

# Avoiding Plagiarism

## Common examples of plagiarism include:

- 1) Not citing any ideas\* or quotations borrowed from a source (Hacker and Sommers 107)  
\*Note: ideas that must be cited include statistics and facts, and any information presented in a visual form, such as a graph or diagram.
- 2) Not putting any language borrowed from a source in quotation marks (Hacker and Sommers 107).
- 3) Not putting “summaries and paraphrases in your own words” (Hacker and Sommers 107).
- 4) Copying the cadence of a sentence too closely.
- 5) Presenting the work of someone else – whether a friend or someone you paid – as your own (*The Purdue OWL*).

## Steps to take to avoid plagiarism:

- 1) Read through the sections of your paper where you relied on an outside source (anything that is not common knowledge or a personal experience) for information. Compare your paper to the source material and make sure that you do not use the exact words from your reference material. If you do, put quotation marks where they belong and properly cite the information.
- 2) When you are trying to summarize or paraphrase information you retrieved from a source, practice saying the content out loud in your own words, as if you were explaining it to a friend. Write down your version of the information without looking back at your reference. Then go back to the source and compare it with your words. Make sure the version you wrote down is accurate, but not too similar to the source – your version should have different words and a different sentence structure than the reference material.
- 3) When you take notes, whether in class or while you are reading a source, put quotation marks around any direct quotations you copy down. That way, when you include information from your notes in your paper, you will know what needs to have quotation marks.
- 4) When you take notes and are summarizing or paraphrasing the information you hear or read, make sure to cite where you got the information. That way, when you include these summaries or paraphrases in your paper, you will remember to cite them.