

## AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

How much do you know about plagiarism? Do you know when to use quotation marks or cite a source? Most students would not deliberately steal something, but often they steal another person's words or ideas by plagiarizing.

Log on to the following website and complete the plagiarism exercise you'll find there. See how much you really know about what plagiarism is and what it is not!

<http://www.library.njit.edu/howto/citations/plagiarism-exercise.cfm>

**Plagiarism is stealing another person's words or ideas and presenting them as your own.**

In order to avoid plagiarism keep the following tips in mind:

- Use your own words.
- If you use words or ideas that aren't yours give credit to your source.
- If you copy exact wording use quotation marks and give credit to your source.
- Use only information that is widely available from a variety of sources – such as historic facts and geographic data – without citing your source. For example, if you were writing a report about hurricanes and wanted to compare Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita with other hurricanes, it would be acceptable to use the dates and locations of other major hurricanes without citing a specific source. However, if you included a personal account or story about living through Katrina, or a meteorologist's analysis of the cause of Hurricane Katrina, you would need to give credit to the source.

Some original passages from various sources follow, along with some examples of how the information has been plagiarized, as well as used without plagiarizing.

### Common Examples of Plagiarism

#### Sample 1

Original Passage – from The Cold War by Ted Gottfried

The Cold War was the period between the end of World War II and the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). It consisted of a series of confrontations between the United States and the Soviet Union and their various allies and satellites. It was marked by an escalating arms race, a competition to conquer space, a dangerously belligerent form of diplomacy known as brinkmanship, and a series of small wars sometimes called “police actions” by the United States and sometimes excused as defense measures by the Soviets.

- The Cold War was the period between the end of World War II and the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It consisted of a series of confrontations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

*This is plagiarized because it has been copied word-for-word without quotation marks and without citing the source.*

- According to Gottfried, the Cold War was marked by an escalating arms race, a competition to conquer space, a dangerously belligerent form of diplomacy known as brinkmanship, and a series of small wars.

*Although credit has been given to the author, this is plagiarized because quotation marks have not been included around the section of words that is copied.*

- The Cold War was characterized by a race to acquire arms, a race to place astronauts in space and a number of small military actions.  
*Although the passage has been paraphrased, credit has not been given to the author for his ideas.*
- The Cold War was a historical time period during which the USSR and the USA tried to gain superiority over one another through a variety of military and scientific measures.  
*Acceptable; the statement has been put in the words of the writer and does not use specific ideas of the author without giving credit.*

## **Sample 2**

Original Passage – from The Cold War by Ted Gottfried

A month later the Soviets began blocking all train, truck, and barge traffic from entering Berlin. Soon no food could be delivered. The city faced starvation. The Allies responded with the Berlin airlift, a massive effort to deliver food and other supplies to the city by air. The Soviets then reduced coal shipments to the city and cut down on the electricity for the Allied sector. They seized six river barges loaded with food bound for Berlin from Hamburg. The Berlin airlift started out delivering six tons of food to the city every day, and worked up to 2,500 tons daily. The Allies spent \$200 million to keep their planes flying in every kind of weather. The Berlin airlift stopped when the Soviets ended the blockade in May 1949, following negotiations with the United States under the sponsorship of the United Nations.

- Following the start of the Berlin airlift by the Allies the Soviets reduced coal shipments to the city and cut down on the electricity for the Allied sector. They seized six river barges loaded with food bound for Berlin from Hamburg.  
*This is plagiarized because it has been copied word-for-word without quotation marks and without citing the source.*
- Ted Gottfried, in his book titled The Cold War, reports that the Allies spent \$200 million to keep their planes flying in every kind of weather.  
*Although credit has been given to the author, this is plagiarized because quotation marks have not been included around the section of words that is copied.*
- When the Soviets cut off food and supplies to the German city of Berlin, the Allied nations implemented the Berlin airlift to provide necessities to the Berlin residents. This mission continued until the United Nations brokered a settlement between the US and the USSR.  
*Acceptable; the statement has been put in the words of the writer and does not use specific ideas of the author without giving credit.*

Log back on to the following website and try the plagiarism exercise again. See how well you do this time! <http://www.library.njit.edu/howto/citations/plagiarism-exercise.cfm>