

Assignments that **Discourage** Plagiarism and **Encourage** Learning

Non-graded, in-class activities (use with 3 Techniques for Summarizing)

- **Summarizing Sprints (10 minutes):** Use this as a warm-up before a lecture. On a screen, project a paragraph or two – in quotations and properly cited – that contains a central concept from the homework reading. Have students individually summarize the key concept during a 5-minute timed writing session. Students then compare their paraphrase with that of a partner's. Tell them to judge it for R.A.P. – Relevancy, Accuracy, and Paraphrase (i.e. in their own words). Ask for 2-3 volunteers to read their paraphrases out loud. If you have projected a complex and big idea, you will be amazed at the variety of responses. Students remember the key content concept, get summarizing practice, and discover where the bar is on synonym substitution. Note: Although this is an informal activity, get students in the habit of including an in-text citation or sourcing language, such as “according to Swales and Feak”.
- **Intellectual Property Partners (10 minutes):** Use this as a review. On a screen, project a list of 5 short-answer questions similar to those that will be on the test. Have students work in pairs, each one answering a different question in a 5-minute timed writing session. Then, have the students swap their answers and paraphrase their partner's answer, including sourcing or attribution language. Share the answers with each other and out loud. Students will remember these 5 key concepts for the test. They will also try extremely hard not to copy exactly any of “the author's” text because he/she is the student sitting next to them.
- **Plagiarists vs. Paraphrasers: (10 minutes):** Use this to reinforce key concepts and ethical principles. Divide into two groups, and let students work in pairs. Hand out 5 different original passages to each of the two groups. Some passages contain instructions that indicate that the writer is to deliberately plagiarize. Others contain instructions that indicate that the writer is to ethically paraphrase. Mix the finished passages up, place on an overhead and ask the students to judge the ethical paraphrase from the plagiarism. Encourage the plagiarists to be good at it and cover their tracks well. Students remember this activity, and learn to better recognize plagiarized text.
- **Citation Analysis (20 minutes):** Select a core article that students must read for the course. On a screen, project a series of “text analysis” questions. What is the structure of the text? What is the thesis? Where are most of the in-text citations – Introduction, Methods, etc? Why are certain sections citation-rich? Does the author use direct quotes? How does the writer use source material – to support or clarify? What are his strategic reasons for choosing and integrating sources? Are the paraphrases long and elegant or short and concise? How many generalizations (with numerous sources referenced on one

point) do you see? Do the in-text citations match the reference list? Is it possible to tell from the reference list what kinds of materials the author used – primary, secondary, online, articles, books, lab notes? What can you conclude about the standard or bar for citations in your field based on an analysis of the article?

Strategies for Successful Take-Home Assignments

- **Scaffolded Assignments** that include completion of 1) Project Plan; 2) Reading List; 3) Outline; 4) Proposal or Introduction; 5) Drafts with Peer Review
- **Precise Topic Assignments** with unique, timely research questions or hypotheses that can't be easily found in the "paper mills"
- **Sequenced Assignments** that culminate in a research paper or essay and are broken down into manageable parts, i.e. 1) Methods & Results; 2) Introduction; 3) Discussion
- **Timely Assignments** that require recent source materials
- **Author's Assignments** that start with author's guidelines, a model journal article and follow the "research article for publication" process
- **Non-sequitur Approach** has students submit their papers with copies of Wikipedia entries on the same topic so they know the instructor is savvy to its use among students

Detailed Writing Assignment Design that Discourages Plagiarism

1. Freewrite in response to a prompt, question, problem, reading
2. Identify a central idea from the freewriting (which you may do 2-3 times)
3. Develop a thesis, hypothesis, research question
4. *Create a writing plan*
5. Search the literature for support
6. Read (and maybe reread) source material
7. *Write a 1- or 2-sentence summary of each source and a 1- or 2-sentence explanation of how/why it will be used in the paper*
8. Generate an outline
9. *Adjust writing plan, if needed*
10. Write a draft of the paper (or if lengthy, write a draft of a section of the paper)
11. Receive feedback on draft (from peers and/or instructor)
12. Revise, integrating appropriate feedback
13. *Write a short reflective piece on the process so far—how is the process going to date, what problems have arisen, how were these addressed, what are the plans for completing the assignment*
14. Continue the process until the draft is ready for proofreading
15. Proofread for grammar, punctuation, and format
16. Turn in portfolio of all preliminary writing, copies of course materials, and final polished draft

Adapted from presenters' personal experiences and *Preventing Plagiarism: Tips and Techniques*. Laura Hennessey DeSena (2007). Urbana, IL: NCTE.