

Avoiding Plagiarism and Using Library Sources Workshop Handout

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March 11, 2014

Model/Sample Student Handout Material

Student Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism

I. Defining Academic Integrity

CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity:

“Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion (89).”

In addition, plagiarism is defined in the City Tech Student Handbook as:

“Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person’s ideas, research or writings as your own.

“The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

- Copying another person’s actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source.
- Presenting another person’s ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source.
- Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
- Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments” (90).

— NYCCT Student Handbook

View the entire handbook here:

<http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/students/images/studenthandbook.pdf>

II. Students caught plagiarizing often say:

“I didn’t know this was plagiarism.”

“My writing isn’t good enough.”

“I can’t write this entire paper tonight”

“I’m sure someone else did a better job on this assignment.”

“My English isn’t strong enough.”

“But, my professor just asked for two citations!”

Don’t be one of these students. If you find yourself in a bind and about to plagiarize, do not do it! Please contact me immediately and I will help you overcome your impasse before you commit this serious academic offense.

III. For research: Understanding Paraphrasing

Plagiarism? Circle: YES or NO	
The history of the Second World War has not yet been written... the passions it aroused still run too high, the wounds it inflicted still cut too deep, and the unresolved problems it left still bulk too large...to strike an objective balance.¹	Original Text
Military historian Sir John Keegan argues that, “The history of the Second World War has not yet been written . . . [because] the passions it aroused still run too high, the wounds it inflicted still cut too deep, and the unresolved problems it left still bulk too large . . .to strike an objective balance” (30).	Yes/No
Military historian Sir John Keegan maintains that no one has written the true history of the Second World War yet because the conflict was so complicated, aroused such passion, and left too many issues unsettled for anyone today to write a balanced account (30).	Yes/No
The true history of the Second World War hasn’t been written yet because the struggle was so complicated, the passions the war aroused still too high, and the wounds still too deep for historians to write an objective account.	Yes/No
The history of World War Two is very complex, too complex for an accurate understanding at the present time.	Yes/No

¹ Keegan, John. *The Battle for History: Re-fighting World War II*

*Above from CityTech’s Library Website (2008):
<http://library.citytech.cuny.edu/instruction/plagiarism/index.php>

Re-write the below excerpt in your own words (paraphrase)

(Example from Purdue Owl, 2010; see <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/619/02/> for more examples)

Of the more than 1000 bicycling deaths each year, three-fourths are caused by head injuries. Half of those killed are school-age children. One study concluded that wearing a bike helmet can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent. In an accident, a bike helmet absorbs the shock and cushions the head. From "Bike Helmets: Unused Lifesavers," Consumer Reports (May 1990): 348.

6 Steps to Effective Paraphrasing (Purdue OWL, 2010)

1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
2. Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase on a note card.
3. Jot down a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material. At the top of the note card, write a key word or phrase to indicate the subject of your paraphrase.
4. Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
5. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
6. Record the source (including the page) on your note card so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/619/1/>

IV. For information about...

- Avoiding plagiarism—through an online tutorial: https://baruch.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/How+to+Avoid+Plagiarism/1_97gb5hw9/8883671
- the difference between paraphrasing, quoting, and summarizing: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/563/1/>
- evaluating sources: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/1/>
- the general writing process including spelling, syntax, and grammar: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/>

Resources for MLA format (from CityTech's library website)

Websites

In depth

- [University of Wisconsin-Madison Writing Center](#)
- [Official website of the Modern Language Association](#)
- Purdue's Online Writing Lab for MLA: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Brief examples of citations

- [New York City College of Technology MLA: The Basics](#)
- [Laguardia Community College MLA Documentation Style](#)

Book

- MLA handbook for writers of research papers / 5th ed. New York : Modern Language Association of America, 1999. Ready Reference LB2369 .G53 1999 (call number for City Tech's library)

APA Formatting Resources

Website Resources

- [Using APA Format, Purdue University Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#)
- [Official Publication Manual of the APA Website](#)

Book Resources

- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 6th ed. Reserve/Reference Desk BF76.7 .P83 2010 (call number at CityTech Library)

Some of my examples of APA formatting for the reference page

Articles:

Angle, H.L., & Perry, J.L. (1983). Organizational commitment: Individual and organizational influences. *Work and Occupations, 10*, 123-146.

Warr, P. (2008). Work values: Some demographic and cultural correlates. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 81*, 751-775.

Books:

Brief, A.P. (1998). *Attitudes in and around organizations*. Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage.

Silverthorne, C.P. (2005). *Organizational psychology: In cross-cultural perspective*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Plagiarism/Academic Misconduct Quiz (Answers on the following page)

Could I be in trouble for academic misconduct/plagiarism? Write “yes” or “no” on each line.

1. ___ I got my friend to read my paper and circle all the typos.
2. ___ I got my friend to read my paper and put question marks next to parts s/he didn't understand.
3. ___ I got my friend to read my paper and write down other quotes that would help support my argument.
4. ___ After my friends and I had a big discussion and disagreement about the reading, I used some of our points in my paper.
5. ___ I read an article on the internet and used its main point as my thesis.
6. ___ I read an article on the internet, used some parts of it word-for-word in my paper, and listed the article on my works cited page.
7. ___ I read some information in a reference book, changed all the words and then put them into my own paper.
8. ___ I rewrote some sentences in my friend's paper so that it would sound better.
9. ___ My tutor showed me some different ways to rewrite sentences so that they sounded better.
10. ___ My tutor asked me lots of questions about the reading, and I used my answers in my essay.
11. ___ My tutor rewrote my thesis statement to change it from a summary to something that opens up an argument.
12. ___ My tutor said that my third paragraph would make more sense if it came before my second paragraph, so I moved it.
13. ___ I sold my paper to an internet student-essay bank.
14. ___ My teacher asked groups of students to read over each other's papers and write suggestions for changes and additions on them.
15. ___ My class discussed the reading and I used some of the points my teacher wrote on the board in my essay.

Answers to the Plagiarism/Academic Misconduct Quiz

No=Not plagiarism

Yes=Is Plagiarism

1. No. Proofreading of this type is acceptable. The reader is merely drawing attention to problem areas, rather than changing them him/herself.
2. No. Proofreading of this type is acceptable. The reader is merely drawing attention to problem areas, rather than changing them him/herself.
3. Yes. Because the reader is doing the work for the writer, this qualifies as academic misconduct on the part of both reader and writer. HOWEVER, instructors may assign students such tasks as part of Peer Response work, in which case students would not be guilty of academic misconduct.
4. No. The university strives to foster academic conversation both inside and outside of the classroom; because these ideas were generated by the group discussion, they belong to everyone in the group.
5. Yes. Using another writer's ideas (without giving credit to that writer), even if the student recasts them in his or her own language, is unacceptable.
6. Yes. Merely citing a work in the bibliography is insufficient; writers must signify direct quotes with quotation marks (or indentation for long passages) and a page reference within the text. In this case, the writer is generally not willfully plagiarizing, but instead needs to be reminded about proper in-text citation.
7. Yes. Using another writer's ideas (without giving credit to that writer), even if the student recasts them in his or her own language, is unacceptable.
8. Yes. Work submitted for a grade must have been written entirely by the student being graded. If the writer uses the suggestions word-for-word in his or her paper, then both students are guilty of academic misconduct.
9. No. The purpose of University-sanctioned tutoring is to help students develop their writing skills. Tutors assist writers by modeling many different sentence techniques which students emulate and then practice on their own.
10. No. All of the ideas generated are the student's own; the tutor is assisting the writer by engaging in academic conversation.
11. Yes. Tutors, like anyone else, may not do the actual writing for the student. Usually, Writing Center tutors are trained not to lead students into this kind of academic misconduct; private tutors, however, may or may not hold to the same standards.
12. No. Tutors often give advice on organization; the student chooses whether or not to accept the tutor's suggestion.

13. Yes. A student who knowingly provides material for others to use is as culpable as the student who turns it in for a grade.
14. No. Tasks that are assigned by a students' instructor as a required part of the writing process are always acceptable.
15. No. The university strives to foster academic conversation both inside and outside of the classroom. In general, ideas generated by group discussion belong to everyone in the group. HOWEVER, instructors are free to set the boundaries of writing assignments in any way they deem appropriate, and may define the ways in which class discussions intersect with written work.

This quiz was originally generated by the Freshman English Office at the University of Connecticut; small adaptations were made by Rebecca Devers.

Sample Student Plagiarism Exercise from <https://www.msu.edu/~jdowell/135/PlagiarismEx.html>

Read this passage by Robert Bellah, from his essay, in the *St. Martin's Guide to Writing* 4th ed. (p.177). Then read the following five paragraphs excerpted from student essays. Determine which excerpts contain plagiarism and what's plagiarized.

Both the cowboy and the hard-boiled detective tell us something important about American individualism. The cowboy, like the detective, can be valuable to society only because he is a completely autonomous individual who stands outside it. To serve society, one must be able to stand alone, not needing others, not depending on their judgment and not submitting to their wishes. Yet this individualism is not selfishness. Indeed, it is a kind of heroic selflessness. One accepts the necessity of remaining alone in order to serve the values of the group. And this obligation to aloneness is an important key to the American moral imagination. Yet it is part of the profound ambiguity of the mythology of American individualism that its moral heroism is always just a step away from despair. For an Ahab, and occasionally for a cowboy or detective, there is no return to society, no moral redemption. The hero's lonely quest for moral excellence ends in absolute nihilism.

Excerpts from Essays Written by Students

1. Our modern urban hero is like the cowboy or the detective in his isolation from his own community. He selflessly stands outside his community in order to help it; he resists any desire to join its members because his mission depends on his resistance to conformity. He must rely on his own moral vision and on his ability to transcend community values to see and implement the larger picture that only he can imagine.
2. The heroes in our modern large cities are the natural legatees of the heroes of America since it was founded. Who hasn't read about the pioneer setting out across the plains to conquer the new land, or of the lonely cowboy protecting his ranch from marauders? Our modern urban hero must also stand tough and alone, not succumbing to gang mentality or to political pressures or to any kind of community pressure; he must stay true to his values no matter what the consequences.
3. The modern urban hero is different from the men who have served as the trademarks of American individualism, like Shane and Sam Spade. Those heroes were on a lonely quest for moral excellence that ended in absolute nihilism, with no role in the community except as an outsider. The modern urban hero, on the other hand, must be tightly integrated into the community. He must be adept at garnering community approval and commitment, and if the community suspects that the hero might become too individualistic, or might impose his own distinctive morality upon the group, the members will remind the hero that he is one of them. The hero will quickly respond and will consult with his community before taking any action.

4. The modern urban hero is similar to the frontier heroes of America's past. He must be able to stand tall, to reject others, to withstand their judgment, and to not submit to other desires. According to Robert Bellah, "this individualism is not selfishness; . . . it is a kind of heroic selflessness" (178-79) that allows one to serve the values of the group. These leaders find their satisfaction in personal fulfillment and achieving their ideals; they don't need connection to the community.

5. Even though modern urban heroes are deeply involved with the members of their community, they do share some of the characteristics of the American individualist explored by Robert Bellah in "American Individualism." Bellah points out that a traditional individualist "is always just a step away from despair [because] ... there is no return to society, no moral redemption. The hero's lonely quest for moral excellence ends in absolute nihilism" (179). Bellah bases his conclusion on his belief that an individualist, such as a cowboy or a detective, "can be valuable to society only because he is a completely autonomous individual who stands outside it. To serve society, one must be able to stand alone, not needing others, not depending on their judgment, and not submitting to their wishes" (178). Like Bellah's individualists, modern urban heroes are often subject to despair, but their despair is based more on their hopelessness about their cause than on their isolation from their community. They are more likely to do the opposite of Bellah's individualist, in that they depend on their community's judgment and wishes, even as they assume positions of leadership: they are individualists within a community.

Plagiarism Exercise - Part 2 Correcting Passages to Avoid Plagiarism

1. Our modern urban hero is like the cowboy or the detective in his isolation from his own community. He selflessly stands outside his community in order to help it; he resists any desire to join its members because his mission depends on his resistance to conformity. He must rely on his own moral vision and on his ability to transcend community values to see and implement the larger picture that only he can imagine.

Answer: Plagiarism

Corrected to Avoid Plagiarism:

Our modern urban hero is like Robert Bellah's cowboy or detective in his isolation from his own community (178-9). He selflessly stands outside his community in order to help it; he resists any desire to join its members because his mission depends on his resistance to conformity (Bellah 178-9). He must rely on his own moral vision and on his ability to transcend community values to see and implement the larger picture that only he can imagine (Bellah 178-9).

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2. The heroes in our modern large cities are the natural legatees of the heroes of America since it was founded. Who hasn't read about the pioneer setting out across the plains to conquer the new land, or the lonely cowboy protecting his ranch from marauders? Our modern urban hero must also stand tough and alone, not succumbing to gang mentality or to political pressures or to any kind of community pressure; he must stay true to his values no matter what the consequences.

Answer: Plagiarism

Corrected to Avoid Plagiarism:

The heroes in our modern large cities are the natural legatees of the heroes of America since it was founded. Who hasn't read about the pioneer setting out across the plains to conquer the new land, or the lonely cowboy protecting his ranch from marauders? [Like Robert Bellah's cowboys and detectives](#), our modern urban hero must also stand tough and alone, not succumbing to gang mentality or to political pressures or to any kind of community pressure; he must stay true to his values no matter what the consequences [\(178-9\)](#).

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3. The modern urban hero is different from the men who have served as the trademarks of American individualism, like Shane or Sam Spade. Those heroes were on a lonely quest for moral excellence that ended in absolute nihilism with no role in the community except as an outsider. The modern urban hero, on the other hand, must be tightly integrated into the community. He must be adept at garnering community approval and commitment, and if the community suspects that the hero might become too individualistic, or might impose his own distinctive morality upon the group, the members will remind the hero that he is one of them. The hero will quickly respond and will consult with his community before taking any action.

Answer: Plagiarism

Corrected to Avoid Plagiarism:

The modern urban hero is different from the men [Robert Bellah identifies as](#) trademarks of American individualism, like Shane or Sam Spade. [According to Bellah](#), those heroes were on a lonely quest for moral excellence that ended in absolute nihilism with no role in the community except as an outsider [\(178-9\)](#). The modern urban hero, on the other hand, must be tightly integrated into the community. He must be adept at garnering community approval and commitment, and if the community suspects that the hero might become too individualistic, or might impose his own distinctive morality upon the group, the members will remind the hero that he is one of them. The hero will quickly respond and will consult with his community before taking any action.

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4. The modern urban hero is similar to the frontier heroes of America's past. He must be able to stand tall, to reject others, to withstand their judgment, and to not submit to other desires. According to Robert Bellah, "this individualism is not selfishness; . . . it is a kind of heroic selflessness" (178-79) that allows one to serve the values of the group. These leaders find their satisfaction in personal fulfillment and achieving their ideals; they don't need connection to the community.

Answer: Plagiarism

Corrected to Avoid Plagiarism:

The modern urban hero is similar to the frontier heroes of America's past. [Robert Bellah describes these frontier heroes as](#) able to stand tall, to reject others, to withstand their judgment, and to not submit to other desires [\(178-9\)](#). According to Bellah, "this individualism is not selfishness; . . . it is a kind of heroic selflessness" that allows one to serve the values of the group [\(178-79\)](#). [Like Bellah's heroes](#), these leaders find their satisfaction in personal fulfillment and achieving their ideals; they don't need connection to the community [\(178-9\)](#).

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5. Even though modern urban heroes are deeply involved with the members of their community, they do share some of the characteristics of the American individualist explored by Robert Bellah in "American Individualism." Bellah points out that a traditional individualist "is always just a step away from despair [because] ... there is no return to society, no moral redemption. The hero's lonely quest for moral excellence ends in absolute nihilism" (179). Bellah bases his conclusion on his belief that an individualist, such as a cowboy or a detective, "can be valuable to society only because he is a completely autonomous individual who stands outside it. To serve society, one must be able to stand alone, not needing others, not depending on their judgment, and not submitting to their wishes" (178). Like Bellah's individualists, modern urban heroes are often subject to despair, but their despair is based more on their hopelessness about their cause than on their isolation from their community. They are more likely to do the opposite of Bellah's individualists, in that they depend on their community's judgment and wishes, even as they assume positions of leadership: they are individualists within a community.

Answer: Not Plagiarism

Works Cited

Bellah, Robert. "Cowboys and Detectives: American Individualism." *St. Martin's Guide to Writing*, 4th ed. 177-180.