



What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without acknowledging the person who created them. Plagiarism is considered unlawful, whether you do it deliberately or thoughtlessly. And it is not specific to English class—students are held accountable for plagiarism in all classes and subject matter.

Plagiarism may be as blatant as submitting someone else's writing as your own. This is most often seen when you “copy” a paragraph, a sentence, a piece of information from a website and “paste” it into your paper or document without citing your source. It also includes papers that are written by someone else for you; the writing is not your own, yet you are presenting it as yours. Letting a teacher think you did work that you actually didn't do is cheating. A more subtle plagiarism is to let a reader think that certain words, phrases, or ideas are your own when they, in fact, belong to someone else you failed to acknowledge. Paraphrases and summaries, individual phrases or words, as well as opinions and ideas can be plagiarized. Changing a few words or changing singulars to plurals does not rule out plagiarism. Even presenting common knowledge (meaning information found in 100 or more sources) in someone else's words, without credit, is plagiarism. It is hard work to make your words your own, but well worth the effort!

Consequences for Plagiarism:

1st offense:

- Conference held between teacher and student—student will be provided proof of plagiarism.
- A grade of zero or half credit with a newly written paper on a different topic is given. The opportunity for a newly written paper is at teacher's discretion and is not guaranteed.
- Detention issued
- Documentation of incident in RenWeb
- Parent(s) informed of the reason for the grade received and the detention

2nd offense* (or more):

- Conference between teacher, student, and administrator—student will be provided proof of plagiarism
- A grade of zero is given.
- Further disciplinary action is discussed and, if needed, implemented. If incident occurs in an AP or honors level class, disciplinary action may include dismissal from that upper level course. This is at the discretion of the teacher and/or administrator.
- Documentation of incident in RenWeb. Documentation of incident placed in student's permanent file if deemed necessary. This is at the discretion of the administrator.
- Parents are informed of the grade received and of other disciplinary action.



It may seem these consequences are harsh. However, plagiarism—if not addressed at this level of education— can lead to serious academic, financial, and legal ramifications. It is considered a Civil Wrong; while not typically a criminal offense (depending on what is plagiarized), it is a breach of ethics, an act against another person or a person’s property. This Civil Wrong has serious consequences. People have been stripped of doctoral, masters, and bachelors degrees; lawsuits have been filed; jobs have been lost; professional and personal reputations destroyed. We have these safeguards in place to help students learn now the importance of academic integrity. We also have the opportunity to reinforce to students the value of critical thinking, hard work, and personal integrity. And, rest assured, teachers work hard to reinforce these ideas and to help students avoid plagiarism at each stage of the learning and writing process.

**The 2nd offense does not have to be in the same class or with the same teacher as the 1st offense. The LC Plagiarism Policy transcends individual classrooms.*