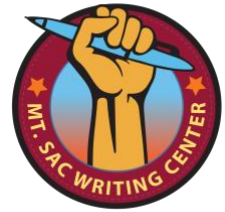


The Writing Center

DLA: Avoiding Plagiarism



This DLA is a writable PDF form. You can enter your answers directly into this document.

YOU MUST DOWNLOAD AND SAVE THIS FILE TO YOUR COMPUTER.

Do not complete this form in a web browser. You will not be able to save your work.

Student Name:

Important Note

To get completion credit for this DLA, make sure you complete all the required activities. If you'd like help while working on a specific DLA, you can meet with a specialist at the Writing Center. Keep in mind that you might need to schedule a second appointment to review your work, check your understanding, and get your completion credit. You can only review **ONE** DLA per appointment. (Check the last section of this DLA for information on making your appointment and receiving completion credit for your work).

Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

Understanding Plagiarism

It is very important for you to understand the rules regarding plagiarism that apply in college. These rules are often very different from what was acceptable in high school or another country.

It is important for every writer using sources in an assignment to understand plagiarism. It should be clear to the reader which information is borrowed, and which information is your own. On the whole, readers assume that all of the language and ideas of an essay belong to the writer, unless the wording is in quotation marks or the paraphrase is cited. Using sources clearly and honestly should be the central goal.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is using someone's words or ideas as your own and is a serious offense. Using someone else's ideas or information without saying where it came from is plagiarism. It should be clear to the reader which information is borrowed, and which information is your own.

- Use quotation marks around exact words and make sure you name your source.
- Use the name of the source when you restate an author's words in your own words.

Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

☐ 1. *Learn How to Avoid Plagiarism*

Go over the [PowerPoint presentation on "Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism."](#) and answer the following questions.

□ 2. *Plagiarism Review*

Please answer the following questions:

- a) What is plagiarism?

- b) What is common knowledge?

- c) Why should plagiarism be taken seriously?

□ 3. *Common Knowledge Review*

To test your understanding of common knowledge, please select the correct option under each statement.

1. *The Simpsons* has been running on television since 1989.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

2. Ruth Bader Ginsburg served as a justice on the Supreme Court for 27 years until her death in 2020.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

3. Over the past 1,400 to 1,500 years, large earthquakes have occurred at about 150-year intervals on the southern San Andreas Fault.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

4. The sitcom, *The Office*, was named the best TV series by the American Film Institute in 2006 and 2008.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

5. Direct health costs attributable to obesity have been estimated at \$52 billion in 1995 and \$75 billion in 2003.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

6. Geologists believe sea levels could rise between seven and 23 inches by the end of the century if current warming trends continue.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

7. The world will invest some \$20 trillion in new energy research over the next twenty-five years in an attempt to slow the effects of global warming.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

8. The United States is 245 years old as of 2021.

A. COMMON KNOWLEDGE

B. MUST BE CITED

□ 4. *Apply What You Have Learned*

Read each scenario and answer the questions, deciding what is and what is not plagiarism. Be prepared to defend your answers.

Scenario 1: Because of her busy schedule, John puts off writing a research paper until the night before the deadline and, as a result, doesn't take the time to identify the sources of borrowed words and ideas in her paper. Is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

Scenario 2: David has a friend read his essays. The friend mostly helps David organize his paper. On this last paper, the friend suggested some ideas on how David could organize his body paragraph. David listened to his friend's suggestions but checked that all of his analytical ideas were originally his own. If David turns this paper into his teacher, is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

Scenario 3: Andrea is writing a paper for her nutrition class. She knows that her roommate took the class last semester. She asks her roommate for help with the essay. She ends up using a lot of her roommate's ideas and even parts of her essay. Andrea later turns the paper in for credit. Is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

Scenario 4: As Annie writes her research paper, she remembers to cite the author's last name for her sources, but she forgets to include the page numbers for each source citation. Is this an example of plagiarism? Why or why not?

□ 5. Review the DLA/Receive Completion Credit

1. Go to [EAB Navigate](#) and make an appointment (online or in-person).
2. Attend your session and be prepared to explain your understanding of the information you've learned in the DLA. Consider the main concept you learned and how you might use this in your future assignments/classes.
3. If your professor asks you to provide proof, you can review the "appointment summary report" through EAB Navigate (app or desktop). You will find all Writing Center appointments under "appointment summary reports" (app or desktop). Look for the summary report for your DLA appointment. This is where your writing specialist will indicate the title of your DLA and state whether it is "completed" or "not completed." If it is marked as "not completed," book a follow up appointment to complete.

Note: Appointment summary reports are also sent weekly to your instructor on record. If there is an issue, please contact us at writingcenter@mtsac.edu or (909) 274-5325.

If you are an individual with a disability and need a greater level of accessibility for any document in The Writing Center or on The Writing Center's website, please contact the Mt. SAC Accessible Resource Centers for Students, access@mtsac.edu, (909) 274-4290.

Revised January 2026