



MicroModule: Plagiarism

REVIEW Page

Below is the entire module on one page.

What is plagiarism?



"Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense:

According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means

- 1) to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- 2) to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- 3) to commit literary theft
- 4) to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward." Source: [Turnitin.com: Research Resources](http://turnitin.com)

Easy to do? Easy to Detect!

The Internet makes it easy to steal. Just copy and paste and you're done right? Unfortunately some students take this attitude. The Internet also makes it easy to detect plagiarism. Try copying a suspicious phrase into a search engine. Do you find copies out there on the net? For more in-depth and rigorous detection try Turnitin.com. This system is specifically designed to uncover plagiarism. Many schools are now using these types of services.



Don't do the crime!

The penalties associated with plagiarism include: failing classes, expulsion from school, and in cases of commercial plagiarism, fines of up to \$250,000. Stealing is serious business and the consequences are be equally serious. Rationalizations like "Everybody does it!" or "I just borrowed a few paragraphs!" ring hollow once you realize that plagiarism is theft.

How can I be sure I am following the rules?

1) Take good reference notes. *Develop the habit of creating a citation for every source you read*, even for references you don't think you will use. You never know when something may prove useful. If you are working on the computer, it becomes a matter of filling out a form and pasting the citation into your paper as you move through your research.

There are good online citation systems that make it easy to create formal citations:

- [IMSA Citation Wizard](#)

- [NoodleBib4.0](#)
- [Landmark's Citation Machine](#)

It helps to be able to work with multiple windows open on the screen at the same time. One for the paper (word document), one for the [Citation Wizard](#), and one for the page you are researching. At this point the paper is at the note taking stage. It is easy to remove unnecessary citations during the final draft of a paper. It is not easy to find citations you forgot to get when you were looking the first time.

2) Use a plagiarism check tool on your paper before handing it in. There are many online tools for checking your paper for plagiarism, accidental or intentional. The best require paid subscriptions or software purchase. Consider these plagiarism checkers :

- [Turnitin.com](#) (Fee based. Currently the most popular system.)
- [Glatt Plagiarism Services](#) (Fee based.)
- [MyDropBox.com](#) (Fee based.)
- [Self-Detection Test](#) (Free!)
- [JPlag](#) (Free! Detects software code plagiarism.)
- [The Plagiarism Resource Site](#) (Free! Windows and Linux based software.)

Combating Plagiarism: Plan, Educate, Confront, Persevere.

Ignoring or winking at cheating and plagiarism perpetuates the problem. The first step is to develop an institutional policy about intellectual property, copyright, fair use, and plagiarism. Consider instituting an honor code. Clearly state the consequences for plagiarism and follow through when plagiarism occurs.

Train students in the issues. Be sure students know how to paraphrase, and cite sources across all curriculum areas. You may hear that “Everybody does it!” but that isn't true. However plagiarism is a significant problem:

“According to a 2003 study by Donald McCabe,



38 percent of students admitted to cut-and-paste Internet plagiarism in the previous year. (Rutgers University/Center for Academic Integrity Study, August 2003)” Source: Turnitin.com

Use electronic measures to detect Internet based plagiarism. Searching phrases with search engines is a good first step. Also consider subscribing to a more comprehensive detection system. Once subscribed, follow through with instructor and student training. Let students know their work will be electronically scanned for plagiarism. In addition to instructor use, consider training students to use these tools as editorial aides as they write their papers.

Make the fight against plagiarism a persistent element of your school's culture. ***Fight the good fight!***

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