

The Writing Center

Cleveland State University, RT 124, 216-687-6981

2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115

www.csuohio.edu/writingcenter

Director, Prof. Mary Murray McDonald, m.murray@csuohio.edu

Plagiarism Quiz

Take this quiz to see if you're making great decisions when you refer to others' work in your own writing. You'll see a sentence followed by a set of options. Answers are at the end of the handout. All entries are from Jane Jacobs' *Dark Age Ahead* (2004).

1. "Not TV or illegal drugs but the automobile has been the chief destroyer of American communities" (37).
If you were going to use this information, would you
 - a. paraphrase it
 - b. quote it

2. "The combination of the appearance of professional respect for scientific rigor coupled with professional contempt for scientifically rigorous behavior is toxic, a poison that infects more activities in North America than the few I have pointed out here. It cripples foreign aid programs, pedagogy, and illegal-drug policies, and it promotes dubious and harmful medical treatment fads, nutrition and other lifestyle advice, and agricultural recommendations" (99).
If you were going to use this information, would you
 - a. quote it directly
 - b. paraphrase it

3. Here is a paraphrase of the above passage (with APA citation style); tell whether it is
 - a. plagiarized
 - b. not plagiarized and therefore acceptable

Jacobs (2004) warns of many future problems for North Americans because of the unwillingness of workers in every industry to engage in scientific thinking that requires hypotheses, testing, and evidence (p. 99).

4. Here is another paraphrase of the above passage (this time with MLA citation); tell whether it is
 - a. plagiarized
 - b. not plagiarized and therefore acceptable

When workers in any industry refuse to engage in scientific thinking, according to Jane Jacobs in her latest book *Dark Age Ahead*, they risk ruining foreign aid programs, pedagogy, and illegal-drug policies along with medical treatment fads, nutrition and other lifestyle advice, and agricultural recommendations (99).

5. “Ireland is almost miraculous in not having sunk into a Dark Age. . . . Famine, Pestilence, War and Death devastated Ireland for centuries; its population dropped from nine million to two million in the mid-nineteenth century. . . . But during all these ordeals, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse were never joined by the fifth demonic horseman, Forgetfulness. The Irish stubbornly remembered who they were and what they valued, and refused to lose their treasured culture. They accomplished this marvel largely through the fragile medium of song. . . . Song is an extremely effective way of passing a culture down through the generations. . . . England now has the lowest productivity of any country in the European community, while the Republic of Ireland has surpassed it” (172-173).

Much of this information is known, so you wouldn't give Jacobs credit for telling Irish history; yet what she does want to point out in *Dark Age Ahead* is how certain cultures pulled out of a Dark Age. Which of the following sentences is respectful to her own ideas while still giving proper citation?

- a. Song is the way that the Irish survived a Dark Age.
- b. Song and other art forms can be important tools for societies to preserve their own history and culture; the memory of both will eventually lead to future success.
- c. Jacobs points to the Irish as a culture that managed to overcome a Dark Age because their songs inculcated in children and adults a love of their rich history and culture; this knowledge eventually led to economic success after centuries of oppression (172-173).

Answers to the Quiz

1. b You would quote this sentence because it is so well worded: any attempt you made to rewrite it into your own words would be longer and less rhetorically effective.
2. b Jane Jacobs is writing a book, and books have much space for an author to really disclose his or her research and opinions. When you write an academic paper, you don't have that much space, so it's better to paraphrase this sentence.
3. b It's acceptable.

4. a This sentence takes the language of Jacobs and is therefore plagiarized even though Jacobs is cited. You cannot take information without citing it, and you also cannot take the language of the author without acknowledging by direct quotation that you are using it.
5. c The other sentences do not acknowledge the original interpretation of Jacobs—they simply steal it without giving her credit.

Pointers on Citation

- turn the book over and write the meaning in your own words to avoid stealing the language of the author
- don't try to paraphrase when you're tired!!
- let your thesis statement/focus and voice guide your paraphrase, not the author's voice and focus
- make a good decision about whether to quote or paraphrase
- if information repeats 3-5 times in the sources you're reading, then consider it general information and don't quote it
- use a handbook and follow it very closely to be sure you have correct citation format

More Worksheets on Plagiarism

The following links have more examples of plagiarism to practice with if you are unsure about citation:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/print/research/r_plagiar.html

<http://education.indiana.edu/~frick/plagiarism/item1.html>

Tutorials in the Writing Center

You are always welcome to bring in a paper to have a tutor check for plagiarism. Your professor might also want you to use the plagiarism service www.turnitin.com. Call for an appointment at extension 6981.