

# Beyond the Plagiarism Checker: Helping Nonnative English Speakers (NNESs) Avoid Plagiarism

**D**uring a university workshop on avoiding plagiarism, I asked a group of English as a foreign language (EFL) students, “Is it okay to lift one sentence from the Internet and put it into your essay without acknowledging the source?” They replied, “Yes, it is okay. It is only one sentence.” Not one student in the room said otherwise. I had been asked to give a workshop on plagiarism because, I had been told, it was a major problem at the university, and with that response, I understood that the problem was even more pronounced than I had realized.

I am not suggesting that plagiarism is a problem unique to those students or to their country. In fact, it is always part of the anxiety-riddled question—what can we do?—among educators in every country and context I have worked in. It is common conversation in the staff room, the subject of workshops and meetings, and a frequent topic of articles shared among faculty members. Moreover, the amount of recent literature on the topic—research on the prevalence of plagiarism and suggestions for how to prevent it—demonstrates that plagiarism is a persistent issue that must be addressed by educators.

Writing instructors talk of the depravity of the new generation, of plagiarism checkers and detectors and anti-plagiarism software, but what are they doing—what are we doing?—to help students avoid plagiarism? Rather than just giving a cursory explanation

of plagiarism and punishments in our writing courses coupled with an obsessive approach to detection, we need to help students understand how to avoid plagiarism and equip them with the tools to become competent and confident writers. As Bloom (2008, 209) says, “It is far easier, more intellectually interesting, and more ethically satisfying to prevent plagiarism than to track it down.”

*Note:* While much of the literature regarding plagiarism and nonnative English speakers (NNESs) pertains to international students—that is, students who study in an English as a second language (ESL) environment (outside their homeland)—throughout this article, NNESs will refer to both students who study in an ESL environment and students who study in an EFL environment (students who study in their native land).

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### UNDERSTANDING WHY NONNATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS PLAGIARIZE

Choi Young-hee (name changed), who completed an undergraduate degree in South Korea and then earned her graduate degree in Australia, expresses her experience of learning the accepted norms of academic writing in the West (personal communication):

For the whole of my undergraduate degree ... I wrote one small essay for an elective course. All other assessment was done through tests and midterm and final exams. ... When I got to postgraduate level at an Australian university, I had to learn how to write essays. I had no idea what a thesis statement was and little understanding of introductions and conclusions. Also, I had to learn how to use sources and how to cite sources. (This was the most difficult thing to adjust to.) The Australian university must have been aware of the Asian education system because they provided a mentor to Asian students. Fortunately, the professors were also aware of the impending issues and provided counseling and, when needed, a chance to rewrite and include citations.

Ideas about plagiarism and textual borrowing vary according to the culture. Not all cultures share the Western idea of plagiarism as an “academic crime” (Reid 1993, 89). In some cultures, education is based primarily on memorization, and the ability to memorize information and demonstrate that mastery is considered good scholarship (Carroll 2002). These cultures do not have the same educational emphasis on research, writing, and critical thinking that exists in the West (Pennycook 1996). In some cultures, using the words and ideas of another shows respect

and honor (Glenn and Goldthwaite 2014). To cite the texts everyone should be familiar with in these cultures is considered an insult to the reader (teacher or otherwise), as it suggests that the reader does not know the source of the original text (Carroll 2002; Glenn and Goldthwaite 2014; Ryan 2000). Although in the West, words and ideas can be owned by individuals through authorship (Pennycook 1996), in collectivist cultures, knowledge is seen as belonging to everyone and thus can be freely shared and used (Carroll 2002; Ryan 2000).

### ADDITIONAL REASONS NONNATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS MAY PLAGIARIZE

In addition to cultural influences, we must be aware that NNEs may have had little or no instruction in or practice with academic writing (Bloch 2001; Glenn and Goldthwaite 2014; Ryan 2000; Schmitt 2005) or even writing at all. These students are trying to master academic writing in a language that is, at best, a second language (Click 2012; Schmitt 2005). Lack of confidence in their English skills is another reason some NNEs plagiarize (Cammish 1997; Carroll 2002; Pennycook 1996). Furthermore, some NNEs resort to plagiarism to keep up with a heavy workload (Carroll 2002; Pennycook 1996). While NNEs might not enter university with the necessary skills to be successful students, they have pressure to succeed academically, and this pressure can lead to plagiarism (Carroll 2002).

### PRACTICING WHAT WE PREACH: TEACHERS AS MODELS

It is naïve to suggest that plagiarism is only a student problem; academics and administrators have also been found guilty. In a famous and ironic case reported by the *New York Times*, the University of Oregon was

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found to have plagiarized its teaching assistants' handbook section on plagiarism from Stanford University's handbook (*New York Times* 1980; Mallon 2001, 100). In some of the same institutions where faculty members complain vehemently about student plagiarism, some of the instructors themselves are plagiarists—sometimes to a pronounced degree, such as copying others' research or having graduate students write their papers (Evering and Moorman 2012; Pennycook 1996), and sometimes more mildly, such as failing to acknowledge the source of instructional materials. While the intricacies of what constitutes plagiarism can be complex, vague, and sometimes disputable—for instance, to what extent does fair use apply in an educational setting?—it is our responsibility as instructors to be knowledgeable about the complexities of plagiarism and to hold ourselves to the highest standards. If we expect our students to present plagiarism-free work, then we as teachers must be exemplar models.

### STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING PLAGIARISM

The strategies presented in this article do not comprise a surefire formula for plagiarism prevention, and it is unlikely that any one strategy will be the answer on its own; rather it is several strategies used together that can have a positive impact (Carroll 2002).

#### No quick fix

Writing skills do not develop overnight. We might like to believe that we can take care of the problem in a single workshop or first-year writing course, but realistically, plagiarism prevention and academic writing skills should be addressed at all

levels of a student's career (Carroll 2002). Encouragingly, a deliberate effort over a period of time can have a positive effect. The School of Engineering at the University of South Australia, in cooperation with the university's learning advisors, held weekly workshops for NNEs on topics such as citations, avoiding plagiarism, and selecting and using sources. In three years, plagiarism among NNEs dropped from 50 percent to below 5 percent (Duff, Rogers, and Harris 2006). If your institution cannot implement such support programs, you can cover relevant topics in class or organize additional seminars or workshops.

#### Raise awareness

The first step is to make sure students understand plagiarism and what acts constitute it; although it is often noted that it is difficult to give a perfect, all-encompassing definition of plagiarism (Biggs and Tang 2007; Schmitt 2005), a definition (even an imperfect one) is a starting point.

Below is an example taken from Harris (2001, 25):

Plagiarism is using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to the other person. When you use someone else's words, you must put quotation marks around them and give the writer or speaker credit by revealing the source in a citation. Even if you revise or paraphrase the words of someone else or just use that person's ideas, you still must give the author credit in a note. Not giving due credit to the creator of an idea or writing is very much like lying.

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## Writing with sources is a complex skill to master even in one's own language.

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Let students know that even unintentional acts of plagiarism are usually considered plagiarism, and it can be extremely difficult to prove that any act of unintentional plagiarism was in fact unintentional.

Following a definition, a quiz can help students understand what specific acts constitute plagiarism (see Figure 1 for a sample plagiarism quiz).

### Teach students to write with sources

While integrating sources into NNEs' writing should be delayed (ideally, they should first focus on basic reading and writing skills), eventually all university students must learn to write with sources. However, writing with sources is a complex skill to master even in one's own language. Blum, writing about native English speakers, says, "Proper citation

practices are difficult skills to acquire; they can be learned only through slow, careful teaching. Students regularly make mistakes about how to cite without any intention of breaking rules" (Blum 2009, 13). We can understand, then, that with all the challenges that NNEs face, developing proper academic referencing skills requires a concentrated effort (on the part of the teacher and of the student) and time. To get to the stage of correct academic writing, students will need a lot of practice and feedback (Carroll 2002; Schmitt 2005) with note-taking, paraphrasing, and summarizing, and with proper citation techniques.

### The "why" of citation

Before students learn to write with sources, they first need to understand why they are expected to cite; otherwise, they might see it as time-consuming and unnecessary.

Is it plagiarism?	
_____	1. A student takes only one sentence from a website and puts it in an essay without acknowledging the source.
_____	2. A student uses a paper written and submitted in one course to fulfill the requirements of an assignment for another course.
_____	3. A student copies his friend's essay and submits it as his own.
_____	4. A student buys an essay from a paper mill and submits it as her own.
_____	5. A student fails to put quotation marks around a direct quote.
_____	6. A student takes a sample essay from a textbook but rewrites the introduction and conclusion and submits the essay as his own.
_____	7. A student makes up references (or an entire bibliography) that she did not consult in her research.
_____	8. A researcher (student or otherwise) invents data.
_____	9. A researcher (student or otherwise) changes the data from his research (usually to make it turn out as he hoped it would).
_____	10. A student paraphrases (putting the words and ideas of another author into her own words) but does not acknowledge the original source.

Answer to above quiz: All items are examples of plagiarism.

Figure 1. Sample plagiarism quiz

This is especially true if they are from a culture with different demands. Students should understand that academic writing is a conversation, and when you write your ideas and support or refute them with the work of others, you are a part of that conversation. When you copy the work of others, you are not a part of the conversation; you are the copier of other conversations. Contextualizing a paper shows that the writer has read extensively, is knowledgeable about the topic, and is a part of the conversation (Harris 2015).

### Teaching note-taking skills

One cause of plagiarism is careless note-taking, leading students to confuse the writing of others with their own. The best way to deal with this is to help students learn careful note-taking skills (Harris 2001).

- Harris (2001) recommends giving students a labeling technique where all copied text is put in quotation marks with relevant source information, such as author, publication date, and page number. Then all paraphrases can be marked with a P, summaries can be indicated with an S, and the student's ideas can be indicated with a label such as "Mine."
- Lipson (2008) suggests starting all quotations with a Q and ending them with a Q (along with recording the proper information for each source) or highlighting copied text or putting it in a different font.
- Evering and Moorman (2012) recommend a two-column strategy whereby students first write their thesis statement and main ideas in the left column. Students then

search the Internet for relevant sources to support their ideas, which they paste into the right-hand column. Students then write their essays, using their original ideas and supporting evidence.

- Teachers can encourage students to keep copies of the articles and book pages as they read and write so that they can recheck all cited material before submitting an assignment.
- Teachers can require students to write a reference list as they take notes.

### TEACHING PARAPHRASING

#### The "why" of paraphrasing

Students need to understand that paraphrasing shows that the writer has clearly understood the ideas in other texts and is acknowledging the sources. Additionally, paraphrasing allows the writer to integrate others' ideas into his or her text in a manner that is often smoother than direct quotation.

#### Give criteria for a paraphrase

- A paraphrase does not differ in meaning from the original.
- A paraphrase uses the writer's own words.
- A paraphrase cites the original source.
- A paraphrase is nearly the same length as the original.

#### Introduce paraphrasing through reading

As a first step to helping students understand paraphrasing, start with reading. For example, in the following exercise, students read a text (which can be very

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short) and then receive a list of sentences—some that paraphrase the information from the reading and some that do not. They will start to see that paraphrasing is about understanding ideas from a reading and seeing how those ideas can be expressed in different words.

### Example exercise for understanding paraphrasing

Step 1: Read the paragraph below.

I have never understood why people enjoy camping. From the beginning of time, humans have worked hard to build and maintain livable shelter, but nowadays, for recreation, many people exchange the comfort of their homes for time in nature. I have been camping twice and was miserable on both occasions. It took hours to cook a simple meal. Our food was sprinkled with dirt and was cold when we did finally eat. There were no shower facilities. We had no way to get clean or even brush our teeth. Sleeping was difficult and uncomfortable. We slept with insects, and rocks were used as pillows. Scary wildlife lurked nearby. All this was for the purpose of relaxation. No thanks. I'll take a nice clean hotel room in the city over a flimsy tent any day.

Step 2: Check the sentences that show what the author would say about camping. Explain your answers.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Camping is a popular activity enjoyed by most people.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Camping is not a good way to relax.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Expert campers should help novice campers.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Camping means giving up many comforts.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ Camping is especially popular during summer vacation.

(Idea from Morgan and Douglas 2016, 58)

### Give examples of acceptable and unacceptable paraphrases

Note that the following texts attributed to Jimalee Sowell are used here as examples and have not been published elsewhere.

#### **Original**

The most eagerly anticipated day in the life of an American teenager is the sixteenth birthday. —Jimalee Sowell, 2018

#### **Acceptable paraphrase**

Sowell (2018) claims that the sixteenth birthday is the day the American teenager looks forward to the most.

#### **Unacceptable paraphrase**

A special day that all Americans care a lot about is the day teenagers turn sixteen (Sowell 2018).

(This paraphrase is not acceptable because it is different in meaning from the original.)

#### **Unacceptable paraphrase**

The most anticipated occasion in the life of an American teen is the sixteenth birthday (Sowell 2018).

(This paraphrase is not acceptable because it is too close in structure and word choice to the original.)

### Give students text to practice paraphrasing

After giving examples of acceptable and unacceptable paraphrasing, give students text to practice paraphrasing. Students can then work together through a peer-review process to decide whether the texts have been adequately paraphrased (Carroll 2002).

#### **The tell-a-friend method**

Dollahite and Haun (2012) recommend the “tell-a-friend” method whereby students read a sentence or passage and then cover it.

They think about how they would explain to a friend what they read, then write a paraphrase of the original without looking at it. Once the paraphrase is complete, students check their paraphrase against the original to see if they have maintained the meaning of the original without using words, phrases, or structures that too closely mimic the original. Carroll (2002) recommends that after reading a text, students literally tell their paraphrase to a classmate, who writes it down. Together, students compare the paraphrase to the original and make any necessary changes.

## SUMMARY WRITING

### The “why” of summarizing

Students need to understand that a summary gives the main point of an entire piece of writing (often an article or book) or a section of a longer piece of writing, such as a chapter. Therefore, unlike a paraphrase, a summary is much shorter than the original. Summary writing is sometimes used as an academic exercise to demonstrate comprehension of a text and when used for that purpose is often about a paragraph in length. However, for the purpose of integrating sources into their writing, students need to be introduced to and practice writing one-sentence summaries.

### Give criteria for a good one-sentence summary

- A good summary credits the original source.

- A good summary does not copy language from the original text but paraphrases it.
- A good summary includes only the main idea.
- A good summary does not include the writer’s own ideas or opinions.

### Start with paragraphs

To ease students into one-sentence summaries, start by having them summarize paragraphs, as in the example shown in Figure 2, “The Importance of Being on Time.” Make sure the paragraphs you use include a title, the name of the author, and a date of publication. You can use the students’ own paragraphs as texts for practicing one-sentence summaries.

### One possible one-sentence summary

According to Sowell (2018), punctuality is an important aspect of making a favorable impression.

### Running dictation for summary writing

Classic running dictation typically makes use of sentences or phrases that students memorize and then dictate, but running dictation can also be a good activity for practicing summary writing. Place paragraphs on the walls outside the classroom—one paragraph per student. Put students into groups. Each group makes a line. The first student in each line becomes the first reader. The first reader goes outside, reads a text, and then returns to the second student

**The Importance of Being on Time**  
by Jimalee Sowell, 2018

If you want to make a good impression, be on time. Of course, we all have instances when circumstances beyond our control might cause us to be late. Sometimes traffic really is unexpectedly bad. You might have an unexpected accident such as spilling coffee on your shirt or breaking the key in the door as you are about to leave for work. But on most occasions, tardiness is preventable. Occasional lateness can be forgivable, but habitual lateness sends a powerful message. People who are perpetually late are saying that their time is more important than the time of the people left waiting. Give yourself even more time than you think you need to reach a destination. Arriving on time or even early does as much for your reputation in a positive way as being late does for your reputation in a negative way.

Figure 2. Sample passage

in line, who is the first writer. The first reader dictates a summarized (one-sentence) version of the text to the writer, who writes it down. The first reader goes to the end of the line. The first writer then becomes the second reader and goes to the hallway to read the next text and returns to dictate a summary to the next person in line. The process is repeated until each student has had the chance to be both the reader and the writer. When all students have had a turn, the original texts are brought into the classroom, and together students compare the original texts with the summaries, making any necessary changes.

### **Show how a one-sentence summary can be integrated into a text**

A paragraph such as the following illustrates to students how to integrate a one-sentence summary into a text:

Writing is a skill that can take many years of applied diligence to develop. Most people believe they need a teacher to learn how to write well. However, in *Writing Without Teachers*, Peter Elbow (1998) insists that writing is a skill that can be developed without the aid of an instructor. *Writing Without Teachers* offers an effective method for developing your writing skills and abilities on your own.

## **USING DIRECT QUOTES**

### **The “why” of using direct quotes**

Students should understand that while quotations can be used to incorporate evidence from sources, paraphrasing and summarizing

are much more common in academic writing. Quotations should be used sparingly. In academic writing, quotations should be used when a paraphrase would somehow not do justice to the meaning, message, or style of the original quote. However, this could be a difficult concept for NNEs who might have trouble distinguishing between what should be paraphrased and what should be cited with direct quotes, believing that the language of a published text is always superior to what they might paraphrase. NNEs might also have a preference for incorporating direct quotations since that is technically easier than paraphrasing or summarizing. It is, therefore, a good idea to introduce NNEs to paraphrasing and summarizing before introducing direct quotation.

### **Give criteria for using quotations**

- Quoted language is put in quotation marks (“ ”).
- Quoted words must be reproduced exactly as they were in the original source.
- Quoted language must be followed by the author, publication date, and page number.

### **Give examples of acceptable and unacceptable use of direct quotes**

#### **Original**

Sixteen is the legal driving age in America in many states, and many teens rush down to the Department of Motor Vehicles on their

English language teachers have at their disposal a number of instructional methodologies. However, it is important that English teachers carefully consider their teaching context before choosing a particular methodology or certain techniques from a methodology. As Scrivener says, “The right methodology is the right methodology for a context. It isn’t a universal answer” (Scrivener 2011, 121). What might be an effective method in one context might not work in another. Teachers need to carefully consider such factors as their learners’ past educational experiences, access to resources, class size, and culturally appropriate topics before making choices regarding methodologies or techniques.

**Figure 3. Passage incorporating direct quotation**

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## Another way to raise awareness is to require students to bring to class samples of paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting that they come across in their own reading.

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sixteenth birthday to take the driving test to become a licensed driver. —Jimalee Sowell, 2018, page 22

### **Acceptable use of quotations**

According to Sowell, “Sixteen is the legal driving age in America in many states, and many teens rush down to the Department of Motor Vehicles on their sixteenth birthday to take the driving test to become a licensed driver” (Sowell 2018, 22).

### **Unacceptable use of quotations**

According to Sowell, “Sixteen is the legal driving age in America in many states, and many teens rush down to the Department of Motor Vehicles to take the driving test to become a licensed driver” (Sowell 2018, 22).

(This quotation is unacceptable because it has omitted the phrase “on their sixteenth birthday” without the use of an ellipsis.)

### **Show how a direct quotation can be interwoven into a text**

The passage in Figure 3 shows how a direct quotation can be incorporated effectively into a text.

## **BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER**

Once students have had practice with paraphrases, summaries, and direct quotations, give them whole pieces of writing to analyze. For this exercise, there should be some mistakes in source integration. Students should work to determine whether sources have been integrated appropriately, and in instances where there are mistakes, they should provide suggestions for correction.

Another way to raise awareness is to require students to bring to class samples of

paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting that they come across in their own reading. Have students work to analyze the writers’ uses of source integration in their samples. You can ask a number of questions (depending on your students’ level of experience), such as why the writers integrated their sources as they did and whether the integration is effective. If direct quotation has been used, ask why the writer used direct quotation. Did the writer need a direct quotation, or would a paraphrase have been a better choice? You might even probe further, asking students to determine whether the writer used an adequate number of sources and whether the writer has balanced source integration with his or her own writing.

## **OTHER STRATEGIES**

### **Give specific instructions**

When students are unsure of what is expected of them, they often have less confidence about how to proceed or even what the end goal is; as a result, they might be tempted to borrow from other texts or self-plagiarize by using previous assignments (Carroll 2002; Harris 2015). Harris (2001) recommends being very specific about assignment requirements, getting to the details such as, “The paper must make use of two Internet sources, two printed book sources, two printed journal sources, one personal interview, and one personally conducted survey” (Harris 2001, 49).

### **Keep your course fresh**

Students naturally look for the best ways to make it through a course, and part of their strategizing is sharing information about the course with one another. It is important, therefore, to make slight changes to your course with different materials and

assignments. This is not to say that a course need be completely revamped every semester or year (which could be overwhelming), but the content and/or assignments should be changed enough so that students cannot easily share pertinent information from previous semesters (Carroll 2002; Davis, Drinan, and Gallant 2009; Glenn and Goldthwaite 2014). For example, if you are using the same textbook for your course over a period of time, each semester you can change the questions used on the midterm and final exam. If your final exam always has an essay-writing component, change the prompts. If you are teaching students to write a response to a text, choose different articles as the response-writing source. Slight alterations that are not too difficult to implement can be effective in the prevention of copying.

**Consider assignments that cannot easily be copied**

You can create assignments that make plagiarism more difficult—if not impossible. Assigning essay topics that are common and easily accessible makes it easier for students to share essays or to find ready-made essays online. Slightly altering common topics can make plagiarism more difficult (Carroll 2002; Glenn and Goldthwaite 2014). For example, instead of using the topic of “Pollution,” you could use “Pollution in Dhaka over the past five years.” Additionally, assignments that are personalized are more difficult to plagiarize (Davis, Drinan, and Gallant 2009; Glenn

and Goldthwaite 2014). Having a student write a paragraph about his or her family and submitting a family picture along with the written work is an assignment that would be nearly impossible to plagiarize.

However, using less-than-common topics or personalized ones may not always be possible; for instance, you might be required to strictly adhere to certain topics due to curriculum restrictions, or you might be helping students learn to write for a standardized exam that often focuses on certain common topics. And as Karon (2012) points out, students at graduate and professional levels need to have the skills to write about any topic without plagiarizing. Therefore, restricting assignment topics might be a strategy better suited to lower-level students.

**Have students submit evidence of their writing process**

Students are less likely to plagiarize when they are required to submit their work as it develops (Carroll 2002; Davis, Drinan, and Gallant 2009; Harris 2015). Having students submit notes, prewriting exercises, and drafts not only cuts down on the temptation to plagiarize but also helps students learn to write (Harris 2015). Arguably, some students plagiarize because they find writing daunting and have never developed a composition process. When students get feedback on their writing as it progresses (from an instructor and/or from their peers), they are more

<b>Plagiarism Statement</b>	
I certify that no part of this essay was plagiarized. All the sentences are my own sentences, and any information or data borrowed from a source was put in my own words, and proper credit has been given to the source.	
Sign your name	Date
Tutor Name	Tutor Signature

**Figure 4. Sample statement of originality** (Kim 2012, 47)

likely to develop a writing process that will allow them to become independent writers. Additionally, having checkpoints can help students better manage their time and possibly prevent them from falling into the temptation to plagiarize because of a time crunch (Carroll 2002; Harris 2015; Lehman 2010). Giving credit in the assessment for both the process and the product can help reduce temptations to plagiarize (Crusan 2010; Harris 2015).

#### **Help students to become aware of other useful resources**

Most students are unlikely to tend to the details of proper methods of writing with resources until they need to do so (Carroll 2002) and will need to refer to guidelines for proper formatting as they write or before they submit an assignment. Make sure that students have sources (print or online) they can refer to and that they know what resources are available to them at your institution, such as a Writing Center, instructional sessions on writing with sources, and handouts (Carroll 2002). In countries where such reference books are hard to obtain, a list of online resources is useful. In contexts where both books and online resources are difficult to access, instructors themselves can create a booklet or handouts. (See the Appendix for print and online resources for writing with sources.)

#### **Require a signed statement of originality**

Many institutions require that students submit a signed statement of originality with their assignments. Of course, such statements cannot guarantee that students always act in good faith, but they do give students occasion to pause and reflect on whether they have done their best to complete plagiarism-free work before submitting an assignment. Figure 4 shows a sample statement of originality from Kim (2012, 47).

### **A TEMPERED APPROACH TO INITIAL OFFENCES**

Although we want students to understand that plagiarism can have serious consequences,

we should react to initial acts of plagiarism by NNEs with a tempered approach (Click 2012; Glenn and Goldthwaite 2014; Pecorari 2001; Reid 1993). This does not mean to tell students that we will be lenient regarding plagiarism. To ignore acts of plagiarism would be negligent, but we must take into account our students' previous educational backgrounds. Rather than being overly punitive for initial offences, we might use them as opportunities for counseling and further instruction (Pecorari 2001). That is, for first-year or newly arrived students, we should offer a yellow-light approach to initial offences rather than failing a student or sending the student to a disciplinary committee. This could mean, for example, having a conversation with the student and asking for a rewrite, or asking the student to seek help from the Writing Center while reminding him or her of school policies on plagiarism. Ultimately, students must learn proper academic writing, but "both students and their teachers need policies that permit new practices to be absorbed gradually, like all other new skills, and that allow students a margin of error as they try to hit a new target" (Pecorari 2001, 244).

### **CONCLUSION**

As English language instructors, we must be sensitive to the fact that our students often come from backgrounds with different ideas of textual borrowing and rhetorical traditions—that much of the plagiarism committed by these students is a result of their previous experiences and educational backgrounds rather than an attempt to deceive. We must be aware of the numerous challenges in learning to write successfully in the Western tradition, and it is our responsibility to provide our students with the support necessary to help them become successful academic writers, which, in part, means learning to write without plagiarizing.

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# APPENDIX

## Useful Resources on Writing with Sources for Students and Teachers

### 1. Print sources on proper referencing and avoiding plagiarism

Williams, Anneli. *Research: Improve Your Reading and Referencing Skills*. London: HarperCollins, 2013.

A user-friendly reference guide for writing with sources.

Munger, David, and Shireen Campbell. *What Every Student Should Know about Researching Online*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2012.

Informative guide detailing the ins and outs of online research.

Menager, Rosemarie, and Lyn Paulos. *Quick Coach Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism*. Boston: Wadsworth, 2011.

Simple guide that delivers key concepts and techniques for writing with sources.

Harris, Robert A. *Using Sources Effectively: Strengthening Your Writing and Avoiding Plagiarism*. 5th ed. New York: Routledge, 2017.

Comprehensive guide for writing with sources.

### 2. Advice, strategies, and activities for helping students write with sources

Benucci, Heather. "Using Evidence in Academic Writing: Avoiding Plagiarism." Washington, DC: Office of English Language Programs, U.S. Department of State, n.d. [https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource\\_files/using\\_evidence\\_in\\_academic\\_writing.pdf](https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/using_evidence_in_academic_writing.pdf)

### 3. Online sources with tips and strategies for avoiding plagiarism

<http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/centers/writing/style/avoiding-plagiarism>

<http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/pages/plagiarism/>

<http://www.plagiarism.org/>

### 4. Online sites that help create citations

<http://www.easybib.com>

<http://www.citationmachine.net>

### 5. Online style guide

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

## 6. Print sources on plagiarism for teachers

Carroll, Jude. *A Handbook for Deterring Plagiarism in Higher Education*. 2nd ed. Oxford, UK: Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development, Oxford Brookes University, 2013.

A resource for developing effective strategies for prevention of plagiarism in higher education; it cites research that explains the reasons and methods behind plagiarism in higher education.

Harris, Robert. *The Plagiarism Handbook: Strategies for Preventing, Detecting, and Dealing with Plagiarism*. Los Angeles: Pyczak Publishing, 2001.

A straightforward resource with many practical strategies and techniques for preventing plagiarism.

Spack, Ruth. *Guidelines: A Cross-Cultural Reading / Writing Text*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

A useful textbook for helping students gradually develop the skills of reading critically, structuring writing, and integrating sources. Includes a handbook on writing with sources.

Dollahite, Nancy E., and Julie Haun. *Sourcework: Academic Writing from Sources*. 2nd ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2012.

A handy resource with numerous ideas and activities (including readings) that can be used in class to help develop academic writing skills in higher education.

Gallant, Tricia B. *Academic Integrity in the Twenty-First Century: A Teaching and Learning Imperative*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008.

An approach to the topic of academic integrity with a focus on enhancing learning rather than implementing punishment.

## 7. Tips for plagiarism prevention

Council of Writing Program Administrators. "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices." Council of Writing Program Administrators, January 2003. <http://wpacouncil.org/files/WPAplagiarism.pdf>

Ehrlich, Heyward. "Plagiarism and Anti-Plagiarism." 5th ed. Newark, NJ: Rutgers University, 2017. <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~ehrich/plagiarism598.html>