TURABIAN TEACHER COLLABORATIVE

THREE PRINCIPLES FOR CITING SOURCES

When you use any source in any way, readers expect you to follow three principles. You risk a charge of plagiarism if you ignore any one of them.

1. **You must cite the source for any words, ideas, or methods that are not your own.**

   Writers can avoid paraphrasing too closely if they focus on remembering what they understand from the original, not its actual words. One way to do this is to put the original aside as you write the paraphrase (Colomb and Williams, 92). But a better way is to imagine you are explaining the idea to someone who hasn't read the original.

2. **When you quote the exact words of a source, you must put those words in quotation marks or a block quotation, even if you cite the source in your own text.**

   For example, this would be plagiarism:

   According to Colomb and Williams, when you quote the exact words of a source, you must put those words in quotation marks or a block quotation, even if you cite the source in your own text (100).

3. **When you paraphrase the words of a source, you must use your own sentences, not sentences so similar to the original that they are almost a quotation.**

   For example, this would be considered plagiarism by many teachers:

   According to Colomb and Williams, you risk being charged with plagiarism when you paraphrase a passage from a source not in your own words but in sentences so similar to it that you almost quote them regardless of whether your own text cites the source (100).

Some students think they don't have to cite material available for free online. Not so. These principles apply to sources of any kind—printed, recorded, oral, and online. You risk a charge of plagiarism if you fail to cite *anything* you get from a source, *especially* if it's from a website, a database, a podcast, or another online source. A source is a source, and you must cite them all.