

Name _____

Period _____

Directions: Plagiarism is a very serious offense at the college level and can even result in academic expulsion. Some students, however, are not always aware that they are plagiarizing. Please keep in mind that even when you are citing sources, unless you put the information or words you borrow in direct quotes, even borrowing sentence structure, syntax (word order), or diction (word choice) are considered forms of plagiarism. This worksheet is designed to give you experience with plagiarism. Consider the student sentences below that are borrowing information from a professional work. Determine whether the student has plagiarized or not based on how they use the information in their student paper.

Professional Source: From Stephen King's On Writing

One of the really bad things you can do to your writing is to dress up the vocabulary, looking for long words because you're maybe a little ashamed of your short ones. This is like dressing up a household pet in evening clothes (117).

Student paper: Stephen King advises that students should avoid trying to dress up their vocabulary, looking for longer words because they're ashamed of their short ones. He compares it to dressing up a household pet in evening clothes (117).

Is this plagiarized? Yes No
Why? _____

Student Paper: Stephen King suggests that the novice writer shouldn't be "dressing up a household pet in evening clothes". This analogy is meant to draw focus on students who try to use more sophisticated vocabulary to "dress up" their work rather than focusing on the most concise and direct way to communicate (117). Writers should focus on how to communicate clearly; not how to impress readers with how brilliant they are.

Is this plagiarized? Yes No
Why? _____

Professional Source: From John Steinbeck's, The Grapes of Wrath

Some of the owner men were kind because they hated what they had to do, and some of them were angry because they hated to be cruel, and some of them were cold because they had long ago found that one could not be an owner unless one were cold (276).

Student Paper: Steinbeck shows that the owner men were benevolent, mostly because they hated what they had to accomplish, and a small number of them were indignant because they didn't enjoy being cruel (276).

Is this plagiarized? Yes No
Why? _____

Student paper: Steinbeck illustrates the conflict within the owners who had to mistreat workers to makes their ends meet, but paradoxically, also detested the situation. “Some of the owner men were kind because they hated what they had to do, and some of them were angry because they hated to be cruel, and some of them were cold because they had long ago found that one could not be an owner unless one were cold” (276). This particular section of the novel aptly demonstrates the tension among those in positions of authority and Steinbeck makes sure it show vividly, that these “cruel” characters are not caricatures or stock characters, but complex individuals.

Is this plagiarized? Yes No

Why? _____

Directions: Take the following information from a professional source and put it in your own paragraph. You are writing a paper on why writers should use the active rather than passive tense and are using this information to support your argument. Make sure whether you are quoting or paraphrasing the information, that you cite it correctly. Be aware when you paraphrase not to borrow diction, syntax, or vocabulary without giving credit where it’s due.

Professional Source: Stephen King’s On Writing (122).

Verbs come in two types, active and passive. With an active verb, the subject of the sentence is doing something. With a passive verb, something is being done to the subject of the sentence. The subject is just letting it happen. You should avoid the passive tense (122).
