

Plagiarism Awareness Contract

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Using someone else's ideas or phrasing and representing those ideas or phrasing as our own, either on purpose or through carelessness, is a serious offense known as plagiarism. Plagiarism is literary theft.

"Ideas or phrasing" includes written or spoken material, from whole papers and paragraphs to sentences, or even phrases, but it also includes statistics, lab results, art work, etc. "Someone else" can mean a professional source, such as a published writer or critic in a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or journal; an electronic resource such as material we discover on the World Wide Web; another student at our school or anywhere else; a paper-writing "service" (online or otherwise) which offers to sell written papers for a fee; a tutor; parent, sibling or other family member. Any time you use someone else's work, you must explicitly give him or her credit using standard methods of attribution, either in the body of your work or as a citation which refers to a Works Cited page or bibliography.

At Agoura High School, students are expected to express their ideas in their own words, using the composition skills they have been taught over the years. Students are also, however, encouraged to research the words and ideas of others. If students choose to use those words or ideas in their own writings, they are expected to give credit (in the form of parenthetical documentation and/or bibliographic citation) and thereby avoid the act of plagiarizing. The temptation to plagiarize can be significant, especially with increased access to technological advances such as the internet and other computer-accessed sources of information. The consequences for plagiarizing, however, are not worth the risk.

At Agoura High School, a student caught plagiarizing or cheating in some other way will participate in a parent/administrator conference during which a letter will be placed in his/her cumulative file indicating that a second incident of cheating in any course during the following 365 days will result in a drop fail from the course in which the second incident occurs. In addition, the plagiarized work or test on which the student cheated will be assigned a grade of zero or fail.

Do not:

- Submit anything orally or in writing as representing your own words or ideas, when, in fact, it does not
- Participate in the plagiarizing acts of others
- Lend your work to, or borrow work from, another student

Remember to:

- Provide formal credit for words or ideas taken from outside sources, or any source that is not you
- Provide formal credit for individuals who contribute to your work
- Use quotation marks when using another's exact words
- Always question yourself as to your literary ethics, and ask your teacher if you are in doubt

as to the validity of your work.

- Be proud of the work you have accomplished and the knowledge you have gained, particularly that you have done it on your own

Whether or not a student intends to plagiarize will not be considered as part of the plagiarism discipline process. Agoura students are responsible to give appropriate credit to ideas that belong to others.