



## Help With: Plagiarism

“A writer has only two things to sell: his words and his ideas. If you steal either, it is as bad as stealing any store owner’s product. Unlike other sellers, though, the writer gives you permission to use his product at your will as long as you point out that the stuff originally belonged to him.”

Plagiarism charges have ended professional careers and nearly ruined US Vice President Joe Biden’s. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic crime in most universities and “I didn’t know” is not an accepted excuse. For those who don’t want to plagiarize but want a clearer idea of what to avoid, let’s identify what is and isn’t plagiarism. Let’s use a source in a text as an example:

### **Original text:**

Wines drunk at Greek tables did not always come from Greece itself. The wine snobbery of the time praised the merits of wines from the slopes of Mount Lebanon, from Palestine, Egypt and *Magna Graecia*—Greater Greece, i.e., southern Italy. The ten liters a day drunk by the famous wrestler Milo of Croton was a wine famous in Calabria, where Milo lived; this wine, *Ciro*, is still made.

Text source: Maguelone Toussaint-Samat’s *A History of Food* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), 263. *Penn Library*, [http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/PORT/documentation/paraphrase\\_examples.html](http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/PORT/documentation/paraphrase_examples.html).

### **Plagiarism:**

The ten liters a day drunk by the famous wrestler Milo of Croton was a wine famous in Calabria, where Milo lived; this wine, *Ciro*, is still made.

**Why?** This is plagiarism because the text is a direct copy from the original with no reference.

### **Plagiarism:**

The ten liters a day consumed by a famous wrestler named Milo of Croton was a wine well-known in Calabria, where Milo resided; this wine, *Ciro*, is still manufactured.

**Why?** This is also plagiarism because some words have been changed to make the text look different, but the statement still has the same information and phrasing as the original source.

### **Direct quotation:**

The ancient Greeks recognized excellent wine regardless of its source. As Toussaint-Samat writes, “The wine snobbery of the time extolled the merits of wines from the slopes of Mount Lebanon, from Palestine, Egypt and *Magna Graecia*—Greater Greece, i.e., southern Italy” (263).

This is good because the author has been credited, and the actual words from the source are indicated by quotation marks.

### **Paraphrase Quotation:**

Although the Greeks were particular about their wine, they enjoyed wine from outside Greece and drank wine from many of Greece’s local trading partners, including Palestine, Egypt and southern Italy. One story tells of the famous wrestler Milo of Croton, who consumed ten liters of foreign wine daily (Toussaint-Samat 263).

This is good because the information has been rephrased in the writer’s own words but still cited.