this last paper, the friend suggested some ideas on how David could organize his body paragraph. David listened to his friend’s suggestions but checked that all of his analytical ideas were originally his own. If David turns this paper into his teacher, is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

**Scenario 4:** Andrea is writing a paper for her nutrition class. She knows that her roommate took the class last semester. She asks her roommate for help with the essay. She ends up using a lot of her roommate’s ideas and even parts of her essay. Andrea later turns the paper in for credit. Is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

**Scenario 5:** As Annie writes her research paper, she remembers to cite the author’s last name for her sources, but she forgets to include the page numbers for each source citation. Is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

## 5. Review

Go to https://mtsac2.mywconline.com and use the [Mt. SAC Writing Center Appointment System](https://mtsac2.mywconline.com/) to make a DLA appointment, or sign-up to see a tutor on the “**Walk-in**” list in the Writing Center. During your session with a tutor, discuss plagiarism. Refer to the completed activities and explain your understanding of plagiarism.

| Sign and date in the space below. |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student’s signature: | Date: |
| Tutor’s Signature: | Date: |

*If you are an individual with a disability and need a greater level of accessibility for any document in The Writing Center or on The Writing Center’s website, please contact the Mt. SAC Accessible Resource Centers for Students,* [*access@mtsac.edu*](mailto:access@mtsac.edu)*, (909) 274-4290.*

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