

# Plagiarism

**Plagiarism** is using information from a source without giving credit to its author. This can include taking words, sentences, ideas, or graphics and using as one's own. Students may not intend to plagiarize, but it is a serious offense that can lead to failing grades, being dropped from a class, or even being expelled from Victoria College. All students need to understand plagiarism and how to properly cite all sources.

*The American Heritage College Dictionary* defines plagiarism: "To use or pass off as one's own work. To appropriate for use as one's own the passages or ideas from another" without giving the proper credit.

## **Common Knowledge:**

This term refers to information commonly shared with the audience of the paper. This depends on the writer's level of understanding of the topic before beginning research to gain additional information. When a writer shares perspective with the reader, such as writing on a topic about Victoria College or about the city of Victoria, then the writer can use this information without citing.

## **What you Have to Cite:**

- Opinions related to facts
- Direct quotations taken from a print source and used word-for-word
- Paraphrased or summarized information, even though not directly taken word-for-word
- Pictures, graphs, charts, non-recoverable information such as interviews, or audio/video information

When in doubt, cite the source.

## **Avoiding Plagiarism:**

Be very attentive to the details of an assignment:

- ✓ Take notes during research and mark the quote, paraphrase, or summary of the material
- ✓ Keep an accurate list of sources, including all required information for the Works Cited page
- ✓ Keep copies of each source to easily double-check what information comes from each source
- ✓ Credit sources with proper in-text citations, as well as a reference listing in a Works Cited page
- ✓ Signal the reader when using someone else's words:
  - Introduce sources. For example: Austen says, "It is well known..." Use a variety of verbs:

says	evaluates	recommends
addresses	examines	reiterates
analyzes	identifies	reports
contributes	proposes	suggests
defines	questions	thinks

You can also use phrases such as "according to," "based upon," etc.

- ✓ Review the paper and use of documentation carefully.