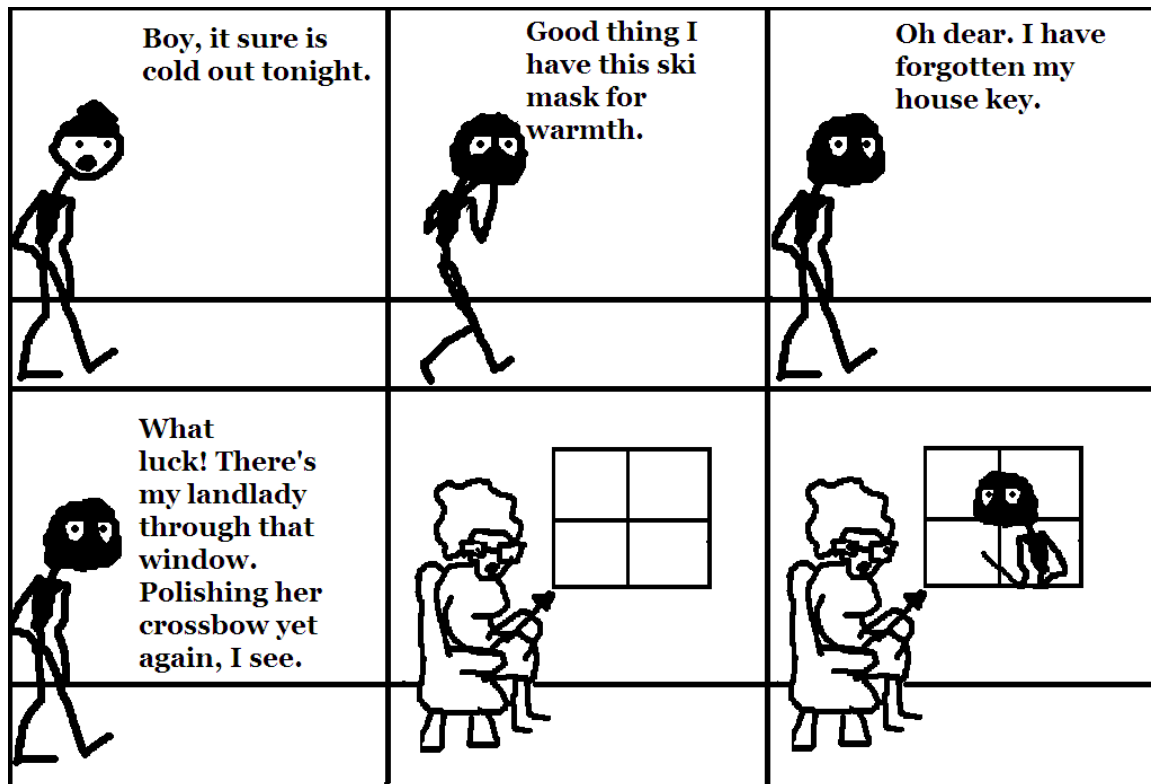


## Avoiding Plagiarism



**You don't want to come across as a thief. That is why it is important to carefully cite all of the outside information you add to your papers.**

**But what information needs to be cited, you ask? Here's a handy list:<sup>1</sup>**

- Words or ideas taken from any print or electronic media
- Words or ideas from an interview
- Diagrams or graphs from print or electronic media
- Images, audio clips, or videos from electronic media

**Basically, if someone else wrote it or created it, you need to cite it.**

<sup>1</sup> Brizee, Allen, Karl Stolley. "Is It Plagiarism Yet?" Purdue Online Writing Lab. Accessed March 1, 2011. Online.

**If you take exact words, put them in quotation marks and cite them using whichever style guide is assigned or best suits the assignment (e.g. MLA for English papers, APA for psychology). This does not count as plagiarism because you are telling the reader where you found the information. If you quote it and cite it, it's borrowing. If not, it's stealing.**

## **Paraphrasing**

However, taking the exact words from a source may not be the best way to convey the information. Sometimes it is better to paraphrase, taking information from another source and putting it in your own words. You still must cite paraphrases, as they contain information that you did not generate.

The key to good paraphrasing is conveying all of the same information while using as few of the same words or phrases as possible.<sup>2</sup>

### Original Text:

Being a landlady reminds me of my time on the farm as a young girl. There's always something to do, some broken fixture that needs mending. It's not like a nine to five job where you get up and do the same things every day. For instance, I had to dispose of a prowler I saw out my window three months ago. It's like when the rustlers would come to take our cows and Pa would hit 'em with the old family crossbow. Meulah, Beulah. *My Life and Reflections from Central State Women's Prison*. 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. (2011): 798-799.

A bad paraphrase will simply take the words and alter them slightly.

Her job as a landlady reminds her of when she was a little girl on a farm. There's always stuff to do, something to fix. It's very dissimilar to a regular job. Like, there was a guy who was trying to break in three months ago, and it was like when my dad would hit them with a crossbow (Meuhla 798).

If you're going to keep that much of the original text, just use a direct quote. Paraphrasing involves putting the content into your own particular voice.

### Good paraphrase:

Her work always kept her busy, which she liked. She grew up on a farm and the constant array of diverse tasks she performed as a landlady provided her stimulation and enjoyment. She describes the crossbow incident as nostalgic and reminiscent of her father, the infamous Crossbow Carey (Meuhla 798).

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<sup>2</sup> Brizee, Allen, Dana Lynn Driscoll. "Paraphrase: Write it in Your Own Words." Purdue Online Writing Lab. Accessed March 10, 2011. Online.

## When not to cite

If you are using information that comes from your own life or information that is common knowledge (can be found not cited in at least five reputable sources), you do not need to cite. However, if you are in doubt, be safe and cite.<sup>3</sup>

### Chapman's policy on plagiarism

Dr. Earl Babbie has created an in-depth slideshow that enumerates what exactly constitutes plagiarism, in his opinion. It's an interesting look at plagiarism from a professor's point of view.

The slideshow can be found here:

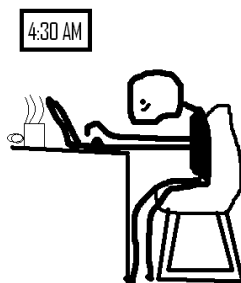
<http://www1.chapman.edu/~babbie/plagoo.html>

Professors' individual syllabi usually include a paragraph or two outlining how they define plagiarism, which is almost universally identical to Babbie's definitions, as well as the ones outlined in this handout.

Keep in mind that the *minimum* penalty for plagiarizing is a zero on the assignment in question and can result in an "F" in the course. Subsequent violations can result in expulsion.<sup>4</sup>

Not that you would cheat, though. Why deprive yourself of the joy of learning at an institution you are paying to attend? Plagiarism cheapens the degree you and all of your classmates earn here at Chapman.

Given that you are an honest, hard-working student, keep in mind these rules, and you'll be able to avoid the pitfalls (and judiciary annoyance) of accusations of plagiarism.



Keeping it real.

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<sup>3</sup> Brizee, Allen, Karl Stolley. "Is It Plagiarism Yet?" Purdue Online Writing Lab. Accessed March 1, 2011. Online.

<sup>4</sup> Chapman University Conduct Board. "Academic Integrity Violations and Sanctions." Chapman University. Accessed March 15, 2011. Online.

