

# *...HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM AND PROPERLY REFERENCE YOUR SOURCES...*

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## **What is PLAGIARISM?**



Plagiarism occurs any time you take someone else's words, thoughts or ideas and pass them off as your own - even if it's accidental! This could be done by copying and pasting, rearranging words or ideas into your own or getting someone else to do an assignment for you.

## **Why is PLAGIARISM such a big deal?**



Why? It's stealing, for one. Also you are being assessed on the work you do - not just the writing part but your ability to find and use information. That's an important skill that people will be looking for after high school - so teachers need to know you can do it on your own.

## **What happens if I PLAGIARIZE an assignment?**



The simple answer is that you will automatically get a zero on the assignment. The longer answer is that your name will go on a list, which could result in a class failure if you plagiarize again. After high school it could result in anything from fines, failures, expulsions or firings. It's really a serious thing.

## ***How can I avoid PLAGIARISM?***

Since plagiarism can occur in different ways you need to know some different things:

- **Don't** do someone else's work for them - and don't get someone else to do your work. If you're caught the consequences will be serious, (and teachers are pretty good at catching people; we know your writing style!)
- **Don't** copy and paste from the Internet, books, magazines or any other source without **properly giving credit** to the original author
- **Don't** take someone else's ideas or words and change them into your own sentences or thoughts. This is called **paraphrasing** and credit still needs to be given to the original author.
- **Do** get familiar with the correct ways of using another person's ideas and giving them credit for their work.
- **Do** familiarize yourself with the Geraldton Composite High School Plagiarism Policy.
- **Do** ask for help if you're not sure about something **before** you hand in a final copy. Once the final copy is in, that's it

## ***REFERENCING (CITING) OTHER PEOPLE'S WORK***

This all depends on the stuff you're using in your own work and it also depends on the expectations of your teacher. Some classes have some pretty serious expectations, (for example, a senior University English course will follow strict expectations) while other classes, (a Grade 10 Geography class, for example) might have completely different expectations. Make sure you ask your teacher.

At the very least, you'll probably be something like this:

## 1. QUOTES AND PARAPHRASING...

If you plan on using quotes make sure you follow the correct format. Check out these paragraphs for sample ideas:

### DIRECT QUOTES...

*There are many different reasons why high school students need to improve their English skills. Stephen King once wrote “the most important skill is an attention to detail because it helps you avoid making simple mistakes and that is a major problem in the work of most writers” (King 53). His words are important because they show that practicing makes for a better writer.*

Wow, that was a great paragraph. Notice the *quotations marks*, the *author’s name in parenthesis* and how the quote flows into the paragraph. Now check out all of the ways this can be done incorrectly.

### PARAPHRASING...

*There are many different reasons why high school students need to improve their English skills. One would be to pay attention to detail because it helps you avoid making simple mistakes and that is a major problem in the work of most writers. Practicing these skills will make for a better writer.*

**STOP THE PRESSES!** The above paragraph basically copies Stephen King’s words right from wherever they were found! This is definitely plagiarism. But so is this:

*There are many different reasons why high school students need to improve their English skills. Paying attention to detail - a way to avoid simple mistakes - is important because this is a problem that many writers face so it is an important skill. Practicing these skills will make for a better writer.*

**STOP THE PRESSES AGAIN!** This paragraph uses something called **paraphrasing**, which means the main idea from someone else is still used, but in different (or less) words. But the idea still belongs to Stephen King

so he should get the credit for this idea. Here's the **right way** to paraphrase:

*There are many different reasons why high school students need to improve their English skills. Paying attention to detail - a way to avoid simple mistakes - is important because this is a problem that many writers face (King 53). Practicing these skills will make for a better writer.*

**CHECK IT OUT!** There are no *quotation marks* because there is no direct quote in the above paragraph. But since the main idea from an original quote is still there, we need to include the original author's name in brackets. The number represents the page from the book where the quote was found.

## **OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT FORMATTING QUOTES AND SOURCES:**

- ➔ If you are including a *partial* quote, (your quote does not include the beginning or the end of a sentence), use three periods to indicate this fact. For example: Wilson explained, "...school is interesting" in his book.
  
- ➔ Think about the source before using it. Is it reliable? For example, quoting a child's book report is probably not reliable but referring to a university professor's essay on the same book probably is a good idea.

**A NOTE ON WEBSITES:** Generally speaking, websites can be poor sources of information because **anyone** can post **anything** online. Therefore it is extremely important to think about where the information is coming from and whether or not it is reliable, (especially with websites like Wikipedia).

- ➔ When using information from someone else make sure that you read the entire work and the quote you use makes sense. For example, if an author writes, "No, I think abortion is something we should consider for women as an author" and you simply quote *this author's opinion of*

*abortions is “no”*, then you have taken the quote completely out of context!

- ➔ If your quote is longer than four lines the entire quote is indented and single spaced, without quotation marks. Your own words leading into the quote and following it remain double-spaced normally. A citation appears below the quote. For example:

There are many reasons why writing is important, as Stephen King identifies in his novel, *Improving Your Writing*. King outlines these reasons in a clear way for his readers:

Writing is a way to communicate thoughts, emotions and feelings. It is something special, where the person writing is able to become someone else - to experience life from a different perspective and explore their world. They are able to captivate audiences, influence imaginations and explore important questions. (King 101).

King’s reasons motivate potential writers to put pen to paper and write. His words are intended to excite writers and remind them of writer’s purpose.

## **CORRECTLY REFERENCING OTHER PEOPLE’S IDEAS...**

Now that you know how to give credit to someone else you need to learn the correct format for putting that credit into your document. There are *many* different ways of doing this depending on the source, (book, Internet, TV show, etc.) and the style requested by the teacher, (APA, MLA, etc.). But here are some general rules:

*There are many different reasons why high school students need to improve their English skills. Stephen King once wrote “the most*

*important skill is an attention to detail because it helps you avoid making simple mistakes and that is a major problem in the work of most writers”*

*(King 53). His words are important because they show that practicing makes for a better writer.*

→**Quotation Marks:** Used to show that information came from someone else

→**Author and Page Number:** Used to show where information is from. This is linked to a bibliography or works cited page at the end of the document. There are different ways of doing this so ask your teacher how to do it correctly!

After you’ve written your document and included all of the quotations, references and stuff like that you’ll need to create a bibliography or works cited section, (See **Step 4**). This information is a list of sources for the information you used in your document that is not your own. The format of the bibliography will depend on the source. Check out the end of this document for some samples.

## WHAT DOESN’T NEED TO BE REFERENCED AS A SOURCE?

Good question. Basically anything that is common knowledge, (i.e. the sun is at the centre of the universe, World War II was from 1939-1945, etc.) does not need to be referenced.

Anything information or facts that someone could disagree with or dispute *should* be sourced, though.

## CREATING THE WORKS CITED PAGE:

The works cited page appears at the end of the essay on a separate page to list all of the sources you have used **within** your essay, (through quotes and paraphrasing) so readers can verify information and credit can be given to the original author. This page is titled Works Cited, which appears at the top and centre of the page.

The format of quotes and/or paraphrasing within the essay, (like in the earlier Stephen King example), includes an author and page reference such as (King 53). This information is matched to the works cited page.

Information in the works cited page is listed alphabetically by author's last name so the reader would look for this information:

King, Stephen. *How to Write*. New York: Bantam, 2004.

This tells the reader that any quotes or paraphrasing connected to the author King comes from this source.

### **SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER:**

- Do not number the entries. Simply list them in alphabetical order by author last name.
- Double-space between entries on the Works Cited page but single-space the actual entries

Here are some sample entries, with a few notes:

King, Stephen. *How to Write*. New York: Bantam, 2004.

---. *Nightmares and Dreamscapes - Short Stories of Horror*. New York: Dell, 2001.

In the above example, the essay referenced two books by the same author. So on the Works Cited page his name is listed fully for the first book, (whichever comes first alphabetically) and then three dashes, (---), are used to show the same author.

Within the essay, simply using (King #) will not work because there is more than one of King's books being used. Therefore, after each quote a short reference to the title must be included to prevent any confusion. For example:

"Writing is awesome" (King *How to Write* 51).

## A SAMPLE WORKS CITED PAGE: (WITH NOTES ABOVE EACH CITATION)

### WORKS CITED

This refers to a regular book:

Barber, Ann. *A Study of Stephen King*. New York: Random House, 1997.

This refers to an article in a magazine. Notice that it takes two lines on the page. These lines are single-spaced and the second line is INDENTED two spaces.

Coulter, John. "Stephen King: Horror Strikes Again" in *Time*. 16 Feb 2004: 81- 83.

This is for a website story without an author. If an author is found it would be included at the beginning of the citation. Notice that again the reference takes two lines. Everything within the reference is single-spaced but all lines after the first are indented.

CNN.com. "An Hour With Stephen King". 28 Aug 2008. CNN News Online. Accessed 30 Sep 2008.  
[www.cnn.com/entertainment/books/king.html](http://www.cnn.com/entertainment/books/king.html)

## **SAMPLES OF DIFFERENT WAYS TO SOURCE STUFF...**

### **BOOKS**

#### **By a single author**

Moran, Theodore H. *Beyond Sweatshops: Foreign Direct Investment and Globalization in Developing Countries*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 2002.

#### **Two authors**

Christiansen, John B., and Irene W. Leigh. *Cochlear Implants in Children: Ethics and Choices*. Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet UP, 2002.

#### **Collection produced by an editor (like textbooks full of works by multiple authors)**

Guernsey, Otis L., Jr., and Jeffrey Sweet, eds. *The Burns Mantle Theater Yearbook of 1989-90*. New York: Applause, 1990.

**NOTE: After the editor's names, the abbreviations *eds.* (or "*ed.*") if only one) is included to show that the content of the book was edited, but not written by, these people.**

#### **Essay or Chapter within a collection**

Sweeney, John J., "The New Internationalism." Broad, Robin, ed. *Global Backlash: Citizen Initiatives in a Just World Economy*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002.

#### **Online reference database**

"African Art." *World History: the Modern Era*. ABC-CLIO Schools Subscriptions Web Sites. Seattle Central Community College Lib. 24 Feb. 2003 .

### **PERIODICAL ARTICLES**

Journal citations should include the volume and issue number, and the publication year.

For magazine and newspapers, omit the volume and issue number and include the complete date.

For full text articles from electronic databases, add the database title and publisher, library through which you gained access, date of access, and URL

### Articles in weekly publications

Ryback, Timothy W. "Letter from Salzburg." *New Yorker* 30 Dec. 1991: 62-75.

### Articles in monthly publications

Alford, Jeffrey. "Ap Nam? Kin Khao? Feeling at Home in Thai Kitchens." *Eating Well* Jan. - Feb. 1992: 44-55.

### Newspaper Articles

Miller, David. "Tightening the Belt." *Seattle Times* 5 Jan. 1992: A1.

### Web Site (No Author)

Geology Review. "A Study of Volcanic Rock". 23 Oct. 2000. Dept. of Science, Howard U. 3 March 2003 . [www.howard.edu/science/geology/volcanic\\_rock](http://www.howard.edu/science/geology/volcanic_rock)

### Website (Author Provided)

Jones, Trevor. "Rock and Roll: A History". 26 Apr. 2007. *Rolling Stone Online*. 2 Nov 2008. [www.rollingstone.com/0407/rockhistory/](http://www.rollingstone.com/0407/rockhistory/)

### Personal Web Page

Hull, Joe. *Geology, Environmental Science, Earth Science*. Accessed: 3 March 2003 .

### Government Site

United States. Library of Congress. Copyright Office. *Copyright Basics* Sept. 2000. 3 March 2003 .

### OTHER SOURCES:

#### Television Show or Movie

Director's Name. "Name of Television Show/Movie". Studio: Year  
EX: Bay, Michael. "Bad Boys II". 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox: 2004.

#### Personal Interview

Name. Personal Interview. Date.  
EX: Wilson, Stephen. Personal Interview. 3 March 2006.

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## **OTHER RESOURCES TO CONSULT...**

### Purdue University - Online Writing Lab

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>

→ This website is full of useful information including a very good list of other websites with several examples. It is highly recommended.

### Duke University - Writing Assistance

<http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/>

→ Duke University has put together some helpful information on citing sources.

**Wikipedia: Citing Sources**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MLA\\_Style\\_Manual](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MLA_Style_Manual)

→ Wikipedia, although not always reliable, has a good list of examples.