

# Rules to Avoid Plagiarism

## Rule 1

**When presenting a fact that is not COMMON KNOWLEDGE, always cite the source.**

The United States desired independence from Great Britain in 1776.  
common knowledge\*

No citation needed.

Haste makes waste.

proverbs and common sayings

No citation needed.

Scientists have found that the featherless chicken makes as much protein as the feathered chicken ("Featherless" 43).

information from a source

Citation required!!

\*Facts that are common knowledge—something that most people in the society would know—can be included without a citation. This includes proverbs and common sayings.

## Rule 2

**When writing about an idea, make clear WHOSE IDEA it is.**

After reading several of Fitzgerald's short stories, one can see that Fitzgerald frequently takes the position of the outsider.

personal observation

No citation needed.

The tone and structure of the poem suggest peace and repose.

personal observation

**No citation needed.**

In her *New York Times Book Review*, Pamela Paul noted that *A Wrinkle in Time*'s Meg Murry is very different from the typical female protagonist.

information from a source

**Citation required!!**

## **Rule 3**

**When writing about SOMEONE ELSE'S IDEA, always cite the source.**

Lotchkin claims that by the year 1856, San Francisco's growth was practically certain (60).

someone else's idea

**Citation required!!**

Obel suggests that one might compare Kobe Bryant's downfall to that of Macbeth (A19).

someone else's idea

**Citation required!!**

The LATimes.com editorial points out that attorneys can use their no-questions-asked challenges to dismiss jurors who fall into protected classes, such as racial minorities.

someone else's idea

**Citation required!!**

## **Rule 4**

**When using someone else's exact words, use QUOTATION MARKS and cite the source.**

Later, the author wrote, “Chapter VII (the hotel scene) will never be quite up to mark—I’ve worried about it too long and I can’t quite place Daisy’s reaction” (Fitzgerald 9).

someone else’s exact words

**Citation and quotation marks required!!**

Common Sense Media rates the original *Frankenstein* film as child-friendly, but notes that “Younger children might be frightened by the monster, themes of grave-robbing, and the laboratory scenes.”

someone else’s exact words

**Citation and quotation marks required!!**

Lurie points out that the character of Peter Pan has evolved dramatically since the first novel was published—originally, “Peter is a very young boy who is half-bird; he has flown away from his nursery to live with the fairies in the park.”

someone else’s exact words

**Citation and quotation marks required!!**

## Rule 5

**When paraphrasing, use COMPLETELY ORIGINAL WORDING and always cite the source.**

Basketball

Greenfield 215

“White” ball, then, is the basketball of patience, method, and sometimes brute strength. “Black” ball is the basketball of electric self-expression. One player has all the time in the world to perfect his skills, the other a need to prove himself. These are slippery categories, because a poor boy who is black can play “white” and a white boy of middle-class parents can play “black”.

Original Source Material as Recorded on a Note Card

Unacceptable Paraphrase

“White” ball is playing basketball in a patient, methodical, strong way. “Black” ball is the game of electric self-expression. The white player takes his time to perfect his skills, but the black player wants to prove himself. These categories, however, are slippery. A poor black may play “white,” and a middle-class white boy may play “black.”

**Note: The student did not use his or her own words to state the idea, nor is the source cited. Both paraphrasing and citation are required.**

### Acceptable Paraphrase

According to Jeff Greenfield, there are fundamental differences between the “white” and the “black” style of basketball. The white player is less hurried; he takes his time, practices his skills systematically, and develops his strength. The black player, on the other hand, proves himself by playing with an almost theatrical flair. Of course, there are exceptions to these categories (215).