Plagiarism & Citing Sources:

Strategies for Writing Research Papers

What is Plagiarism?
Plagiarism is using others’ ideas, research theories, and words without clearly acknowledging the source of information.

Examples of an author’s work:
The words and ideas of others (writings), as well as art, graphics, computer programs, music, websites, charts, diagrams and other creative expression.

What you should cite:
Journals, books, magazines, newspapers, textbooks, websites, movies, photos, paintings, and plays, unpublished sources (e.g., blogs, class handouts, lectures, notes, and speeches).

Strategies for avoiding plagiarism

Strategy 1: Paraphrase
Paraphrase is your own rendition of essential information and ideas expressed by someone else, presented in your own words.

Getting paraphrasing right
✓ Re-read passages until you understand the full meaning.
✓ Set the original aside, and write the paraphrase on a note card.
✓ Rewrite the main points in your words without looking at the original.
✓ Check the original to make sure that your version expresses all essential information.
✓ Type your paraphrase in your paper.
✓ Remember to cite using APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.

Strategy 2: Quoting
Quoting is copying the exact words of the original passage and showing evidence with quotation marks. There are two types of quotations: direct and indirect.

Use quotations to:
✓ Emphasize a point you’ve made
✓ Provide an example
✓ Show an author’s intention
✓ Show how historical figures spoke or thought

Strategy 3: Summarizing
A summary is a shortened version of the original text. The purpose of a summary is to highlight the major points from reviewed text. The goal is to help the audience get the gist in a short period of time.

Getting summarizing right
✓ Read the selection, looking for key ideas, and evidence
✓ Identify the writer’s main purpose of the discussion
✓ Combine your section summaries
✓ Indicate clearly the source of your summary using a style guide or style manual (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.)

Strategy 4: Use style guides or style manuals
Style guides or style manuals are used to document resources used throughout your research paper.

*Always consult with your instructor to determine which style guide to use.
Why are citations important to research papers?
Citing sources used in your research paper will:
- Prevent plagiarism by giving credit to others ideas
- Back up important facts made in your paper
- Demonstrate that you researched your topic

What is an in-text citation?
An in-text citation is a citation that provides information about the source in the text of their paper. Often, in-text citations include a signal phrase which gives the author's name and a parenthetical reference, which can include the author's name and the page number. The set-up of an in-text citation will vary according to each style guide (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.).

What is a signal phrase?
A signal phrase signals to a reader that either a direct quote or a paraphrase is about to follow.

Example: APA in-text citation
According to Jones (1998), “Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time” (p.199).

Facts about Quotations
Remember!

Different types of quotations
- **Direct quotations** involve incorporating another person’s direct words in your writing.
- **Indirect quotations** are not exact wordings but rephrasing or summaries of another person's writings.
- **Short quotes** are placed in quotation marks in the text. Short quotes consist of 40 words or less. Consult the style guides or style manual for more information.
- **Long quotes** are used when a quotation exceeds 40 words in length. Place direct quotes longer than 40 words in block quotation.

Block quotation or a long quotation is a quotation in a written document which is set off from the main text as a distinct paragraph (or block).

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