

Understanding Plagiarism Workshop Lesson Plan

Goals for students:

To define plagiarism appropriately

To recognize plagiarism

To be able to explain what constitutes appropriate use of others' words and ideas

Introduce topic

- Present goals for workshop
- Explain the agenda of activities for the workshop

Directions for first activity

Pass out a 3 X 5 card to each of the students

Post this prompt on the blackboard or overhead projector:

“I would never think of taking _____ without asking.”

- Have students complete the sentence.
- Have student swap cards as many times as possible in ten seconds. (This relieves students of responsibility for what is on the card when read out; it gets them moving around and involved.) [For fun, I just poll the class to see who had the most exchanges—they usually want to know anyway]
- Call on some students to read out the responses on the cards and record on the blackboard.

Expect that no one will mention “words” or “ideas.” IF someone does, give that response a big hurrah! Point out that only one of six or seven did so; again, you may want to poll the class to see if anyone else holds a card with “words” or “ideas” on it.

When you point out that no one thought that taking words or ideas is wrong, they get an important point.

Lecture

Briefly explain the notion of plagiarism (absolutely limit your lecture to 10 minutes; less is even better).

- Plagiarism is taking another's ideas is taking a very personal possession
- Plagiarism is a failure to create your own ideas and diminishes the plagiarizer's intellect
- Use others' ideas, but give them credit. Most great art, inventions, etc. are built on other people's ideas—that's natural and they should be given credit. Failing to credit is inexcusable since it is a conscious choice.

Exercise 1 (first on handout)

- Have students first make choices alone
- Ask them to get into pairs or trios for 3 minutes to compare answers
- Direct them to figure out exactly what makes 1 and 2 plagiarism and 3 not.

- After they explain their answers, have them read page 2 and “grade” themselves.
- Discuss questions they may have.

Define Plagiarism Activity

Have students write alone. Have students compare their definitions with one or two others (2 minutes max.)

Exercise 2 (page 3)

Direct student to the directions and have them read them; ask for questions about the procedure, answer any and set them on to the task of writing an original paragraph using the resources properly.

- Again, have them get into new trios and compare their paragraphs.
- Have them select the one they think is best.
- Have group read out their selection and
- Explain why they chose it (the explanations should focus on how the resources were used.)

Questions and answers—open forum

If time allows, have students revisit their definitions of plagiarism and revise if necessary.

[You may want to collect their work to read their definitions to check for understanding.]