

## Nancy (Annie) Heckel

### Instructional Design Portfolio, Sample Lesson

The lesson below is a lesson on plagiarism and citation that I created for use in English department course at American Public University/American Military University. All material is my own, except as noted within the lesson (citations were included not just because one needs citations, but also to model good citation practices to students). It has been used in at least three courses in various forms; this version is the newest, and takes advantage of tools available in the Lessons feature of Sakai 11.

The landing page for the lesson, showing the basic table of contents:

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Plagiarism and Citation

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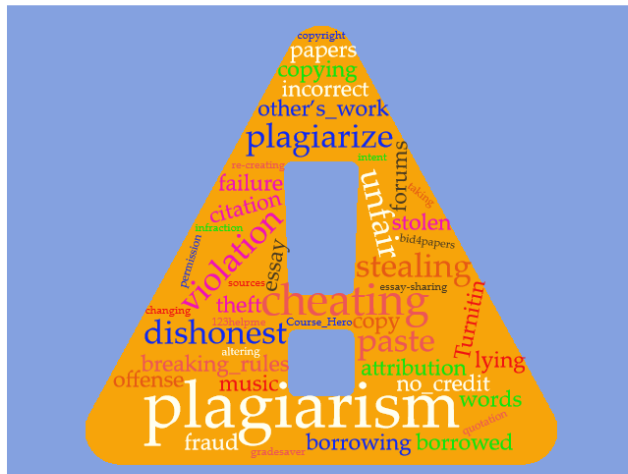


The first page of the lesson; all elements, including the image, are my own work. The quiz question on each page is required. This first page introduces the basics of academic honesty and its place at the university, referencing the student handbook and the university's academic honesty rules:

## APU/AMU and Academic Honesty

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### Academic Honesty at the University

The University is committed to strong academic values, and one of those values is academic honesty. "Academic honesty" means that students do their best to ensure that the work they submit for grading is the production of their own effort, and represents **their own** abilities and knowledge. It means that students agree to obey restrictions put on assignments that may ban working in groups on particular assignments, or receiving help that results in another person completing some or all of the student's required academic work. It also means that students agree to **not provide this kind of help** to other students, either at our institution or another, or help other students at our institution or another to circumvent academic honesty regulations.

To help drive home the importance of academic honesty, APUS has an official [APUS Student and Faculty Honor Code](#):

### Honor Code

Accept responsibility for my actions at all times.  
Practice and promote academic integrity at all times.  
Uphold unconditionally the University's policy of Academic integrity and accept the consequences of Academic dishonesty.  
Show consideration for and respect the dignity of all persons.

### Honor Pledge

As a member of the American Public University System learning community, I understand and will abide by the University's policy of academic integrity, as described in the Student Handbook and the University catalog. Furthermore, I agree to the provisions of the APUS Honor Code, and I will not engage in, condone, or assist others in any act of dishonesty or plagiarism. I understand that I will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or academic sanctions if I commit any violations of the University's academic integrity policies. Finally, I understand that any violation is subject to and may include immediate suspension or expulsion. (APUS, "Mission and Honor Code Statements")

By enrolling at the University, you have agreed to this Honor Code and Pledge, and are held to the related regulations.

★

The APUS Student and Faculty Honor Code requires APUS students and faculty to practice which of the following 2 behaviors?

1. Accepting responsibility for one's actions
2. Promoting academic integrity
3. Understanding the sometimes people plagiarize without meaning to
4. Serving on the University Academic Honesty board

- ☐ 1 and 4  
☐ 3 and 4  
☐ 1 and 2  
☐ None of the above

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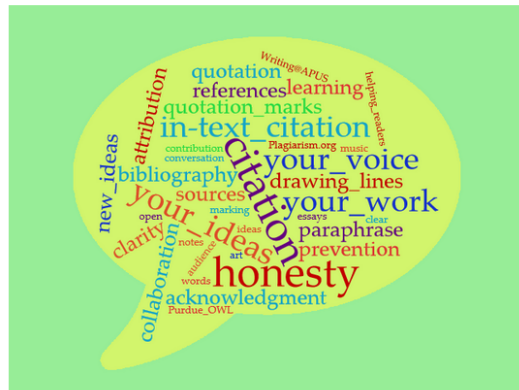
The third page of the lesson; the word-cloud graphic is my own work, and the Langston Hughes portrait by Winhold Reiss:

## Good Citation Practices

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There are some areas about which you should be especially careful in this class, and those are correct use and marking of quotations, and how to paraphrase without plagiarizing. The next section of the lesson goes over these.

### Correct Use and Marking of Quotations

A quotation is defined as any use of **exact, distinctive wording** from a source. **Not marking quotations clearly as quotations is plagiarism, even if you include a citation.** Any time that you use **distinctive wording** from a source, you need to mark that passage as a quotation.

### Determining if a Passage Contains Distinctive Wording

To determine if a passage uses distinctive wording, look at the passage and ask these questions:

1. Does it use words that seem to be deliberately chosen, and could it be structured or phrased completely differently and still communicate the same basic idea?
2. Is the wording immediately obvious or difficult to phrase any other way?

If the passage best matches #1, then it is **distinctive wording and must be formatted as a quotation**. If the passage best matches #2, it is not distinctive wording, and does not need to be formatted as a quotation. Note that this second case usually occurs in relation to specific kinds of information such as dates or the basic description of an event. This kind of information is nearly impossible to phrase distinctively, and it is not only possible but likely that multiple authors will communicate



the information in the same way.

★

True or false: It is all right not to put quotation marks around an exact, distinctive passage copy-pasted from a source, as long as you include a citation.

- ☐ True  
☐ False

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A good example of non-distinctive phrasing is the following: "James Langston Hughes was born February 1, 1902, in Joplin, Missouri." Although this was copy-pasted straight from Poets.org, the information is very basic, and difficult to present any other way without sounding awkward or contrived. It is not, therefore, distinctive.



c. 1925 portrait of Hughes by Winhold Reiss

Contrast this with: "Born on February 1, 1902, in Joplin, Missouri, Langston Hughes had an unsettled childhood during which his parents divorced, and he raised in both his grandmother's and later his mother and stepfather's households." The information this second sentence includes is more in-depth and not information that would automatically be contained in a sentence giving basic information about a birth date. The passage also contains descriptive words such as "unsettled" that assign a particular character to Hughes' childhood, a word that the writer chose to include in order to give the passage a particular tone and further meaning. While the first, basic sentence would not be considered distinctive phrasing and would not need to be formatted as a quotation, the second would be considered distinctive phrasing, and would need to be formatted as a quotation if you were to use it.

★

Which of the following does not need to be marked as quotation even if you write the passage the same way that a source did?

- ☐ The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.  
☐ The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a brutal dawn raid that killed many US sailors.  
☐ 353 Japanese fighters, bombers, and torpedo planes attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.  
☐ Pearl Harbor was an event which galvanized the American people, and without it, the entire outcome of the war might have been different.

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considered as a possibility for his own work as well. In a 1951 letter to Milton Waldman, Tolkien wrote of his own creative process for the grand mythology that he knew he would never complete, recalling his initial ambitions for the project: "But once upon a time (my crest has long since fallen) I had a mind to make a body of more or less connected legend . . . I would draw some of the great tales in fullness, and leave many only sketched in the scheme, and sketched. The cycles should be linked to a majestic whole, and yet leave scope for other minds and hands, wielding plain and music and drama . . ." ([Letters 145].

## Formatting Quotations

**Long quotation format:** the following passage is from Poets.org's biography of the Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes (note that all citations here are in MLA format). Here it is in correct **long quotation format**, which is the format you should use for quotations that would take up more than 4 lines in a paragraph:

Hughes, who claimed Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Carl Sandburg, and Walt Whitman as his primary influences, is particularly known for his insightful, colorful portrayals of black life in America from the twenties through the sixties. He wrote novels, short stories and plays, as well as poetry, and is also known for his engagement with the world of jazz and the influence it had on his writing, as in "Montage of a Dream Deferred." His life and work were enormously important in shaping the artistic contributions of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. ("Langston Hughes")

Long quotation format:

1. Is offset from the main text of the paragraph by **indenting 1 inch from the left edge** of the paragraph.
2. It does not require use of quotation marks, as the indentation is enough to indicate the quotation
3. **It does require the use of a citation**(in this case, the parenthetical citation is formatted for a work without a known author, and uses a short title).

The parenthetical citation should be placed *after* the period at the end of the quotation (this is different from short, in-paragraph quotations).

**Short quotations** that will take up less than 4 lines in a paragraph are the sort of quotations that you will use the most often, and their format is slightly different. They should be completely incorporated into your own sentence structure using a signal phrase, and fit grammatically as part of **your own** sentence; don't just drop it in. For instance, if I were to use a small part of the above passage, it might look like the following: Poets.org points out that Hughes' "life and work were enormously important in shaping the artistic contributions of the Harlem Renaissance" ("Langston Hughes"). From this we can see that **short quotation format** contains the following elements:

1. **Quotation marks around the part of the passage that is from the source.** This tells readers very clearly what part is not your words.
2. A **citation**, which in MLA will be present as either a **signal phrase** or a **parenthetical citation** or some combination of the two.
  - **A signal phrase** that works the quotation into the writer's own sentence; in this case "Poets.org points out that Hughes'" is the signal phrase.
  - **parenthetical citation that allows the reader to easily connect the passage with one of the sources in the works cited list,**
3. When there is a parenthetical citation, it should go *outside* of the quotation marks, but before the period that ends the sentence.

**Not marking quotations clearly as quotations is plagiarism, even if you include a citation.** To be safe, use these techniques whenever you use **distinctive wording** from a source, even if the *information* given in the passage is common knowledge.

\*

Ways of correctly formatting quotations include:

- ☐ Putting the quotation in italicized font
- ☐ Putting quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quoted passage
- ☐ Putting parentheses around the quoted passage
- ☐ Putting the quoted words in their own, new paragraph

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Page five of the lesson; this one I haven't yet found an appropriate graphic for. Not surprisingly, it's hard to find a good image for "paraphrase."

### Paraphrasing

Another area where plagiarism commonly occurs is in paraphrasing. Paraphrasing is when you take a passage from a source, and present the exact information in that passage in your own phrasing. The difficulty arises in trying to make that phrasing entirely your own, without reproducing any distinctive phrasing, and without even reproducing the exact order of ideas in the sentence structure. **Reproducing distinctive phrasing without marking it as a quotation is plagiarism even if you are otherwise paraphrasing the passage.** Learning how to paraphrase properly, therefore is very important.

We'll start with the Poets.org passage used in the section on quotation. Again, here is the original:

Hughes, who claimed Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Carl Sandburg, and Walt Whitman as his primary influences, is particularly known for his insightful, colorful portrayals of black life in America from the twenties through the sixties. He wrote novels, short stories and plays, as well as poetry, and is also known for his engagement with the world of jazz and the influence it had on his writing, as in "Montage of a Dream Deferred." His life and work were enormously important in shaping the artistic contributions of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. ("Langston Hughes")

#### Poor Paraphrase, or "Half Copy"

A poor paraphrase of the first sentence might look like this:

Poets.org explains that Hughes claimed Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Carl Sandburg, and Walt Whitman as major influences, and is well-known for his portrayals of black life in America from the twenties through the sixties, which were colorful and insightful ("Langston Hughes").

Even though this is not exactly the same as the original, it is still tied very closely to the wording and structure of the original. In terms of wording, the order of ideas is almost exactly the same (first discussing influences, then discussing Hughes' own work) and it makes use of distinctive word choices such as "influences," "portrayals," "colorful," and "insightful."

#### A Little Better, but Still Not There

Here is a second attempt at paraphrasing that still has problems:

Poets.org notes that from the twenties through the sixties, Hughes was known for portraying black life in America in insightful and colorful ways, building on the work of his influences, who included Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Carl Sandburg, and Walt Whitman" ("Langston Hughes").

This paraphrase is good in terms of how it re-orders the ideas—first it references Hughes' main time span and describes his work, and then references the other poets that were important to him—but it still uses the distinctive wording that was repeated in the first poor paraphrase: "influences," "portrayals," "colorful," and "insightful." To paraphrase fully and well, both structure and wording needs to change.

Here is one last attempt that succeeds at changing both wording and the order in which ideas are presented:

Poets.org points out that Langston Hughes was known for astute depictions of the lives of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century black Americans, and was inspired by the work of earlier poets such as Walt Whitman, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, and Carl Sandburg ("Langston Hughes").

This final paraphrase changes up both sentence structure—the ideas are presented in a different order—and word choice. While the same information is communicated and the same ideas come through, the phrasing is entirely different and entirely the writer's own. **Note that the paraphrase must still include citation information**, which is why there is both a signal phrase to introduce the paraphrase (this also helps to show readers very distinctly where the writer's ideas stop and the source's ideas begin) and a parenthetical citation that connects the paraphrase to one of the sources in the works cited list.

Looking back over all these ideas, we can see that a **strong paraphrase must have:**

1. **Completely different wording but without introducing new ideas**; merely changing a few words (known as "half copy") would still be plagiarism
2. **Different ordering of ideas** that still get the *same* ideas across
3. **Clear in-text citations**; at the very least a signal phrase is absolutely necessary to show readers where the writer's ideas stop and the source's ideas begin, but often a parenthetical citation is needed as well

If you find that there are distinctive phrases that are simply too strong and "just right" not to include, put those phrases in quotation marks to make clear that the wording is not yours. **Reproducing distinctive phrasing without marking it as a quotation is plagiarism even if you are otherwise paraphrasing the passage.** Always watch out for those distinctive phrases, and consider constructing all paraphrases without looking at the original in order to help you fully process the ideas and put them in your own words.

★ True or False: Paraphrases do not need to be cited since the wording is your own.

☐ True

☐ False

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★ What strategies do you use to make sure that you're writing strong paraphrases?

Answer:

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The final page of the actual lesson; I couldn't resist the graphic—after all, it *is* the best summary of a human life!—but I'm planning to run it by my instructors to make sure that they're also finding it funny.

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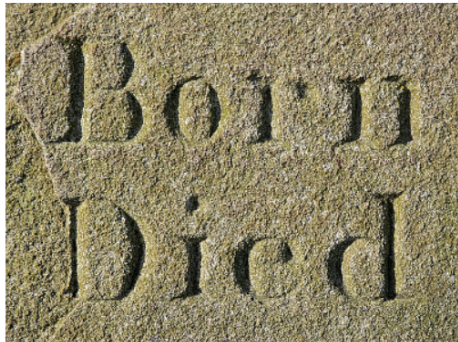
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#### Summaries



A third method of including information from sources is *summary*. Summary is a technique in which the writer presents information from a source, but does so in a much shorter passage, and without including all the details

of the information. Summaries usually only highlight pieces of information that are particularly important to a writer's purpose in that section of their writing. Though summaries condense information from a source, they should follow the same guidelines as paraphrases in regards to distinctive wording.

No matter what technique you are using to include information from a source, it is vitally important that you make sure you are presenting the information as clearly and honestly as possible, giving your readers all the signals necessary to help them separate your ideas and wording from those of your sources, and to make clear what source in the works cited list contains the information. If you are have trouble with or questions about correct formatting of quotations or effective paraphrasing, please contact the instructor.

★



**True or False: A summary that uses exact phrasing from a passage in the original source must mark that passage as a quotation.**

- ☐ True  
☐ False

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The last *actual* page is the Works Cited page, done in MLA format to function as an example for students:

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#### Works Cited



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