Department of English

Style Sheet and Working with Sources

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STYLE SHEET

I. General Guidelines

Preliminaries

1. Print your essays, double-spaced, on one side of unlined, white paper, 8 ½ x 11 inches in size. Use a medium-sized font: Times New Roman 12-point is the standard. Double-space all notes, quotations, and bibliography, as well as the text. As a precaution, be sure to keep a printed copy of your paper, and ALWAYS back up your work on a USB key or other storage device. To be really safe, e-mail yourself a copy of your paper.

2. Leave a margin of at least one inch on both sides and on the top and bottom of your paper. If you discover errors after it is too late to print a revise copy, make any corrections above the line, not in the margins.

3. Indent five spaces (or one tab) from the left-hand margin at the beginning of each paragraph. Indent a set-off quotation ten spaces from the left margin.

4. Number each page consecutively in the upper right-hand corner.

Title Page

According to MLA format, your research paper should not have a separate title page. Simply place your name, your professor’s name, the name of the course, and the date, all double spaced, at the top left corner of your paper. Then centre your title on the page, and begin your essay below it. For instance:

Arthur Dent

Professor Beeblebrox

ENG 2135: Science Fiction

9 November, 2011

The Relevance of Trauma Theory to Vogon Poetry

While all poetry is in some degree traumatic to the hearer, Vogon poetry has been known to produce physical injury and even death in those who are unfortunate enough to be subjected to
Titles in the Text

1. Underline or italicize the titles of published books, plays and novels. The same rule applies to plays or novels which are reprinted as part of an anthology. Place in quotation marks the titles of poems (unless they are long poems which would have been originally published separately, in which case the titles are underlined or italicized, e.g. *The Rape of the Lock*, *Paradise Lost*, OR *The Rape of the Lock, Paradise Lost*, etc.).

Quotations

1. Copy direct quotations accurately, reproducing the exact wording, punctuation, and spelling of the original, including any mistakes. You can indicate a writer's error in a quotation by inserting the Latin word *sic* in square brackets after the error [*sic*]. Integrate short quotations (not more than four lines of prose or not more than three lines of poetry) smoothly into the structure of your sentence:

   * Porphyro's passion is indicated by his blushing "like a full-blown rose."

   * When Keats says, "That I may drink, and leave the world unseen / And with thee fade into the forest dim," he is referring to the temptations of death.

   Note that in the second example above, a slash (/) is used to indicate the end of a line of poetry.

2. Longer quotations (more than four lines of prose or three lines of poetry) are generally introduced by a colon and are indented ten spaces from the left margin.

   * The theme of Milton's *Paradise Lost* is introduced in the opening lines of the poem:

     Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit

     Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste

     Brought death into the world, and all our woe ...

     Sing, Heavenly Muse. (1.1-6)

   Note that set-off quotations are not put in quotation marks. If the first line of the quotation is the beginning of a prose or verse paragraph (as in the above example), the first line is indented an extra two spaces. In quoting poetry follow the verse format of the original exactly.

3. For ellipsis (omission of quoted matter) *within* a sentence, use three periods (...) with a space before and after each period. If the ellipsis occurs at the end of the quoted sentence, use four periods (the sentence period, followed by three spaced periods).

   * Stanley Fish writes, "An observation about the sentence as an utterance . . . has been transformed into an account of its experience . . . ."
Four periods may also be used to indicate the omission of an entire sentence or more, even several paragraphs. But you must not misrepresent by your omissions the author you are quoting. Use square brackets when you need to add your own words to make the quoted passage grammatically correct or clear:

* Jessica Mitford states, "In those days [the early 1940s] until the post-war repression set in, the [Communist] Party was a strange mixture of openness and secrecy."

II. Documentation

Two styles of documentation are currently in use. In the Modern Language Association (MLA) documentation style, sources are indicated in the body of the essay by parenthetical reference to the author's last name and to the page number of the work cited. In the older "footnote" style, each reference is documented by an individual footnote. The MLA style, which is less repetitive and more economical, should be followed unless your instructor requires you to use footnotes. Both methods are described below.

A. Parenthetical Style of Documentation (MLA)

1. The parenthetical style of documentation follows the MLA Handbook (7th edition, 2009). In the MLA style, secondary sources are cited by brief parenthetical references that refer to a list of "Works Cited" at the end of your essay. The only information that will usually be necessary is the author's last name and the page number of the book:

* The early eighteenth century "saw the rise of a new leisure industry" (Rogers 10).

Note that no punctuation separates name and page number and that the sentence period follows the reference. In the case of an indented or set-off quotation, the sentence period precedes the reference. You can also name the author in the body of your sentence, in which case the only necessary parenthetical information will be the page number:

* Rogers states that the early eighteenth century "saw the rise of a new leisure industry" (10).

In a number of cases, references will not be so straightforward; below are some other cases you are likely to encounter:

a) **An Author of Two or More Works**: If you are citing more than one work by the same author, place a comma after the author's name and provide an abbreviated title—(Frye, Anatomy 109).

b) **A Work by Two or More Authors**: Name both authors or, in the case of three or more authors, use the phrase *et al.*, meaning "and others"—(Nicolson and Rousseau 33) or (Abrams et al. 124).

c) **Two or More Authors with the Same Last Name**: Supply the author's first name in your reference—(Samuel Johnson 298).

d) **A Multivolume Work**: Indicate the specific volume you used—(Blotner 2: 1347).
e) **Citing a Work by Title**: If you are citing a work for which no author is named, such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, use a shortened version of the title—(Chicago 305).

2. In citing famous literary works, such as Shakespeare's plays, include information about act, scene, and line numbers—(*Othello* 4.2.7-13). This example refers to act 4, scene 2, lines 7 to 12. Do not use Roman numerals for act and scene numbers. A poem like Spenser's *Faerie Queene* can also be cited parenthetically (*FQ* 3.3.53.3). This reference is to book 3, canto 3, stanza 53, line 3. Remember, however, that if your essay is about one of these works, and it is perfectly clear within the essay itself which work you are quoting from, then you should not include the title within the parentheses. In other words, lines spoken by a character in *Othello* in a paper (or part of a paper) that is analyzing *Othello* should be cited parenthetically simply as (4.2.7-13).

3. If you wish to supply extra information or commentary that does not easily fit into your paper (e.g. extra bibliographical information), write an endnote. These are numbered like traditional footnotes and are included on a separate page at the end of your paper, before the list of works cited.

**B. List of Works Cited**

1. The list of Works Cited will appear at the end of your essay in alphabetical order according to author. You must include this list if you use the parenthetical style of documentation. The form of the entries follows the traditional format of bibliographies—author, title, and publication information. In accordance with the 7th edition of the *MLA* Handbook, each entry should be followed by the word “Print” or “Web” to indicate the medium consulted. For online sources, do not include the URL unless your instructor requires it or you believe your reader would be unable to locate your source without it. Follow the punctuation exactly as it is given in the following examples. Use the hanging indent function to indent the second and subsequent lines of each entry five spaces.

If you have consulted materials that you have not cited in your essay, these can be included in your list, but the list should then properly be titled, Bibliography and Works Cited.

a) **A Book by a Single Author**:


b) **A Book by Two Authors** (reverse only the name of the first author):


c) **An Anthology or Collection**:

d) **A Book with an Author and an Editor:**


e) **An Article in a Scholarly Journal:** citations for articles contain the following information—author, title (in quotation marks), title of periodical, volume number, year of publication:


f) **An Article in a Scholarly Journal Accessed Through an Online Database:** citations for journals accessed through an online database like *JSTOR* or *Project Muse* are formatted as for print journals but conclude with the name of the database, the word “Web”, and the date you accessed the article:


g) **An Article in a Scholarly Journal Available ONLY Online:** some scholarly journals exist only online. An online journal may not have pagination, as in the example below. If there is no pagination, indicate this with “n. pag.”. Otherwise, give the pages as in the examples above.


h) **An Online Source Other than a Scholarly Journal:** You must document all information you obtain from online sources that you subsequently use in your essay. In general, give the author's name, the title (in quotation marks), the title of the periodical or other full source, the publisher (i.e., the name of the site or organisation producing the site), the date of the web publication, the word “Web” to indicate how you accessed the source, and the date you consulted the source.


NB. Sources of information on the internet vary dramatically in quality and reliability. Avoid using or citing information where the identity and/or credentials of the author are uncertain (e.g., Wikipedia).

C. **Footnote Style of Documentation**
1. The footnote style outlined here follows the *Chicago Manual of Style*. To avoid a proliferation of footnotes, use the following procedure with any texts that you cite frequently. The first time that you quote, use a regular footnote, followed by the sentence, **All further references are to this edition and are included in my text**. The next time you quote (and thereafter), place the appropriate page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence which includes your quotation or reference, e.g. (p. 69). For a poem, do not cite the page but the line numbers, e.g. (125-132), and for a play, cite act, scene, and line numbers, e.g. (1.2.25-27). Do not use Roman numerals for act and scene numbers.

2. Place footnote numbers at the end of the sentence in which you are making the reference. Use the footnote function of your word processor to ensure that your notes are numbered and placed correctly. The following are examples of the kinds of footnotes you will commonly make; be sure to follow the format and punctuation of the sample notes exactly.

   a) **A Book by a Single Author:**


   b) **A Book with a Translator:**


   c) **A Book with an Editor:**


   d) **A Text in an Anthology:**


   e) **A Second Reference to a Previously Footnoted Book:**

      5Shelley, 252.

   f) **An Article in a Scholarly Journal:** Citations for articles contain the following information—author, title (in quotation marks), title of periodical, volume number, year of publication:


g) An Article in a Scholarly Journal Accessed Online: some journals are available in both print and online editions, while others exist only online. Most journals accessible through online databases like JSTOR or Project Muse fall into the first category. Articles in these journals should have a DOI (Digital Object Identifier), which you put at the end of the citation in place of a URL:


If an article in an online journal does not have a DOI, include the URL instead:


The date that you accessed the article should only be included if your instructor specifies that you do so.

h) An Online Source Other than a Scholarly Journal: You must document all information found online that you subsequently use in your essay. For a newspaper or magazine article accessed online, give the author's name, the title of the article, the title of the publication, the date of the publication, and the URL:


NB. Sources of information on the internet vary dramatically in quality and reliability. Avoid using or citing information where the identity and/or credentials of the author are uncertain (e.g., Wikipedia).

3. You should also include a bibliography of the materials you have consulted in the course of preparing your essay. In drawing up your bibliography, follow the format outlined above for the list of Works Cited. Entries should be listed in alphabetical order.

III. For Further Reference

The information in this short guide cannot cover all the questions you may have about the mechanics of essay writing. If you have further questions about the proper format for citations (such cases as translations, corporate authors, editions, etc.) or about the mechanics of parenthetical reference, consult Joseph Gibaldi and Walter S. Achtart, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed., New York: MLA, 2009. Copies of the Handbook are available in the University Bookstore. You can also refer to any university-level writing handbook. One of the many convenient handbooks is *The Little, Brown Handbook*, by H. Ramsey Fowler et. al., 2nd Canadian Edition, Don Mills: Addison Wesley, 1998. For questions of spelling and usage, consult a good dictionary: the full *Oxford English Dictionary* is available free online to registered University of Ottawa students at [http://www.oed.com/](http://www.oed.com/). You will need to login with your student ID for off-campus use.
RESEARCH PAPERS: WORKING WITH SOURCES

Introduction

Knowing how to use outside sources properly in writing your essays and term papers is extremely important for two main reasons. First, such knowledge will help you avoid the trap of relying on others to do your thinking for you. In researching your term paper, you should use secondary sources (books and articles relating to your essay topic) to help explain and support your ideas, not as a substitute for your own thinking on the subject. Second, learning how to draw correctly on the work of other writers will safeguard you from committing an act of plagiarism. To plagiarize, according to Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, is “to steal and pass off the words or ideas of another as one’s own.” The term derives from the Latin work plagiarus, meaning “kidnapper.” Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism is a serious academic offense that can lead to failure in a course or expulsion from the University. The best way to avoid the problem of plagiarism is to develop sound research methods. This guide is intended as an introduction to working profitably with outside sources and integrating your research correctly into your essay.

I. Research and Taking Notes

A. Beginning Your Project

Before you even think of going to the library to look for sources, you must develop a tentative thesis for your paper and work out your own ideas on the topic you’ve chosen to explore. In an English essay your first step will always be to study closely your primary sources (the poems, plays, or novels that you intend to discuss), taking notes and generating your own thoughts as you read your chosen texts. This is the most crucial stage in the preparation of your essay. Never lose sight of the fact that the literary texts themselves are your most important research source (that’s why they are called primary sources) and that the purpose of writing any essay is to develop your own critical skills in reading and evaluating those texts, rather than parroting someone else’s ideas. Your goal at this stage should be to arrive at a thesis—your point of view or line of argument about your topic. Your essay topic might be, “The nature of evil in Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein,” but this is not a thesis. The thesis you develop will express your perspective on the topic, e.g., “Through its use of double characters, Frankenstein presents a complex and even contradictory view of human evil.” By the time you have finished studying your primary texts, you should have arrived at a preliminary outline of your essay.

B. Evaluating Secondary Sources and Taking Notes

Once you have determined the specific focus and direction of your essay, you may wish to consult some secondary sources. Before you do so, however, ask yourself whether you really need to read outside books on your subject. Don’t use other people’s opinions as a crutch; slavish dependence on the view of others will prevent you from developing your own critical skills and self-confidence. Nonetheless, some essay topics will require you to dig into
secondary sources, perhaps to explore the historical, social, or critical background of your subject. At this stage you will have to rely more than ever on your evaluative skills. The library contains many valuable books. It also contains a lot of rubbish. The internet will give you access to excellent scholarly databases, but it also contains truly astounding amounts of rubbish. Your task will be to separate the wheat from the chaff.

The internet should be used primarily for scholarly databases, which you can access through the library website: http://www.biblio.uottawa.ca/index-e.php. Perhaps the most useful and comprehensive for research in English literature is the MLA International Bibliography, which lists almost all journal articles, book chapters, and monographs in the field. Many of these articles are then accessible in full text through other databases such as JSTOR or Project Muse. It is always better to begin your search with the MLA Bibliography rather than in a periodicals database like JSTOR, because JSTOR only lists articles in journals that are affiliated with JSTOR. The MLA Bibliography lists articles in all journals, and much else besides.

The university library provides access to the MLA Bibliography and to many other useful databases, including the Oxford English Dictionary, which is the definitive English dictionary for scholarly use, covering words from the beginnings of the language to the present. The library’s guide to its English literature resources is available at http://uottawa.ca.libguides.com/literature_en. You will also find it useful to browse the full list of available databases: http://www.biblio.uottawa.ca/html/db-az.jsp?lang=en. The MLA Bibliography (search under M) can be found here, as can the Oxford English Dictionary (search under O). For off-campus use, most of these databases will require you to log in with your student ID.

Just about all the research resources you could possibly need for your essay are available through the library, either physically or online. Doing “research” outside of these databases—for instance, simply typing a topic or title into Google—is risky. Such searches will turn up everything from Sparknotes (NOT appropriate for university-level work) to failed papers by high school students, to the literary ravings of self-published cranks. In general, you should make use of documents found on the internet only if you have a good reason to have confidence in the author(s) of the site (e.g., material provided by another reputable university). Do not make use of anonymously-produced documents. If you do use documents obtained from the internet (by taking information, ideas or quotations from them) the same standards of thoroughness apply to these usages as those discussed below for texts obtained through the library. You must be absolutely rigorous in citing and discriminating among these sources, and in honestly documenting your use of them. And remember that your professors can and do use Google—and discover plagiarized sources—just as easily as you can.

When using the library and scholarly databases, don’t simply pounce on the first books or articles you see that seem vaguely related to your subject. There are many hundreds of books on the plays of Shakespeare, but only a fraction of these may have something to say about the topic of animal imagery in Taming of the Shrew. Scan the introduction, tables of contents, and indexes of books to see if they contain potentially relevant information. Once you have narrowed down the list of secondary sources you wish to consult, you must attempt to evaluate the reliability of your remaining sources. The criteria that should guide you in your evaluation include the author’s (1) command of the subject, (2) use of effective reasoning and sound arguments, (3) presentation of ample, accurate evidence, and (4)
acknowledgment of opposing views. Check the writer’s background for evidence of his or her qualifications and possible biases. If you’re uncertain about the value or reliability of a source, ask your instructor for guidance. The opinions you find in your sources may conflict with one another or with your own. Rather than giving up on your own views or citing only those sources favourable to you, be forthright in your essay about opposing analyses. To quote the advice of *The Little, Brown Handbook*, “you must deal honestly with the gaps and conflicts in sources. Old sources, superficial ones, slanted ones—these should be offset in your research and your writing by sources that are newer, more thorough, or more objective.”

As you read your sources, make careful notes, not only of ideas that confirm and extend your thesis but also of contradictory evidence. Accuracy is critical at this stage. Students who are questioned about careless or unacknowledged use of sources often claim that they mixed up notes about their own thoughts with notes taken from outside sources. Excuses of this kind, however, carry no weight because part of your task in carrying out any kind of research assignment is to keep strictly accurate and honest records of your work. One way to avoid confusing your words with your author’s is to learn the techniques of paraphrase and summary (see below). If ideas of your own come to you as you are reading and taking notes, record them on a separate sheet or circle them to indicate that they are yours. Obviously your thoughts will change as you research your topic: revising your thinking is an essential and beneficial part of the learning process. All the more reason, then, to keep a distinct record of your own insights or of connections that you make between various ideas encountered in your reading. Never read outside sources in a random attempt to come up with ideas; your reading and note-taking should be focused by the specific questions or problems you wish to investigate.

### C. Paraphrasing and Summarizing

One reason for developing sound note-taking techniques is to facilitate the work of digesting and interpreting your sources—a necessary step in writing a worthwhile paper. It is often tempting to photocopy or print off the relevant pages of a source, but simply printing material without reading closely, underlining, and taking notes (or writing notes in the margins of the copy) short-circuits the indispensable creative and analytical process that note-taking encourages. Learning to paraphrase and summarize your sources offers, in the long run, a far more valuable method for assimilating your sources.

**Paraphrasing** (from the Greek work for “tell” with the Greek prefix *para-*-, meaning “alongside”) involves restating *in your own words* the information in your source. In your paraphrase you reproduce the order of the author’s thoughts and line of reasoning but not his or her original words. By paraphrasing you avoid the risk of letting the author’s language slip from your notes into your essay, and you develop your understanding of the material in the process. Because paraphrasing involves restating accurately and fully the material in your source, your paragraph may be as long as the original, or even longer. Be certain that you are not plagiarizing your source as you paraphrase. If you cannot find a substitute for a distinctive word or phrase in your original, put it in quotation marks. The following example illustrates an acceptable and an unacceptable paraphrase.
(1) Original Source:


Aristotle defines the ridiculous as a mistake or deformity which does not cause pain or harm to others. This is the essence of the comic. Plato in the *Philebus*, on the other hand, takes a moralist’s view and defines the ridiculous as “a certain kind of badness.” Plato’s bias applies more accurately to the satiric than to the comic. If comedy presents its ridiculous objects as things of no importance, the harmlessly base or ugly, satire interprets the ridiculous as harmful or destructive at least potentially.

(2) Acceptable Paraphrase:

Aristotle and Plato see different meaning in the term “ridiculous,” which can help us distinguish between comedy and satire. While Aristotle sees harmless error or physical distortion as the main sources of the ridiculous, Plato emphasizes the ethical dimension, arguing that there is an element of “badness” in the ridiculous. Plato’s view falls in line with our understanding of satire: ridiculous things in comedy are seen as silly, unimportant, or “harmless,” but in satire they are possibly or actually damaging, injurious, or detrimental.

(3) Unacceptable Paraphrase (Plagiarized words in bold type)

For Aristotle the ridiculous is a mistake or deformity that does not harm others. This is the essence of the comic. In contrast to Aristotle, Plato takes a moralist’s view, arguing that there is an element of badness in the ridiculous. Comedy sees ridiculous objects as things of no importance, but satire regards the ridiculous as potentially harmful or destructive.

Summarizing is what you will be doing most often when you take notes. Summarizing involves taking down only the main points in a paragraph, chapter or essay. The key to effective summarizing is to identify the essential points of an argument, leaving out the examples and illustrations that support the main ideas. Your summary will be a condensed version of the original—perhaps no more than one sentence for every paragraph in the original. Like paraphrases, summaries should not distort or comment on the original text: your comments, interpretations, and judgments on the text belong in your own notes, not in a summary or paraphrase. The following are examples of acceptable, inaccurate, and plagiarized summaries of the paragraph quoted above from Leon Guilhamet’s study of satire:

(1) Acceptable Summary

We can distinguish between comedy and satire by contrasting Aristotle and Plato, who define the “ridiculous” as, respectively, “harmless” and “bad”: ridiculous things in comedy are silly and harmless but in satire they are “potentially” damaging or bad.
II. Proper Acknowledgment of Sources: Avoiding Plagiarism

A. What to Acknowledge

In writing a research paper, you combine information from as many as four sources: (1) your own thoughts and insights, (2) common, shared knowledge, (3) material from classroom lectures, and (4) the work of others. Your own thoughts, of course, require no acknowledgement, but if you find, in the course of your research, that another person has arrived at the same conclusions as you, it may be wise to include a footnote explaining the fact, e.g., “Joe Bloggs concurs with my opinion on this point . . . .” or “Joe Bloggs has arrived at the same conclusion . . . .” etc. The line between common knowledge and specialized information is sometimes difficult to draw, but widely known facts, such as historical information or the standard definitions, approaches, and terminology in any area of study do not have to be acknowledged. For example, you need not acknowledge the commonly accepted fact that Shakespeare’s Hamlet delays unduly in carrying out his revenge, but a critic’s particular theory or explanation for that delay must be documented. Information can be common knowledge even when you have to look it up in a reference book (the facts of John Donne’s life, for example), but if you have any doubts about whether the information you are using is common knowledge, acknowledge the source anyway or ask your instructor for guidance.

The material you may use from classroom lectures obviously belongs to someone else, but many instructors allow their students to treat classroom information as common knowledge. If you rely heavily in your essay on ideas discussed in class, you should acknowledge this in a footnote or ask your instructor for guidance. What you must always acknowledge is the work of another—that person’s words, ideas, statistics, tables, diagrams, etc. This material may take the form of a book, a magazine, a microfilm, a taped interview, a videotape, and so
on. Even if you translate someone else’s ideas into your own words, you must document the
source. You can include the results of your research in your essay in one of three ways:
direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. Below are examples of the correct and incorrect
use of research materials in your term paper. Each of the examples draws on the following
passage by E.B. White.

**Original Source:**


One of the things commonly said about humorists is that they are really very sad
people—clowns with a breaking heart. There is some truth in it, but it is badly stated. It
would be more accurate, I think, to say that there is a deep vein of melancholy running
through everyone’s life and that the humorist, perhaps more sensible of it than some
others, compensates for it actively and positively. Humorists fatten on trouble. They
have always made trouble pay. They struggle along with a good will and endure pain
cheerfully, knowing how well it will serve them in the sweet by and by. You find them
wrestling with foreign languages, fighting discomforts of tight boots (or as Josh Billings
wittily called them, “tite” boots). They pour out their sorrows profitably, in a form that
is not quite fiction or quite fact either. Beneath the sparkling surface of these dilemmas
flows the strong tide of human woe.

**B. Direct quotation:**

As a general rule of thumb, you should quote briefly and sparingly in your essays. Quote
secondary sources as evidence to support your own arguments, not as a way of letting
someone else do your thinking and arguing for you. As Lynn Quitman Troyka advises in the
*Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers*, “Use quotations only when (1) the language is
especially striking, (2) the thought is particularly difficult to rephrase accurately, (3) the
authority conveyed by the quotation is especially important for your thesis or main ideas, or
(4) the source’s words could be open to alternate interpretations, so your reader needs direct
access to the words.” (What I have just done here is an example of bad quoting: I could
easily have paraphrased Troyka’s points in my own words.) Make sure you quote accurately.
If you have to change a word or two in order to fit the quotation into the grammar of your
sentence, put the changed words in brackets. Combine your quotations gracefully into the
flow of your argument and your prose.

(1) Correct quotation:

Critics in the eighteenth century sometimes objected to the mixing of comic and tragic
scenes in Shakespeare’s plays. But the line between the comic and the tragic is difficult
to draw. As E.B. White observes in “Some Remarks on Humor,” the humorist often
draws on life’s sad experiences for comic inspiration: “... there is a deep vein of
melancholy running through everyone’s life and ... the humorist, perhaps more sensible
of it than some others, compensates for it actively and positively ... [Humorists] pour
out their sorrows profitably, in a

form that is not quite fiction nor quite fact either. Beneath the sparkling surface of these
dilemmas flows the strong tide of human woe.” Perhaps the most profound instance of
this paradox in Shakespeare is the Fool in *King Lear*. Beneath the “dilemmas” and “sparkling” jests uttered by this character indeed “flows the strong tide of human woe.”

In the above example, the quotation is used to *support* rather than to *state* the point that the essay writer is developing. It is fully integrated into the writer’s argument. In order to make the quotation fit grammatically and to prevent it from becoming too long, the writer has used several ellipses (spaced periods) where words have been left out. For the sake of clarity, the pronoun “they” has been replaced by “humorists” at one point, a change indicated by the use of square brackets. The writer uses a footnote (X) to document the source. See the first part of this booklet (pp. 2-5) if you are unfamiliar with the proper procedures for documenting sources (footnoting and compiling bibliographies).

(2) **Plagiarized Quotation** (Plagiarized words in **bold** type):

Critics in the eighteenth century sometimes objected to the mixing of comic and tragic scenes in Shakespeare’s plays. But the line between the comic and the tragic is difficult to draw. Many humorists, for example, draw on life’s sad experiences for comic inspiration. There is a deep vein of melancholy running through everyone’s life and the humorist, perhaps more sensible of it than some others, compensates for it actively and positively. Comedians pour out their sorrows in a form that is neither quite fiction nor fact. Underneath the sparkling surface of these dilemmas flows the strong tide of human woe. Perhaps the most profound instance of this paradox in Shakespeare is the Fool in *King Lear*. Beneath the dilemmas and sparkling jests uttered by this character flows the strong tide of human woe.

Although the writer has changed or omitted a few words and phrases, an outright theft from the source has been committed. Even if a footnote or a bibliographical entry indicating the source were included in the essay, the result would still be plagiarism because the writer has not used quotation marks to acknowledge E.B. White’s words.

**C. Paraphrasing and Acknowledging Ideas**

(1) **Acceptable Paraphrase**

One of the great paradoxes about humour is that its source of energy is often the sadness of human existence. As E.B. White argues in “Some Remarks on Humor,” the humorist is generally more sensitive than others to the “melancholy” of life and will counterbalance this awareness with comic, slapstick depictions of adversity.

The essential content of White’s paragraph has been restated in the writer’s own words and has been acknowledged with a footnote (X). Moreover, White’s idea is used to support and develop the writer’s argument.

(2) **Unacceptable Paraphrase**

One of the great paradoxes about humour is that its source of energy is often the sadness of human existence. The humorist is generally more sensitive than others to the vein of melancholy that runs through life and will compensate for this awareness with comic, slapstick depictions of adversity. Beneath their sparkling hilarity we can detect the heavy weight of human sorrow.
This plagiarized passage steals an important idea from White without acknowledging the source. Some of White’s turns of phrase, such as “vein of melancholy,” are borrowed, and despite some clumsy attempts to disguise the fact, the last sentence reproduces both the structure and content of White’s concluding statement.

III. Conclusion

If you follow these guidelines for using and acknowledging outside sources in your research, you will be able to avoid the problem of plagiarism in your writing. (Plagiarism is only one form of academic fraud, however, and you would be well advised to read the Faculty of Arts “Policy on Academic Fraud” published in the Calendar in order to acquaint yourself more fully with the University regulations.) But more importantly, learning to use sources properly will make you a more intellectually independent and better educated individual.

Notes
