

# AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

## A Guide to Citation

Planners' Writing Exchange  
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# Why Cite Sources?

- Give credit where it is due
- Backup what you are writing with evidence
- Conform to a certain research tradition
- Provide opportunity to extend your research

# When to Cite Sources?

## □ Quote

- “If we place *The Idiot* in the perspective of Dostoevsky’s work as a whole, it may be considered his most courageous creation...With an integrity that cannot be too highly praised, Dostoevsky fearlessly submits his own most hallowed convictions to the same scrutiny that he had used for those of the nihilists” (Frank 2004, xxviii).

## □ Paraphrase (and summarize)

- In *The Idiot*, Dostoevsky courageously places his own values under scrutiny just as he placed the values of Russian nihilism under scrutiny in his other novels (Frank 2004, xxviii).

## □ Use of an idea that is not your own

- Dostoevsky uses his novels as an experimental lab to test the value systems of the world (Frank 2004, xxviii).

# To Quote or not to Quote?

## Quote

- When the words give evidence that backup your reasoning
- To be fair to passages with which you disagree
- When an authority on the issue backs up your view
- When quoted words are so original you can't recreate them
- When the quotation could frame the rest of your discussion

## Paraphrase

- When you can write what a source states more clearly or concisely
- When the details of a source—not its specific words—bolster your argument
- **Summarize** when details provided by source are not important enough to take up precious space

# How to Avoid Plagiarism

“Many students fail to realize that they risk being charged with plagiarism even if they were not intentionally dishonest, but only ignorant or careless.”

*-Kate Turabian*

- Exact words + Citation – Quotation marks → **Plagiarism**
- Paraphrase  $\approx$  Quotation → **Plagiarism**
- Someone else’s idea – Citation → **Plagiarism**

# Now, you try...

- Paraphrase the following passage from Jared Diamond:
  - ▣ “Because technology begets more technology, the importance of an invention’s diffusion potentially exceeds the importance of the original invention. Technology’s history exemplifies what is termed an autocatalytic process: that is, one that speeds up at a rate that increase with time, because the process catalyzes itself.” (301)
- Can someone share what they wrote?
- One example:
  - ▣ The power of technology goes beyond individual inventions “because technology begets more technology.” It is, as Diamond puts it, an “autocatalytic process” (301).

# Try again...

- Paraphrase the text below:
  - You paraphrase appropriately when you represent an idea in your own words more clearly or pointedly than the source does. But readers will think that you cross the line from fair paraphrase to plagiarism if they can match your words and phrasing with those of your source.
- A plagiarized paraphrase:
  - Booth, Colomb, and Williams claim that appropriate paraphrase is the use of one's own words to represent an idea to make a passage from a source clearer or more pointed. Readers can accuse a student of plagiarism, however, if his paraphrase is so similar to its source that someone can match words and phrases in the sentence and those in that source.
- On the border:
  - Appropriate paraphrase rewrites a passage from a source into one's own words to make it clearer or more pointed. Readers think plagiarism occurs when a source is paraphrased so closely that they see parallels between words and phrases (Booth, Colomb, and Williams, 2007).
- Good paraphrase:
  - According to Booth, Colomb, and Williams (2007), paraphrase is the use of your own words to represent the ideas of another more clearly. It becomes plagiarism when readers see a word-for-word similarity between a paraphrase and a source.

# Was that my idea?

- Cite if an idea is associated with a specific person
- No need to cite if idea is common knowledge in one's field
- Economics:
  - ▣ The demand curve slopes downward
  - ▣ Interest rates are influenced by animal spirits
- Psychology:
  - ▣ Humans use different parts of the brain to think and feel
  - ▣ Rational decisions depend greatly on emotions
- Can you think of an example for Planning?



# A Few Tips

- Plagiarism begins with sloppy research
  - Start early
  - Take judicious notes
  - Use note-taking to spur the creative process (don't just record information)
- Don't read your sources as you paraphrase them
- Purchase a 'guide to style'
- When in doubt, ask your professor

# Citation Style

- Modern Language Association (MLA)
  - ▣ Light, R.J. Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds. New York: Random House, 2001.
- American Psychological Association (APA)
  - ▣ Light, R.J. (2001). Making the most of college: Students speak their minds. New York: Random House.
- Chicago
  - ▣ Light, R.J. 2001. *Making the most of college: Students speak their minds*. New York: Random House.

# Citation Style

## □ MLA

- “With an integrity that cannot be too highly praised, Dostoevsky fearlessly submits his own most hallowed convictions to the same scrutiny that he had used for those of the nihilists” (Frank 28).

## □ APA

- “With an integrity that cannot be too highly praised, Dostoevsky fearlessly submits his own most hallowed convictions to the same scrutiny that he had used for those of the nihilists” (Frank, 2004, p. 28).

## □ Chicago

- “With an integrity that cannot be too highly praised, Dostoevsky fearlessly submits his own most hallowed convictions to the same scrutiny that he had used for those of the nihilists” (Frank 2004, 28).

# How would you cite my sources?

- Trimmer, Joseph F. A Guide to MLA Documentation. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006.
- Turabian, Kate L. 2007. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.