Exploring and Preventing Accidental Plagiarism in a Digital Age

Amy Y. Sexton
Kaplan University, ASexton@kaplan.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gaintlit

Part of the Curriculum and Instruction Commons, and the Information Literacy Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gaintlit/2015/2015/83

This presentation (open access) is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences & Events at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu.
Exploring and Preventing Plagiarism in a Digital Age

Amy Sexton
Asexton@kaplan.edu
Students use information from the Internet without proper attribution, but students attest to using their own words and ideas.

Quick Internet search locates sentences and passages they have used verbatim.

Where is the disconnect?
Questions

How do digital natives view information accessed via the Internet?

How do digital natives conduct academic research and use it in their writing?

How do students define common knowledge?

How can educators best assist students who complete online research and present with plagiarism issues in their writing?
Copy/Paste – Two Most Frequent Types of Plagiarism

**Clone**
- Submitting another’s work, word-for-word, as one’s own

**CTRL-C**
- Contains significant portions of text from a single source without alteration (Turnitin, 2010).
### Academic Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Internet</th>
<th>After Internet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited access</td>
<td>Easy access via computer, devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical possession</td>
<td>No physical possession of source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careful note-taking</td>
<td>Copy and paste (Gabriel, 2010)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“A digital culture that promotes sharing, openness and re-use is colliding with one of the fundamental tenets of education – the ability to develop, organize and express original thoughts” (Turnitin, 2011).
Changing views of ownership and originality, as well as different ways of acquiring information may be linked to increased plagiarism among digital natives. Trip Gabriel (2010) suggests that digital natives may see information accessed via the internet as belonging to all and free for the taking – without attribution.

“Today’s digital culture has blurred the lines of originality and authorship” (Turnitin, 2010).
Shifting Views of Information and Knowledge

Information Individually Owned, Knowledge Independently Constructed

Information Communally Owned, Knowledge Collaboratively Constructed (Gallant, 2014).

The Internet is a “mutual brain that we can all tap”
~ Anonymous student (as cited in Gallant, 2014).
Defining Common Knowledge

I found this on Wikipedia, so it must be common knowledge.

This information can be found in five or more different sources, so it is common knowledge.

(Gallant, 2014)
Institutional Solutions

- Foster a culture of academic integrity
- Establish clear, fair academic integrity policies
- Encourage consistent reporting of policy violations
- Create relevant, meaningful assignments that are difficult to plagiarize

(Evering & Moorman, 2012; Gallant, 2014; Turnitin, 2010, 2011)
Classroom Solutions

- Have explicit conversations about plagiarism
- Redefine common knowledge
- Teach why of citation before teaching why
- Offer real life/workplace examples of plagiarism

(Evering & Moorman, 2012; Gallant, 2014; Turnitin, 2010, 2011)
Classroom Solutions

- Teach note-taking skills
- Teach students effective paraphrasing
- Provide templates for student research (i.e. double entry journals)
- Teach time management skills

(Evering & Moorman, 2012; Gallant, 2014; Turnitin, 2010, 2011)
Classroom Solutions

Realize that threatening students with plagiarism detection may not work

Model correct citation and attribution

Use Internet sources for modeling and teaching

Allow students to submit drafts and then revise

(Evering & Moorman, 2012; Gallant, 2014; Turnitin, 2010, 2011)


