

Avoiding Plagiarism

Designed by
Duke University's Writing Studio

“Using another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source constitutes plagiarism. Derived from the Latin *plagiarius* (‘kidnapper’), plagiarism refers to a form of intellectual theft.”

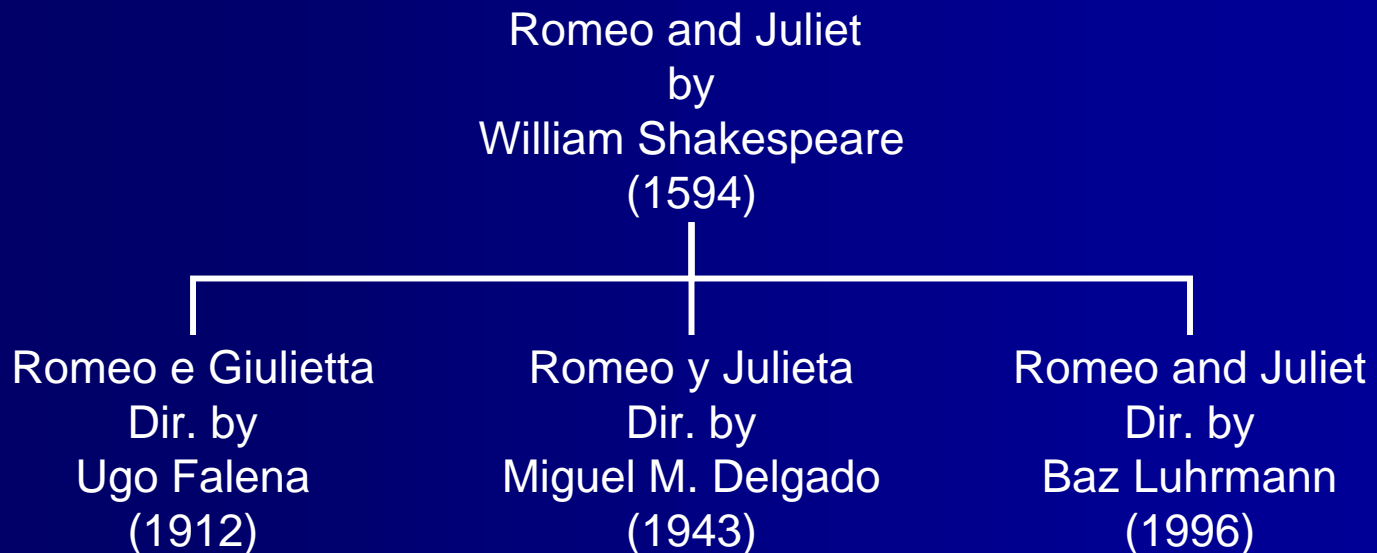
— Joseph Gibaldi,
MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing.
2nd ed. New York: MLA, 1998: 151.

What is Plagiarism?

- Copying word for word from published sources without adequate documentation
- Using language and/or ideas from sources without adequate documentation
- Purchasing a pre-written paper
- Letting or paying someone else to write a paper for you
- Paraphrasing a source without attributing credit
- Submitting someone else's unpublished work as your own

Why Do We Document Sources?

According to Abigail Lipson and Sheila Reindl in “The Responsible Plagiarist—Understanding Students Who Misuse Sources,” “Proper documentation traces a family tree of intellectual kinship, in which we place our own ideas and text in context” (9).



What causes plagiarism?

According to Kacie Wallace, Dean of Judicial Affairs at Duke, “The rise of the Internet as the primary source for student research has changed the shape of plagiarism....For a lot of students [plagiarism is] the result of poor time management and waiting until the night before to write a paper. And carelessness runs into a lack of integrity.”

Duke Community Standard: The Pledge

The statement below is provided by the Academic Integrity Council at http://judicial.studentaffairs.duke.edu/resources/community_standard/cs_more.html

1. I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.
2. I will conduct myself responsibly and honorably in all my activities as a Duke student.

N.B.: This vow is renewed each time you register for classes on ACES and some professors have you sign the pledge before submitting papers or taking exams

What is the punishment at Duke for academic dishonesty?

- Of the 26 cases referred to the Undergraduate Judicial Board in the fall of 2002, punishment ranged from probation to a three-semester suspension.
- More information on Duke's policies, actions, and statistics can be found at http://judicial.studentaffairs.duke.edu/policies/policy_list/academic_dishonesty.html

Some consequences of plagiarism beyond Duke

- In May 2004, the chairman of the Orange County (NC) School Board made national news by plagiarizing parts of a high school graduation speech. He resigned the chairmanship and later lost his bid for re-election.
- In September 2004, the senior pastor of a well-known Charlotte, NC, church resigned after admitting several of the sermons he had broadcast over Christian radio stations were not his own.

And more recently...

- In 2006, Harvard sophomore Kaavya Viswanathan made national news when it was revealed that a novel she had written contained several passages remarkably similar to passages in two novels by author Megan McClafferty.

How to avoid plagiarism: Gathering research materials

- Allow time for gathering materials.
- Expect to make several trips to the library.
- Take time to make careful choices among available research tools.
- Allow time for reading.
- Write down a citation for every source.
- Have a dorm mate, friend, tutor, or professor preview your paper before turning in the final draft.

Taking notes

- Identify what you write down as direct quotation (“Q”), paraphrase (“P”), summary (“S”), or your own ideas (“Me”). Jot down the page number, author, and title.
- Keep a working bibliography.
- Keep a research log.

Important Questions to Ask*

- Can my readers tell which ideas belong to whom?
- Am I clear about how I have used others' ideas in service to my own contributions?
- Have I represented others' work fairly in the context of my own?
- Where have I contributed something of my own to the discussion?

*Adapted from "The Responsible Plagiarist-Understanding Students Who Misuse Sources" by Abigail Lipson and Sheila Reindi. About Campus. July-August 2003/Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 7-14.

Documenting sources

- You must cite **direct quotations**.
- You must cite **ideas** that are not your own
- You must cite **sayings** or **quotations** that are not familiar.
- You should cite facts that are **not** “common knowledge.”
- You must cite all **printed, audiovisual, electronic, and interview sources**.

Deciding if something is “common knowledge”

Material is probably common knowledge if one of these is true:

- You find the same information undocumented in at least five other sources.
- You think it is information that your readers will already know.
- You think a person could **easily** find the information with **general** reference sources.

Definitions

- A *quotation* contains the exact words of the source and is indicated by quotation marks.
- A *summary* gives an overview of the original ideas and is shorter than the original.
- A *paraphrase* restates all the original material in different words and is about as long as the original.

Quotation example

- Quotation: In her book *A Writer's Reference*, Diana Hacker notes, “In research writing, sources are cited for two reasons: to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas” (260). *Source introduced, original wording in quotation marks, correct citation*
- Plagiarized: In research writing, sources are cited to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas. *Same words as original, no quotation marks, no citation*

Summary example

- Summary: In research writing, we cite to give credit and let readers know what our sources are (Hacker 260). *Concise, complete citation*
- Plagiarized: In research writing, we cite to give credit and let readers know what our sources are. *Missing citation*

Paraphrase example:

- Paraphrase: Researchers cite their sources to ensure their audiences know where they got their information and to recognize and credit the original work (Hacker 260). *Student's own words, complete citation*
- Plagiarized: In research writing, we cite for a couple of reasons: to notify readers of our information sources and give credit to those from whom we have borrowed (Hacker 260). *Only slight changes in original wording*

Before you begin . . .

- Find out whether you need a bibliography/ “works cited” list.
- Find out what citation style your professor prefers (e.g. MLA, APA, Chicago, CBE, Turabian), and whether you should use footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citations.

Advice for summarizing and paraphrasing

- First, write your paraphrase and summary without looking at the original text, so you rely only on your memory.
- Check your version with the original for content, accuracy, and mistakenly borrowed phrases. Are phrases and sentence structures your own?

Advice for quoting directly

- Keep the author's name near the quotation in your notes and in your paper.
- Select direct quotations that make the most impact in your paper. Too many quotations may lessen your credibility and interfere with your style.
- Double check quotations and page numbers for accuracy.

A word of caution

When using quotations, summaries, or paraphrases, be careful not to substitute others' ideas *at the expense of* your own. If all you do is weave together various sources and materials, readers will recognize your project as a pastiche. Your paper should be an original piece of work; be sure to include your own thoughts, ideas, and analysis.

Always remember to:

- Check your work with your notes to make sure *anything* taken from them is acknowledged in some way.
- Begin summaries with a statement giving credit to the source.
- Put any unique words or phrases that you cannot change in quotation marks.
- Put quotation marks around direct quotes.

Help at Duke

[http://uwp.aas.duke.edu/wstudio/resources/
working_sources.html](http://uwp.aas.duke.edu/wstudio/resources/working_sources.html)

Interested in a more in-depth experience?

- To sign up for a one-on-one appointment, go to “Schedule An Appointment” on the Writing Studio’s website:

<http://uwp.aas.duke.edu/wstudio/>