

Plagiarism

Every day in classrooms all around the world teachers and students are confronted with the issue of plagiarism. With the ideas and words of so many people being used, it is imperative that students give proper acknowledgement to their sources. By using the correct techniques of quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing, avoiding plagiarism becomes simple.

The Definition of Plagiarism

According to Webster's New World College Dictionary, plagiarizing is "to take (ideas, writings, etc.) from (another) and pass them off as one's own" ("Plagiarize"). The UMKC conduct standards expand this to include:

- (i) use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without fully and properly crediting the author with footnotes, citations or bibliographical reference;
- (ii) unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials, or unacknowledged use of original work/material that has been produced through collaboration with others without release in writing collaborators. (University 513)

Using Direct Quotations

Sometimes another person's words are exactly what is needed in a paper. This is the time when a writer should quote. Quoting is using a source's exact words to support a thesis. In those instances, a few things are necessary besides simply using quotation marks. Below are two examples.

Start with **an introductory sentence**:

Geoffrey and Judith Summerfield demonstrate the differences between nature and culture by using Eudora Welty as an example. They explained that, "We grow up in a little world of family and home; and this is what we come to think of as *natural*. Eudora Welty was startled to discover that story books-which felt, like everything else at home, *natural*-'were not natural wonders, coming up of themselves like grass'" (30).

Use only **part of the quote** and intertwine that into the sentence:

Geoffrey and Judith Summerfield explain how "we grow up in a little world of family and home; and this is what we come to think of as *natural*" (30). The presence of culture, though, was made apparent to "Eudora Welty [who] was startled to discover that story books [...] 'were not natural wonders, coming up of themselves like grass'" (Summerfield 30).

When using words that are not included in the original quote, such as "[who]" in the above passage, brackets are needed. Also, if a section of a quote is deleted, then an ellipsis (. . .) with surrounding brackets, shown in the above example, needs to be used.

Summarizing

Another great way to utilize quotes is to summarize them. A summary condenses someone else's ideas or research into a much shorter passage. Here is **the original** source from Jerry Berman and Paula Bruening's article "Is Privacy Still Possible in the Twenty-first Century?":

Without question, the growth of government and commercial transactions and the increase in technological developments over the last 50 years have heightened threats to privacy. Today the Internet accelerates the trend toward increased information collection and facilitates unprecedented flows of personal information. (Berman and Bruening 306)

Here is **the summary**:

In their article, Jerry Berman and Paula Bruening discuss factors which have led to a decrease in privacy.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is using someone else's research or ideas by putting them into the words of the writer. A paraphrase usually ends up about the same length as the original passage. The problem of plagiarism arises when paraphrasing is done incorrectly. Often a student's take on another writer's work is too close to the original wording, and unknowingly he or she plagiarizes. Working from the same quote used earlier, here is an example of **an inappropriate paraphrase**:

Undoubtedly, the increase in government and commercial transactions, along with technological advancements in the last 50 years, have created privacy threats. The internet increases the move toward greater information gathering and allows a great deal of movement of personal information (Berman and Bruening 306).

This paraphrase is too similar to the original passage. A major problem lies in the writer's use of synonyms, such as "growth" for "increase" and "created" for "heightened," to replace the original words. Despite several word changes, the structures of the sentences, as well as some of the words, stay the same. It also does not make the quote clearer or provide any information about how this ties into the student's own ideas. Below is **a more appropriate paraphrase**:

In the latter part of the twentieth century, privacy has been undermined by such factors as technology, expanded commerce, and the Internet, all of which enable the easy exchange of information (Berman and Bruening 306).

Here the writer paraphrased with an eye towards his or her own purpose for using this source. Although, it provides the same information from the original passage, it is in the writer's own words and tells the reader where the focus is. The writer keeps his or her idea clear and the structure of the sentences does not mimic the original passages. Also, there is an in-text citation, which is a requirement in order to avoid plagiarism.

Works Cited

Berman, Jerry, and Paula Bruening. "Is Privacy Still Possible in the Twenty-first Century?" Social Research (Spring 2001): 306-309.

"Plagiarize." Webster's New World College Dictionary. 4th ed. 1999.

University of Missouri-Kansas City General Catalog. Kansas City: University of Missouri Kansas City, 2002.

Summerfield, Geoffrey and Judith Summerfield. Reading(s). New York: Random House, 1989.