



Orange Coast College Library

Avoid Plagiarism!

Cite . . . Cite . . . Cite

One of the main reasons for research is to study what others have written on a topic and then to form your own opinions. But you must always acknowledge the original author or work, even when you summarize or paraphrase information found in books, articles, or Web pages.

If you use someone else's words or ideas without crediting them, you are committing a type of theft called plagiarism. Plagiarism, according to the *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, is "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own; use (a created production) without crediting the source." In other words, it is the act of presenting another's work or ideas as your own.

Plagiarism can be as obvious as turning in another person's paper or project as your own or copying text from Web pages or other sources and pasting it directly into your paper. It's less obvious when you paraphrase sections of various works or rework something that wasn't your idea and you don't give credit to the author or work.

How can you avoid plagiarism?

- Take clear, accurate notes about where you found specific ideas.
- Write down the complete citation information for each item you use.
- Use quotation marks when directly stating another person's words.
- Always credit original authors for their information and ideas.

Other Tips:

- Give credit if you are using another person's idea, opinion, or theory.
- Give credit if you are using facts, statistics, graphs, charts, or anything that is not common knowledge. "Common Knowledge" is knowledge that we all acquire while in school or just by living.
- Give credit if you are using another person's actual spoken or written words.
- Give credit if you are paraphrasing another person's actual spoken or written words.

Know Orange Coast College's Student Conduct Code and understand the severe consequences for acts of plagiarism! Cite your sources and avoid plagiarism!