

Avoiding Plagiarism

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,"](#) available under the DLA tab on the [Writing Center webpage](#) at <http://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/>.

□ 2. *Plagiarism Review*

Please answer the following questions:

- What is plagiarism?
- What is common knowledge?
- Why should plagiarism be taken seriously?

a)

b)

c)

☐ 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 in 1995 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, Minyi puts 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](#) 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.

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, (909) 274-4290.

Revised 03/23/2022

UNDERSTANDING AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

UNDERSTANDING WHAT PLAGIARISM IS

- Using the **words** or **ideas** of another person without giving credit (on purpose or unintentionally)
- This may include (but is not limited to):
 - Copying an entire piece from another author, a website, etc.
 - Copying parts of someone else's writing, speech, etc. without giving proper credit
 - Paraphrasing (rewording) passages or information without giving credit to the author or source using an appropriate citation style
 - Having someone make changes to your paper
 - Having someone dictate sentences for you
 - Buying or borrowing someone's paper and turning it in as your own
 - ***In some schools, turning in the same paper for two different classes is considered plagiarism as well

WHY PLAGIARISM IS CONSIDERED UNACCEPTABLE

- In the U.S.:
 - Originality is important
 - Respect for others' work is important
 - This means we always make it clear when we borrow words or ideas from someone else
- The goal of research is to learn something new about a topic of interest and to add your ideas and your voice to the ongoing discussion.

WHAT HAPPENS IF STUDENTS PLAGIARIZE

- Plagiarism can have serious results, including:
 - A failing grade on the assignment
 - Disciplinary report sent to the Student Life Office (which deans and other professors can see) and/or note in a student's academic records
 - Suspension or expulsion from college

Note: Other schools may have different policies.

HOW STUDENTS CAN AVOID PLAGIARISM

1. While receiving tutoring/help from others:

Students are encouraged:

- To ask questions and listen to suggestions and write their own ideas and use their own words
- To not procrastinate; leaving papers to the last minute leads to a higher chance of copying and forgetting to cite.

2. While researching:

Students are encouraged:

- To annotate articles using their own words
- To create note cards or a notes-sheet in which they specify:
 - Whether it is a direct quote or paraphrase
 - Full citation
 - Page number(s)—if applicable

3. While writing a research or academic paper:

Students are encouraged:

- To check that ALL sources are cited in their paper
 - Include author's name and information about the source (where they found the information)

HOW TO CITE AND INTEGRATE A SOURCE THE FIRST TIME (MLA FORMAT)

Information to include in citations:

- 1) the author's idea or words (quote, paraphrase, or summary)
- 2) the name of the author or organization
- 3) *brief explanation of who that person is*
- 4) where the information can be found (e.g., newspaper, book, etc.)

Cite all four the first time a source is referenced in a paper!

Example:

"California has become the first state to implement a law that addresses working conditions for warehouse workers, like those for Amazon and other major companies," states *journalist Jaclyn Diaz* in the NPR online article, "A New Law In California Aims To Protect Workers At Retail Warehouses Like Amazon's."

HOW TO PROPERLY CITE SOURCES AFTER THE FIRST CITATION

- When that author and work is quoted after that, the author's last name and just the citation is used.

Example:

Diaz explains the positive and negative effects of this new law in the news article.

WHERE TO USE CITATIONS IN AN ESSAY

- Citations appear in two places:
 - in the text (“in-text citations”)
 - in the works-cited or bibliography page at the end of your paper
- Citations are **unnecessary** when the information is ***common knowledge***.*

**More on this later.*

WHERE TO USE CITATIONS IN AN ESSAY(CONTINUED)

Include the full citation in the MLA Works Cited page:

Works Cited

Diaz, Jaclyn. "A New Law In California Aims To Protect Workers At Retail Warehouses Like Amazon's." *NPR*, 23 Sept. 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/23/1039970039/californias-new-law-targets-amazon-warehouses>

In-text citation:

"California has become the first state to implement a law that addresses working conditions for warehouse workers, like those for Amazon and other major companies," states journalist **Jaclyn Diaz** in the *NPR* online article, "A New Law In California Aims To Protect Workers At Retail Warehouses Like Amazon's."

WHERE TO USE CITATIONS IN AN ESSAY(CONTINUED I)

Include the full citation in the APA Reference List page:

Reference

Diaz, J. (2021, 23 September). *A new law in California aims to protect workers at retail warehouses like Amazon's*. NPR.
<https://www.npr.org/2021/09/23/1039970039/californias-new-law-targets-amazon-warehouses>

In-text citation:

"California has become the first state to implement a law that addresses working conditions for warehouse workers, like those for Amazon and other major companies," **states journalist Jaclyn Diaz (2021)** in the NPR online article, "A New Law In California Aims To Protect Workers At Retail Warehouses Like Amazon's."

WHERE TO USE CITATIONS IN AN ESSAY (CONTINUED 2)

Include the full citation in the Chicago Style Reference List page:

Bibliography

Diaz, Jaclyn. "A New Law In California Aims To Protect Workers At Retail Warehouses Like Amazon's." *NPR*, (23 September 2021), <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/23/1039970039/californias-new-law-targets-amazon-warehouses>

In-text citation:

"California has become the first state to implement a law that addresses working conditions for warehouse workers, like those for Amazon and other major companies," states journalist Jaclyn Diaz in the *NPR* online article, "A New Law In California Aims To Protect Workers At Retail Warehouses Like Amazon's."¹

1. Jaclyn Diaz, "A New Law In California Aims To Protect Workers At Retail Warehouses Like Amazon's," *NPR*, (23 September 2021), <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/23/1039970039/californias-new-law-targets-amazon-warehouses>

WAYS TO CITE IN-TEXT

- **Example 1:** In the U.S., before the average child is twelve, he will have witnessed over 8,000 murders on television (Sullivan 677).
- **Example 2:** According to Jones (1998), "students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 199).
- **Example 3:** In the article "Kip Kinkel: A Boy's Life," *Rolling Stone* reporter Randall Sullivan notes that after the Springfield school shootings "the newspapers trotted out the now-familiar numbers: the 8,000 on-screen murders that the average American child will witness before finishing elementary school."¹

¹ Randall Sullivan, "Kip Kinkel: A Boy's Life," *Rolling Stone*, (1998, October 1), <https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/kip-kinkel-a-boys-life-part-2-69473/>

1. Can you identify the four elements of proper citations in these examples?
(refer to slide 6 for review)

2. Which citation style is presented? MLA, APA, or Chicago Style?

WAYS TO CITE IN-TEXT (CONTINUED)

- **Example 1:** In the U.S., before the average child is twelve, he will have witnessed over 8,000 murders on television (Sullivan 677).
- **Example 2:** According to Jones (1998), "students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 199).
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1. Can you identify the four elements of proper citations in these examples?
(refer to slide 6 for review)

2. Which citation style is presented? MLA, APA, or Chicago Style?

WAYS TO CITE IN-TEXT (MLA FORMAT) ANSWERS

- **Example 1:** In the U.S., before the average child is twelve, he will have witnessed over 8,000 murders on television (Sullivan 677).
- **Example 2:** According to Jones (1998), "students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 199).
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- 1) MLA FORMAT
- 2) APA FORMAT
- 3) CHICAGO STYLE FORMAT

1. Randall Sullivan, "Kip Kinkel: A Boy's Life," *Rolling Stone*, (1998, October 1), <https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/kip-kinkel-a-boys-life-part-2-69473/>

PRACTICE: IDENTIFYING PLAGIARISM

1) Which of the following is plagiarism?

- a. Looking at a friend's essay to get an idea of how to write your essay
- b. Having a friend help you organize your essay
- c. Having a friend correct your errors in an essay

2) Which of the following is not plagiarism?

- a. Cutting and pasting from an online source
- b. Using parts of someone's essay
- c. Copying words and phrases from a reading
- d. Using ideas from an article that you have paraphrased and cited

3) Which of the following is not plagiarism?

- a. Not using quotation marks on a passage copied from a text
- b. Forgetting the author's name when paraphrasing
- c. Using an essay that you wrote and then had your friend rewrite
- d. Having someone help you with your essay by suggesting changes

PRACTICE: IDENTIFYING PLAGIARISM ANSWERS

1) Which of the following is plagiarism?

- a. Looking at a friend's essay to get an idea of how to write your essay
- b. Having a friend help you organize your essay
- c. **Having a friend correct your errors in an essay**

2) Which of the following is not plagiarism?

- a. Cutting and pasting from an online source
- b. Using parts of someone's essay
- c. Copying words and phrases from a reading
- d. **Using ideas from an article that you have paraphrased and cited**

3) Which of the following is not plagiarism?

- a. Not using quotation marks on a passage copied from a text
- b. Forgetting the author's name when paraphrasing
- c. Using an essay that you wrote and then had your friend rewrite
- d. **Having someone help you with your essay by suggesting changes**

COMMON KNOWLEDGE

- **What is common knowledge?**
 - Information that many people know and that you can find in many sources
 - Information that is so basic and factual that most, if not all, sources would agree with it
 - It often includes widely known information about:
 - current events
 - geographical facts
 - familiar history

Examples →

EXAMPLES OF COMMON KNOWLEDGE

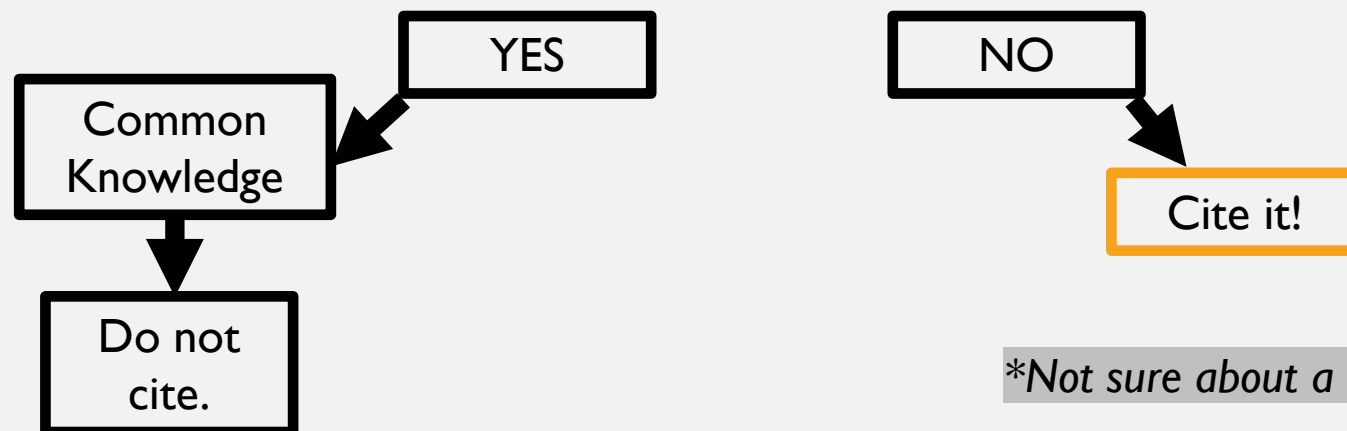
- Some examples of common/general knowledge:
 - Walt Disney created Disneyland.
 - George Washington was the first president of the United States.
 - *Titanic* was the movie that made Kate Winslet famous.
 - Stomach pain can be a side effect of aspirin use.
 - The sun rises in the east.
- Each of the above statements would be considered generally true or accepted in its field, and we can find these same facts in multiple sources. Statements like the above would not need to be cited.
- Also, feel free to use familiar proverbs (“You can’t judge a book by its cover”) without citing.

COMMON KNOWLEDGE VERSUS MATERIAL THAT NEEDS TO BE CITED

- What is **NOT** common knowledge and, therefore, needs to be cited?
 - Other people's opinions, analysis, interpretations, specific wording or data
 - Information that is disputable
- For example:
 - George Washington was the most trustworthy president of the United States.
 - Procrastination can have serious effects.
 - 13% of Americans thought that *Titanic* was a terrible movie.
 - People should avoid taking aspirin because it can harm the stomach lining.
- If you got the above ideas from a source, you would need to cite them.

COMMON KNOWLEDGE VERSUS MATERIAL THAT NEEDS TO BE CITED (*CONTINUED*)

- **Common Knowledge Test**
 - To determine if the information you want to use is common knowledge or not, ask yourself the following three questions:
 1. Can I find this information in many different sources?
 2. Do many people know this information?
 3. Did I know this information before I began researching?



**Not sure about a source? It is better to overcite than to not cite.*

PRACTICE: IDENTIFYING COMMON KNOWLEDGE VERSUS MATERIAL THAT NEEDS TO BE CITED

- To test your understanding of **COMMON KNOWLEDGE**, take the quiz below. **A) Common knowledge B) Must be cited**

1. *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* has been running on television since 2017.
2. Ruth Bader Ginsburg served as a justice on the Supreme Court for 27 years until her death in 2020.
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.
4. The sitcom, *The Office*, was named the best TV series by the American Film Institute in 2006 and 2008.

5. Direct health costs attributable to obesity have been estimated at \$52 billion in 1995 and \$75 billion in 2003.
6. Geologists believe sea levels could rise between seven and 23 inches by the end of the century if current warming trends continue.
7. The world will invest some \$20 trillion in new energy research over the next 25 years in an attempt to slow the effects of global warming.
8. The United States is 245 years old as of 2021.

PLAGIARISM PRACTICE: SCENARIOS

Instructions: In your group, read each scenario and discuss it. Answer the questions, deciding what is plagiarism and what is not plagiarism. Be prepared to defend your answers. You may write on this paper.

- **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?

PLAGIARISM PRACTICE: SCENARIO 2

Instructions: In your group, read each scenario and discuss it. Answer the questions, deciding what is plagiarism and what is not plagiarism. Be prepared to defend your answers. You may write on this paper.

- **Scenario 2:** Because of her busy schedule, Minyi puts 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?

PLAGIARISM PRACTICE: SCENARIO 3

Instructions: In your group, read each scenario and discuss it. Answer the questions, deciding what is plagiarism and what is not plagiarism. Be prepared to defend your answers. You may write on this paper.

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?

PLAGIARISM PRACTICE: SCENARIO4

Instructions: In your group, read each scenario and discuss it. Answer the questions, deciding what is plagiarism and what is not plagiarism. Be prepared to defend your answers. You may write on this paper.

- **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?

PLAGIARISM PRACTICE: SCENARIO 5

Instructions: In your group, read each scenario and discuss it. Answer the questions, deciding what is plagiarism and what is not plagiarism. Be prepared to defend your answers. You may write on this paper.

- **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?

THREE WAYS TO USE OUTSIDE SOURCES:

1. Direct quotes
2. Paraphrases
3. Summary

Come to our “Using Quotations and Paraphrase ,” “Mastering MLA,” or “APA Style” workshop and/or complete our “Integrating Sources” DLA to learn how to do each of the above!