The Importance of Citing References

Originally Posted At: http://www.teach-nology.com/Articles/teaching/citing/

:

Another great tutorial from TeAch-nology.com! The Web Portal For Educators!
(http://www.teach-nology.com)

:

What's All the Hype?

Since the advent of the Internet, the information highway phenomenon has given us access to virtually anything that has ever been written or expressed since the beginning of time. There is so much information that is now available to us that it is no wonder that our students are having a field day citing from sources that otherwise would not be available or easily tracked. The cut and paste craze has hit us like a storm and has entered into our classrooms more and more in assignments requiring expression of thoughts that students claim are their own.

We have found that many people who are new to the Internet do not know how to cite references that are found on the World Wide Web, specifically, "electronic references." The purpose of this tutorial is to explain the importance of citing references appropriately and correctly and how to avoid "on-line plagiarism."

:

The Perils of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense! It comes in many forms, from direct quotes to summaries or paraphrases that do not cite authorship or reference to sources used to get the information that is cited. It can also include "recycling papers" that have been written by others and putting your own name on the copy. Plagiarism is common among students of all ages and can result in serious consequences. In some cases, it could lead to hefty fines, in other cases it can lead to legal ramifications. Depending on the policies dictated for schools, ranging from elementary to higher education, it can lead to a student's expulsion from the academic institution. More and more, plagiarism is growing rampant; this is especially true with the vast amount of information now available on the Internet. There is a tendency to fall into the plagiarism trap because students do not think that

their teachers can find the sources that they used as the basis for writing a paper, or for giving a presentation. It is important for teachers to be alert and aware of some of the red flags that come up with plagiarism.

:

How to Help Students Avoid Plagiarism

There are many ways to help students avoid plagiarism. One very effective way is to define your expectations clearly. Inform students about your policy regarding plagiarism; give them a written copy of the policy; include the policy on your course outline. It really helps to give them concrete examples of plagiarism.

There are programs designed to actually deter plagiarism. Our guess is that if students know that you will be using a program to detect plagiarism, the likelihood of plagiarizing will decrease. Examples of programs that help deter or detect plagiarism are offered by companies like Glatt Plagiarism Services, Inc.,http://www.plagiarism.com/. These services help provide Articles that teach about plagiarism and provide mechanisms to deter and detect plagiarism.

In addition, there is so much out there that has been written on the topic. It is important to keep informed about the perils of plagiarism. We found a good article that addresses the most recent type of plagiarism: On-line Plagiarism. The article defines the different types of plagiarism and how you can prevent it, detect it, and track it down!

:

How to Cite References

We found a great resource that you can use, or recommend to your students to use. Recommended by the American Psychological Association (APA), this Web site provides information and format on how to cite electronic resources from the Internet (http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html).

The following examples are included on the APA Web site:

- Citing Email Communications
- Citing a Web Site
- Citations and Quotations in Text
- Creating References for Specific Documents on a Web Site
- Creating References for Articles and Abstracts Obtained From Electronic Databases

Another resource that we found that provides a guide for writing research papers based on MLA can be found at: http://webster.commnet.edu/mla.htm (prepared by the Humanities Department and the Arthur C. Banks, Jr., Library, Capital Community

College, Hartford, CT). Examples are given that include working with quotations; formatting; parenthetical documentation; citing from CD-ROM; and sections on how to cite references including government documents, parts of a book, essays and article, legal documents, and much more.

We believe that if students are given the tools that they can use to avoid plagiarism, then the temptation to plagiarize may decrease. Students need to know that it is okay and desirable to cite references when expressing ideas or thoughts about any given topic.

The Bottom Line

Plagiarism is cheating, it is dishonest, and it is unethical. We, as educators, can help students avoid plagiarism by addressing it directly and offering solutions to a problem that can only get worse since the advent of the Internet.

For more information on "plagiarism," click on:

http://www.teach-nology.com/highered/plagiarism/

©2007 Teachnology, Inc. All rights reserved.