AVOIDING ACADEMIC TRAPS
A Plagiarism Game
First, let’s define **PLAGIARISM**
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Taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as your own

Taking credit for work you didn’t do
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How to avoid this humiliation?
Just PROPERLY CITE THE SOURCE
Just **PROPERLY CITE THE SOURCE**

Or else, **SNAP!**

There goes your grade and academic reputation.
LET'S PLAY
LET’S PLAY

Make sure you have a copy of the score sheet to record your answers
Steve Jobs knew from an early age that he was adopted. “My parents were very open with me about that,” he recalled. He had a vivid memory of sitting on the lawn of his house, when he was six or seven years old, telling the girl who lived across the street. “So does that mean your real parents didn’t want you?” the girl asked. “Lightning bolts went off in my head,” according to Jobs. “I remember running into the house, crying. And my parents said, ‘No, you have to understand.’ They were very serious and looked me straight in the eye. They said, ‘We specifically picked you out.’ Both of my parents said that and repeated it slowly for me. And they put an emphasis on every word in that sentence.”

Abandoned. Chosen. Special. Those concepts became part of who Jobs was and how he regarded himself. His closest friends think that the knowledge that he was given up at birth left some scars. “I think his desire for complete control of whatever he makes derives directly from his personality and the fact that he was abandoned at birth,” said one longtime colleague, Del Yocam. “He wants to control his environment,
Which student or students committed plagiarism?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Becky</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jobs’ knowledge that he was given up at birth left some scars, his friends agreed.</td>
<td>Isaacson reports that several people close to Steve Jobs believe that the fact that “he was given up at birth left some scars” (4).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carla</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Del Yocam, a man who worked for many years with Steve Jobs, believes that part of Jobs’ need to control all facets of his work was connected to the fact that he was adopted (Isaacson 4).</td>
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</table>
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Jobs' knowledge that he was given up at birth left some scars, his friends agreed. Isaacson reports that several people close to Steve Jobs believe that the fact that “he was given up at birth left some scars” (4).

Del Yocam, a man who worked for many years with Steve Jobs, believes that part of Jobs’ need to control all facets of his work was connected to the fact that he was adopted (Isaacson 4).
Amy’s sentence: The knowledge that he was given up at birth left some scars, his friends agreed.
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No source listed for where Amy found this information. Even if she personally interviewed a bunch of Jobs’ friends, she still needs to include that information in the passage.
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In this format, she’s stolen from Isaacson and has just harmed her academic reputation.
Three students want to use a bit of this passage by Susan Logan-McCracken on page 39 of Catster Magazine.
5. **Their sense of smell is far superior to ours.** Cats are equipped with an extra organ involved in their sense of smell. Located at the roof of their mouths, the vomeronasal organ enables cats to heighten the power of their sense of smell. By 4 weeks of age, this organ is fully developed. Kittens rely on smelling to get around.

6. **Their sense of hearing is one of the best on the planet.** Except for bats and moths, cats have the best hearing of all land animals. They are born deaf, but when their amazing sense of hearing is fully developed by 4 weeks of age, they can hear 65,000 cycles per second (or hertz), whereas we can only hear 20,000.

7. **They see things differently.** Kittens are born blind and don’t even open their eyes for their first week or two after birth. While their eyesight is undeveloped, they are adept at using their whiskers and sense of smell to get around. Fully developed by 5 weeks of age, their eyesight is powerful.
Which student or students committed plagiarism?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daniel</th>
<th>Eddie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A kitten’s ability to hear is fully developed by the time the animal is four weeks old (Logan-McCracken 39).</td>
<td>A typical cat’s hearing is more than three times better than the average human’s hearing, scientists report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Franklin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cats are incredibly focused animals; aside from moths and bats, a cat’s hearing is said to be the best among all other animals on the planet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin</td>
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Why?
Why? Both Eddie and Franklin took information without giving credit to the source.

Eddie: A typical cat’s hearing is more than three times better than the average human’s hearing, scientists report.

Franklin: Cats are incredibly focused animals; aside from moths and bats, a cat’s hearing is said to be the best among all other animals on the planet.

Both could be fixed with a simple attributive tag: (Logan-McCracken 39)
3. Gina was assigned an essay on the Great Depression. Last year, she had a similar assignment in a different class. She takes her old essay, updates the introductory paragraph and changes a few body paragraph sentences before turning it in to this year’s teacher.

Did Gina commit plagiarism?

YES  NO
3. Gina was assigned an essay on the Great Depression. Last year, she had a similar assignment in a different class. She takes her old essay, updates the introductory paragraph and changes a few body paragraph sentences before turning it in to this year’s teacher.

Did Gina commit plagiarism?

YES  NO
You can give yourself permission to use your own previous work, but plagiarism isn’t just about copying someone else’s ideas. It’s about **claiming to do work that you haven’t done.**

By recycling your old essay and presenting it as fresh work, you just **plagiarized yourself.**
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By recycling your old essay and presenting it as fresh work, you just **plagiarized yourself.**

This is sometimes called “**academic double-dipping**” and can bring a world of trouble.

If you want to repurpose old work, check with your teacher ahead of time for **permission.**
4. These lines were taken from students’ papers. Which of them contains plagiarized content?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helen</th>
<th>Iris</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. President Barack Obama served two terms, holding office from 2009 to 2016.</td>
<td>U.S. President Ronald Reagan worked many years as a Hollywood actor before entering politics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt held the office from 1933 to 1945, helping to pull Americans out of the Great Depression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trick Question!

**NONE** of these are plagiarized because each student’s sentence is a generally accepted fact.
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Things that are common knowledge don’t need to be attributed to a source.

If you saw the same fact repeated in most of your sources, and if your reader is likely to already know this fact, it is probably common knowledge.

Basically, if most adults you know already know this information, you probably don’t need an attributive tag. When in doubt, check with your teacher.
Adding self-driving technology — at least as it stands now — into regular passenger cars could make them absurdly expensive for anyone without the cash of a Silicon Valley mogul. Until recently, the laser sensor used on the Google car project cost $75,000.

Those costs are coming down, but it will be some time before they have a realistic price for consumers. But a new, big tractor-trailer truck can easily cost more than $150,000, so the added cost of robotic features could make more sense.

In addition, it could make trucking more efficient, allowing, for example, a human driver to rest in the sleeper cabin while the truck takes the wheel.

Still, automating commercial driving is controversial and — potentially — a job killer.

There are more than three million truck drivers in the United States, according to the American Trucking Associations, and about one in every 15 workers in the country is employed in the trucking business.
### Which student or students committed plagiarism?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kyle</th>
<th>Lawrence</th>
<th>Matthew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automating commercial driving is controversial and – potentially – a job-killer (Markoff).</td>
<td>Automating commercial trucking is highly controversial and will potentially kill off many jobs (Markoff).</td>
<td>The proposal to allow long-haul trucks to be driven by a computer instead of a human is controversial, both in terms of public safety and significant job loss (Markoff).</td>
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The proposal to allow long-haul trucks to be driven by a computer instead of a human is controversial, both in terms of public safety and significant job loss (Markoff).
Why?
Why? Both Kyle and Lawrence misused the attributive tag. Both of them took actual words from Markoff’s article without properly using quote marks to note Markoff’s original words.

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Kyle: Automating commercial driving is controversial and – potentially – a job-killer (Markoff).

Lawrence: Automating commercial trucking is highly controversial and will potentially kill off many jobs (Markoff).

He just copied and pasted without using quotes.

He sneakily tried to switch a few words, but the essence of the work still belongs to Markoff.

Only Matthew’s sentence is an original piece of writing.