
Forms of Written Plagiarism

Adapted from Brian Martin's "Plagiarism: A Misplaced Emphasis," *Journal of Information Ethics* 3.2 (Fall 1994): 36-47.

- **Word-for-word plagiarism:** copying words, phrases, sentences, even whole passages from someone else's text without acknowledging the source. Putting word-for-word copying in quotation marks while still failing to cite the source is still plagiarism.
- **Paraphrasing plagiarism:** changing the words of a sentence or passage or whole work and submitting them as one's own without acknowledging the source.
- **Plagiarism of secondary sources:** copying quotations, paraphrases, summaries, and/or just references to an original source taken from a secondary source without double-checking the quotation or reference information and without citing the secondary source.
- **Plagiarism of the form of a source:** using the organization of an argument or report of information without acknowledging the source of the form, even if the content is completely different.
- **Plagiarism of ideas:** using an idea or ideas from another source without acknowledging that source, even if the ideas are presented in a different form and with different words.
- **Plagiarism of authorship:** simply putting one's name on an entire text produced by someone else and thus, claiming to have created that text.

Some of these forms may surprise some people. Some scientists, in fact, might be shocked to discover that their routine use of the conventional organization of a report of empirical research (intro, lit review, methodology, results, discussion, & implications) could be construed as plagiarism. It never is so construed, of course, if for no other reason than that such an arrangement is so common.

But what about "plagiarism of secondary sources"? I've asked a number of academics if they have ever simply used source material quoted in a secondary source without going back to the original. Almost all of them admitted having done so.