

# PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism (from the Latin word for “kidnapper”) is the act of taking another person’s words, ideas, or information, and presenting them as your own. Whether it is done deliberately or inadvertently, this form of intellectual theft is a very serious academic offense. Most colleges and universities have strict policies defining plagiarism and establishing punishments for offenders. These penalties can be severe, and in some cases may result in expulsion from a school. Hence, it is important to learn how to avoid plagiarism.

Some acts of plagiarism are deliberate and easy to recognize. Downloading whole papers or sections of them and turning them in as if they were your own work, is clearly plagiarism. So is copying a phrase, sentence, or lengthy passage of a book without including quotation marks. There are computer programs designed to scan for plagiarism or a reader can simply take a distinctive sentence from a paper and search the internet in virtually any web browser to find the original source of scholarship.

Other plagiarism can be less deliberate but still must be avoided. An example would be borrowing information from a friend’s essay, even if you include the original citation. Another common mistake is paraphrasing (putting another person’s analysis into your own words) a distinctive source without accrediting the ideas to the rightful author. Bottom line: students may not present another’s work as their own. When you write history, you join a community of scholars that work toward a common goal of advancing historical understanding. Respect the efforts of others. Submit your work in your name and give your colleagues credit for their ideas and words.

The Social Studies Department at Lake Forest High School condemns plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. The Lake Forest High School Student-Parent Handbook specifies what constitutes plagiarism and outlines the penalties for offenders.