The Plagiarism Spectrum: Tagging 10 Types of Unoriginal Work

The Plagiarism Spectrum identifies 10 types of plagiarism based on findings from a worldwide survey of nearly 900 secondary and higher education instructors. Each type has been tagged with an easy to remember digital moniker, defined, ranked by severity (#1-10), and scored by frequency of appearance (1=least, 10=most).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEVERITY</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong> Clone</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitting another’s work, word-for-word, as one’s own</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong> CTRL-C</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Containing significant portions of text from a single source without alterations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong> Find - Replace</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong> Remix</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing from multiple sources, made to fit together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong> Recycle</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing generously from one’s previous work without citation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#6</strong> Hybrid</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages without citation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#7</strong> Mashup</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixing copied material from multiple sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#8</strong> 404 Error</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citing non-existent sources or including inaccurate information about sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#9</strong> Aggregator</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including proper citation of sources but containing almost no original work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#10</strong> Re-tweet</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including proper citation but relying too closely on the text’s original wording and/or structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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