

The importance of understanding what constitutes plagiarism

[Education](#)



The paper " The Importance of Understanding What Constitutes Plagiarism" is an exceptional example of an educational essay.

Plagiarism is becoming a serious issue, especially in universities today. " Almost everybody thinks that something ought to be done about it, but almost nobody agrees with anybody else about just what that something ought to be" (Keller, 2003, par. 4). Spender asserted " that what is dubbed plagiarism is just part of the way students learn" (as cited in Trounson, 2008, p. 024). Viswanathan stated that plagiarism is essentially " academic dishonesty" (as cited in Bran, 2007, par. 11) that comes in varied forms. Keller (2003) furthered that it is this originality of thought which is at the root of plagiarism. (par. 21) To which Spender contended that combining and harmonizing bits of other's ideas from which new or modified idea is produced is not plagiarism. (As cited in Trounson, 2008, p. 024) As plagiarism remains unclear, muddled and abused and as information becomes more easily accessed on the internet, it is very important to understand what really constitutes plagiarism.

Understanding what constitutes plagiarism is important in two ways: first it helps student know how to avoid plagiarism – that an unacknowledged paraphrased original thought, that an acknowledged yet improperly quoted words, and that an unacknowledged three words from an original source are in fact all considered plagiarism (Plagiarism, no date); second, it gives the student the power to defend him/herself when accused of plagiarism. But ultimately, understanding plagiarism would give the student the proper guidance on how to use original materials properly, which instead of being frightened from using other's idea would help him/her to think more

creatively. In this way, he/she will be honed better and will be saved from committing an academic mistake - blatant or inadvertent - considered abhorrent, even heinous by the academic world. In short, it will help students graduate with academic integrity.