How to Paraphrase and
Avoid Plagiarism
(or How To Research Without
Accidentally Stealing Someone Else’s
Ideas!)
Pop Quiz: Which of these situations are plagiarism?

1. Copying one sentence of your paper from a website.
2. Using a quotation from a website in your benchmark project paper, with a parenthetical citation, but forgetting to put quotation marks around it.
3. Using ideas, but not direct quotations, from SparkNotes, Schmoop, Wikipedia, or any other website.
4. Cutting and pasting a sentence from a website and then changing some of the words to synonyms.
5. Putting “Donald Trump is the President of the United States” in your paper and not citing that fact.
6. You have citations, but almost the whole paper is quoted from a source.
7. You have parenthetical citations but you got them mixed up and they do not lead to the right source.
Instead of Plagiarizing, there are 2 choices...

1. **Summarize or Paraphrase**
   Put the information *completely* in your *own words*, with a citation.
   Or...

2. **Use direct quotations**
   Use the author’s words, with “quotation marks around them” and a citation.
So let’s practice paraphrasing.

When you paraphrase, ask yourself...

Did I use any words or phrases from my source?

Did I keep the same order of ideas or sentence structure as my source?
Original: “Be completely honest with your children. This will show them how always applicable the principle is and will demonstrate your commitment to it... Never let them hear you tell little ‘convenient lies’ on the phone and never ask them to tell one for you” (Eyre 15).

Never tell lies, even little convenient lies, around your children. In addition, don’t let them tell a lie for you. By doing this, you will demonstrate your commitment to honesty (Eyre 15).
Be completely honest with your children. This will show them how always applicable the principle is and will demonstrate your commitment to it... Never let them hear you tell little ‘convenient lies’ on the phone and never ask them to tell one for you” (Eyre 15).

Be totally honest with your kids. This shows them that honesty is always important, and it will show your commitment to telling the truth. Never tell lies, even if small, and never ask them to lie for you (Eyre 15).
Be completely honest with your children. This will show them how always applicable the principle is and will demonstrate your commitment to it... Never let them hear you tell little ‘convenient lies’ on the phone and never ask them to tell one for you” (Eyre 15).

Children learn from their parents’ examples, especially when it comes to honesty. Parents who don’t tell or allow lies, even “white lies,” show their children the importance of telling the truth by setting a good example (Eyre 15).
How to Paraphrase

Step 1: READ IN “CHUNKS”

Stop after each paragraph or “chunk” and ask, “What did I just read?” Write that down.

Summarize facts, not sentences. Only use what you need.

When you take notes, avoid full sentences.
Step 2: PARAPHRASE:

• *Put the source away & write about what you just read, in your own words.*

  • Pretend you’re explaining to a friend.

• Try starting with something different/change the order of ideas.

  • DON’T put anything in your paper that you don’t understand.

  • DON’T cut and paste and change words!
3. CITE YOUR SOURCES!
How often do I have to cite?

ALWAYS cite right after “direct quotations,” numbers, dates, and statistics.

Cite after you paraphrase (yes, even though the whole thing is in your own words!)

After about 3 paraphrased sentences from same source
How to do Parenthetical Citations

Author and page #:

(Gardner 5)

For web sources, sometimes you do not have a page number:

(Gardner)

Sometimes you don’t have an author. Move to the next thing, the title:

(“Explaining Multiple Intelligences” 56) or (“(Explaining Multiple Intelligences”)
Burrowing owls are an endangered species because of the way humans interact with their habitat. “Burrowing owls live in underground dens that are easily threatened by construction projects” (Miller 55). Even if construction crews don’t hurt the owls, the birds may still become too afraid to lay eggs. Burrowing owl populations have gone down by 45% in the last ten years (“Threatened Bird Statistics”). Construction projects are a significant threat to the survival of this species.
Don’t forget the Works Cited page:

Even if you have parenthetical citations, you still need a page at the end of your paper listing each source you used in alphabetical order…

See the example Annotated Bibliography at irvington.org/mla
Resources to Help You

Safe Practices for Quoting and Paraphrasing:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/avoiding_plagiarism/safe_practices.html

Avoiding Plagiarism--practice exercises:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/avoiding_plagiarism/plagiarism_exercise.html