



Copyright



What is Copyright?

When you write a poem or story or even a school paper for your class, you own the copyright to it. Copyrighted material can be a drawing, or other artwork, a story, poem, paper, image, song or video. A copyright protects the created material so no one else can claim the piece as their own idea. You authored the material and you have the ability to decide how the piece can be used. No one else can use what you created without your permission. That means they can't make copies of the material, modify or change it, and certainly not reproduce it for sale.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is taking someone's ideas or words. You may use copyrighted material to do your schoolwork, but if you use an author's ideas you must give the author credit, either in the text or in a footnote. If you use an author's words, you must put the words in quotation marks or other indication of direct quotation. Failure to give credit to the author is plagiarism. If you use an extensive amount of a single work, you must obtain permission. Even if you change a few words from an author, you must still put the entire material in quotation marks, with your changes in square brackets.

What if I ignore the copyright?

It is illegal to use copyrighted material without the owner's permission. If copyright infringement occurs, the owner of the material can have the unauthorized use fined or taken to court.