

Plagiarism ranges from using texts or images without proper attribution to disguising the misuse of someone else's work. It has increased with the rise of technological advances and individual access to technology. The average person has access to multiple, global sources of information, increasing opportunities for plagiarism to occur.

Differences in moral perception directly impact today's global society as students follow common practice in their violation of established laws. For example, as long as a hyperlink provides direct access and clear attribution, some sources no longer require prior permission to link. However, some sources may even deny permission. Therefore, teachers must address the issues surrounding plagiarism and copyright as they prepare students to do research and complete assignments.

Educators must monitor and report inappropriate behavior during the completion and submission of assignments. Challenges to a student's original authorship typically result in parental involvement that can rise to the level of the school's administration, the LEA central office, and sometimes the courts.

## Resources

Brizee, Allen (2008 September 30). Avoiding plagiarism. Retrieved October 13, 2008, from The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Web site: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/677/01/>

Frick, Ted (2004). Understanding plagiarism. Retrieved September 4, 2008, from Indiana University Bloomington School of Education Web site: <http://www.indiana.edu/~tedfrick/plagiarism/> (Includes examples of paraphrasing and a brief review quiz).

Harris, Robert (2004 November 17). Anti-plagiarism strategies for research papers. Retrieved September 15, 2008, from VirtualSalt Web site: <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>

(2008). North Carolina graduation project. Retrieved September 4, 2008, from Public Schools of North Carolina Web site: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/graduationproject/>

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries, (2004 August 30). Plagiarism and the Honor Code. Retrieved October 13, 2008, from Information Ethics Tutorial Web site: <http://www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/infoethics/plagiarism/>

Additional resources: (Plagiarism site <http://www.ncwiseowl.org/it/plagiarism/>)

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# An Educator's Guide to Plagiarism: Avoiding the Copying Syndrome

North Carolina  
**Department of  
Public Instruction**

**Curriculum, Instruction  
& Technology Division**



Public Schools of North Carolina  
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**Plagiarism is illegal** in the state of North Carolina according to General Statute § 14-118.2. Text of the statute and a tutorial on plagiarism for students are available at the UNC University Libraries site: <http://www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/infoethics/plagiarism/>

Other definitions: see Plagiarism site <http://www.ncwiseowl.org/it/plagiarism/>

## Characteristics of Plagiarism

Educators need to define for their students what requires attribution. Ideas that are now in the public domain, such as “Big Brother is watching you,” do not require attribution beyond using quotation marks. However, a well-known phrase such as, “All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others” (Orwell, p. 52), is not clearly in the public domain and the creator should be acknowledged.



## Instructional Strategies

- Teach students an information research process model such as the Big6.
- Create authentic, real-world problem-solving assignments in which students must create and answer essential and supporting questions, e.g. project-based learning.
- Use formative assessment to monitor student progress in research activities, e.g., outlines, drafts, journals/reflection logs, etc.
- Require students to provide verification of sources (e.g., links on bibliographies, hard copies of relevant pages with attribution)
- Include a process for scaffolding in school-wide curriculum maps when teaching students the discrete skills of a research process at all grade levels

**Additional suggestions:** Valerie Person, English Department Chair, Currituck County (NC) High School (see plagiarism site <http://www.ncwiseowl.org/it/plagiarism/>)

*“If you don’t tell whose work it is, you are pretending the work is your own. **This pretending is called ‘plagiarism,’ and it is just like cheating. It’s not fair. It’s not nice. It isn’t OK. It’s stealing.**”*

(Simpson, 2005)

## Policy and Procedures

It is recommended that school systems create a policy that defines plagiarism and addresses representative instances when plagiarism might be evident, as well as states the expectation for appropriate, ethical behavior in completing all assignments. A plagiarism policy should address what is an actionable offense and how it will be resolved. Specific procedures should be outlined and implemented according to the policy. The overall intent of the policy should be to create and foster a culture of academic and personal integrity.

**NOTE:** Permission is granted to use text from this brochure and the plagiarism Web site that is originated by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

## Recommended Plagiarism Policy Guidelines

State principles and objectives. The policy should include a definition and possibly a list of the characteristics of plagiarism.

Reference the North Carolina G.S.14-118.2 on plagiarism.

Make reference to a procedures document that outlines precise steps for action to deal with infringements of the policy.