

Plagiarism in Schools

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What is Plagiarism?

Webster's Dictionary defines plagiarism as a) To steal and use the ideas or writings of another as one's own. b) To take passages or ideas from and use them as one's own. Plagiarism is now running rampant due to the Internet and electronic sources, but there are ways teachers can fight back and/or deter their students from committing it.

Adam Janowski, author of *Plagiarism: Prevention, Not Prosecution*, writes what forms of plagiarism are out there.

- Buying or downloading a paper from a research service or a term-paper mill and offering it as your own. www.junglepage.com, www.schoolsucks.com, www.oppapers.com
- Turning in another student's work, with or without that student's knowledge, as your own.
- Copying any portion of another's work without proper acknowledgement.
- Copying material from a source and supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotation marks or failing to indent properly.
- Paraphrasing ideas and language from a source without proper documentation.

Prevention: Educate & Inform

The authors of *Plagiarism and the Web* say that the way to beat plagiarism and cheating is by prevention. There are several ways educators can keep their students from taking words and thoughts from others and using them as their own.

- First, educate students on what plagiarism is. Provide a clear and concise idea; many don't know what it actually means.

**To hear Plagiarism Interview
Click on Photograph**



- Second, inform students that you are aware of the paper-selling websites.
- Third, making penalties of plagiarism clear. Create a handout or post them in the classroom.
- Fourth, show students how to properly use resources, paraphrasing, quotations, and provide good examples of citations depending on the format being used.
- Fifth, make papers more specific or difficult. For example, have students read non-published or unfamiliar works; this way it's new and, more than likely can't be found on paper-selling websites.
- Sixth, have students write in class. This will provide comparison work; keep them from copying word for word, and deterring from any unwanted sources or websites.

To see the interview:



([Quicktime Movie](#) file format)

Detection: How to Catch Plagiarism

If an educator is reading through research papers and comes across one that either a) sounds like something they have heard before, b) doesn't match up with the student's particular writing skills or style, or c) doesn't match the criteria of the assignment, an educator can do the following to tell if this student is in fact plagiarizing:

- Do a search online for a phrase, grouping of text or a whole paper. If a match is found, a URL will be brought up and a copy should be printed to provide proof of plagiarism.
- Use a service such as www.turnitin.com which is a service where students submit their work through the site, it's analyzed and the educator can check the results
- Use of programs. Programs hold lots of information in a database and make a comparison to the student's work:
www.canexus.com/eve/index3.shtml or www.plagiarism.com.

Consequences of Plagiarism

Educators handle punishment for plagiarism in several ways:

- Failing the assignment that was plagiarized
- Failing the class it took place in
- Detention
- Parent contact
- Suspension
- Expulsion or Dismissal

Consequences can be used separately, combined, or a system can be created. Whichever is chosen, educators must stick to it to show students plagiarism is a serious offense. When students are aware of the consequences and they know punishment will be carried out, it can act as prevention. Students will be less likely to plagiarize when they know punishment will be followed through.

Works Cited

Janowski, Adam. "Plagiarism: Prevention, Not Prosecution." *Book Report* 21 (2002): 26-8.

Vernon, Robert F., Shirley Bigna, and Marshall L. Smith. "Plagiarism and the Web." *Journal of Social Work Education* 37 (Winter 2001): 193-6.