

# Plagiarism essay



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Plagiarism is a problem that many people face daily whether it is a student struggling with a research paper or an advertising agent trying to get new ideas together for a sales pitch. Is plagiarism limited only to a student using material copied from a book without giving credit to the author or for turning in a paper that a friend wrote for another university? Would a student who acknowledged that he/she got the information for a research paper from a source but recorded the wrong source be just as guilty of plagiarism as a person who copied information from journals without giving any reference to the journals at all?

In order to understand the reasons plagiarism is committed it is important first to ensure that it is properly defined. According to Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, plagiarism is defined as the act of stealing or passing off the ideas or words of another as one's own or to use someone else's work without crediting the source. Plagiarism can be divided into two different types, intentional and unintentional. Intentional plagiarism is the act of purposely and knowingly passing another person's work as one's.

Unintentional plagiarism is conducted due to lack of proper knowledge of what plagiarism means or how to correctly cite works utilized. Now that a working knowledge of what plagiarism entails has been established, the reasons for why the act is committed can be explored. Students commit plagiarism intentionally and unintentionally for many reasons. Examples of reasons students intentionally plagiarize include: " searching vs. researching, but their words are better, making the grade, everyone else is doing it, and poor planning. (" What is plagiarism," 2012)

Students often find the task of completing a research paper too overwhelming and find it easier and more convenient to look for data on the Internet and change it to fit their needs. Students can often fear that the quality of their work would never measure up to the amount of information already in print and simply decide to copy what they read. Sometimes, the need to obtain perfect grades outweighs the need to perform the task as directed and therefore, students just turn in work that does not belong to them.

Peer pressure can often be very intense for students and hearing how other students may have gotten away with copying other works and putting forth minimal effort causes some to feel that they have to engage in the same actions. Time management is essential for students and with lack of proper planning deadlines can quickly creep up causing students to take whatever actions needed in order for them to complete the assignment as soon as possible. Students can have the best intentions with their schoolwork and still unintentionally plagiarize.

Examples of how students unintentionally plagiarize include: “ citation confusion, plagiarism vs. paraphrasing, I was just copying my notes, I couldn’t find the source, I thought we didn’t have to quote facts, and confusion about expectations. ” (“ What is plagiarism,” 2012) Not knowing the correct way to cite material is the most common cause for unintentional plagiarism. A lot of students find it hard to distinguish what is correct paraphrasing and plagiarizing.

Poor note taking habits often leads to students plagiarizing material.

Carelessness when noting the bibliographic information of sources leads students to plagiarism as a result of not being able to properly cite the information later. Difficulty with distinguishing what is common knowledge leads students to plagiarize. Common knowledge is information that most people would know. Lack of knowledge about how to conduct proper research leads students to simply copy information they have found in articles and journals.

Whether plagiarism is a result of direct intentions, lack of knowledge, or just plain negligence, it does not make it any less wrong. It is always best to over-cite to avoid plagiarism when using someone else's material. If a student should ever have any doubt about whether citation is needed, he/she should follow through with properly citing the material. It is important that all identifying information be included in citations so that proper credit can be giving to the author.

An example of improper citation of a book would be if a student left out the page number of a direct quote he/she used. A student that was citing a journal article that noted the author, title of the article and periodical but forgot the year the journal was published would be guilty of plagiarism. Citing information gathered from a newspaper article by identifying the author, title of the newspaper and article, and date published but forgetting the page numbers would be considered plagiarism because all proper information needed was not included in the citation.

Proper education is the key to decreasing unintentional plagiarism. If students would better understand how plagiarism is committed they would be less likely to engage in the careless/sloppy habits that cause them to engage in plagiarism. Paraphrasing, re-stating someone else's ideas/words into unique ideas/words, is the proper way to complete a paper. Direct quoting, copying word for word another's words through the use of quotation marks, decreases the likelihood of committing plagiarism through improper use of another person's words.

Neatly and correctly recording all identifying information from sources used to complete proper works cited pages would decrease plagiarism through improper citing. Changing the way people view plagiarism would also effectively decrease the frequency of the crime being committed. People often feel that because the material used is merely words it is not important to give credit for who wrote the material. If students would think about how they would wish future students to treat literary works that they may someday create, they would be more careful with the way they treated other people's work.