

## What Constitutes Plagiarism?

*This resource is largely based on information from the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab) web site, as cited below. For more detailed information about plagiarism and avoiding plagiarism, click [here](#).*

### **Blatant and Unquestionable Instances of Plagiarism**

- Purchasing, stealing, or borrowing material written/created by someone else and presenting it as your own.
- Copying a complete online or print resource (paper, article, web page, book chapter) and presenting it as your own.
- Copying, pasting, and combining information from online or print resources and presenting it as your own.
- Using text in your document from any source without quotation marks or proper citations.
- Hiring someone to write your paper for you.
- Using audio or visual media in any format created by someone else without the proper citations.

### **Possible Instances of Plagiarism**

- Using words or passages from a source too closely when attempting to paraphrase without citing the original work.
- Building on someone else's ideas without citing their work.

### **Avoid Plagiarism by always [properly citing](#) the following:**

- Someone else's words, ideas, or creative output presented in any printed, on line, audio, or visual resource or format (e.g. magazines, books, the web, recordings, movies, etc.)
- Information obtained from interviews or conversations with others through any means (e.g. face-to-face, telephone, texting and other social media, written correspondence, etc.)
- Exact words or unique phrases used from any source.
- Paraphrased passages that are someone else's ideas.
- Reprints or copies of diagrams, illustrations, charts, pictures, printed music, and other visual materials.
- Online media created by someone else (e.g. images, audio, video, etc.)

### **Citations are not necessary and you are NOT plagiarizing when you:**

- write about your own thoughts and experiences, observations and insights, and your own conclusions about a subject.
- conduct and write up results of lab and field experiments.
- use your own artistic or media-based creations (e.g. artwork, photographs, videos, music, etc.)

- use ideas that are considered “common knowledge” (e.g. folklore, common sense observations, myths, urban legends, historical events, etc.)
- use ideas that are generally accepted as facts (e.g. plagiarism is an example of academic dishonesty; the sun rises and sets every day; Christmas is December 25<sup>th</sup>, etc.)

Stolley, Karl, and Brizee, Allen. *Purdue Online Writing Lab: Is it Plagiarism Yet?* Purdue University, last edited 21, Apr. 2010. Web. 9, Feb. 2012. <<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>>.