

Weaving Copyright Information and Plagiarism Prevention into Your Classroom Media Center School Environment

1. Model the behavior you expect from your students. Clearly identify your sources of information in all materials for students.
2. Have a consistent approach used by all teachers in all classes. You might take the initiative to get the program started, but work with your library media specialist and administration to make it a school-wide program.
5. Teach copyright in context—when students are creating and preparing assignments. It doesn't work to have a one-week unit at the beginning of the school year if students won't use the information until much later.
4. Teach about copyright a little bit at a time —print, audio, graphics, Internet, etc.¹
5. Assess students' understanding and have them take ownership by writing a personal statement of responsibility, in their own words, for using work that is not original.²
6. Create quick, easy-to-understand mini-posters that explain what can/not be used legally. (Cite your sources for that information.)
7. Have those "reference posters" strategically placed in conspicuous locations where they will be used—the media center, computer labs, and classrooms.

Preventing Plagiarism

8. Let students know that you are aware of how widespread and easy it is to get plagiarized work from Web sources. Show that you can find the original sources of copied work from the Web.
9. Use non-traditional assignment formats rather than traditional "papers" that students can copy. Everything from "newspapers" to multimedia formats will decrease the likelihood of plagiarized work.
10. Make the preparation of any research/writing assignment a "process" of smaller steps for which students must submit drafts, research notes, etc.

¹ A tip from Lorraine Hart, Media Specialist, Franklin Monroe High School, Pittsburg, OH 45358

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