

Plagiarism

Master level

What is it?

- ▶ Taking ideas or words from a source without giving credit (acknowledgement) to the author.
- ▶ a kind of theft- considered to be an academic crime.
- ▶ In academic work, ideas and words are seen as private property belonging to the person who first thought or wrote them.

Why must students avoid plagiarism?

- ▶ Discuss alone or with your partner(s), and come up with a list of reasons why students must not plagiarise.

Main reasons include:

- ▶ *Copying the work of others will not help you develop your own understanding*
- ▶ *To show that you understand the rules of the academic community*
- ▶ *Plagiarism is easily detected by teachers and computer software*
- ▶ *It may lead to failing a course or even having to leave college*

Degrees of plagiarism

- ▶ Although plagiarism essentially means copying somebody else's work, it is not always easy to define. Working with a partner, consider the academic situations on the worksheet and decide if they are plagiarism.

Plagiarism can be accidental

- ▶ Situation (10) when the author's name is mis-spelt, is technically plagiarism but really carelessness.
- ▶ Situation (9) your teacher may have encouraged you to discuss the topic in groups, and then write an essay on your own, in which case it would not be plagiarism.
- ▶ Self-plagiarism is also theoretically possible, as in situation (7).
- ▶ It can be difficult to decide what is general or common knowledge (situation 6)

But.....

- ▶ It is *not* a good excuse to say that you didn't know the rules of plagiarism, or that you didn't have time to write in your own words. Nor is it adequate to say that the rules are different in your own country.