# Brief Brain Trick to Succeed at 3 Key Things: 1) No Plagiarism or “Half-Copy” Plagiarism, 2) Quotation Changes Revealed Clearly & 3) Accurate Citing

[The Brain Trick to Succeed with Both 1) & 2) & 3) 1](#_Toc63492155)

[Common Questions from Students 1](#_Toc63492156)

[Can I Use the Sample Paper’s Pre-Built Citation? 1](#_Toc63492157)

[Do I Need Citation and/or Quotation Marks? 1](#_Toc63492158)

[4 Examples So You Can Compare: Do I Need Citation & Do I Need Quotation Marks around These Words? 2](#_Toc63492159)

[Your Future & Plagiarism or “Half-copy” Plagiarism Being Marked in the Rubric for Your Project 2](#_Toc63492160)

[Optional: Plagiarism and “Half-copy” Plagiarism & Survival in the Workplace & in Personal Decision-Making 4](#_Toc63492161)

### The Brain Trick to Succeed with Both 1) & 2) & 3)

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| --- |
| The rules for showing what you have taken out (…) of the author’s words or put in ([ ]) are complex and for most of us they are **not** useful for most writing you do in the social or physical sciences or career programs. You can also look more polished in your writing if you use this brain trick.  This **brain trick lets you be accurate and brief**:   1. Open the source to the 3 to 6 words you chose to quote. 2. Type the **3 to 6** words and **change nothing** (not an *ing* or an *ed*, not a comma, **nothing**) between the first and the last word. 3. Put a “ **before** the first word and a ” **after** the last word. <with the “” made larger below so you can see them 4. Place those words with the “ ”within your sentence. **CAUTION**: Immediately **close** the source. To prevent plagiarism or “half-copy” plagiarism, **never** type or write words within the paper with a source open. **Tip:** If you want to make a reminder to cover something in your Project, then write a 2-3 word reminder and the page number. 5. **If something sounds awkward about your sentences, then change *your* own words**—the only words *you* have a right to change. 6. Before you leave the source, look at all of the words in the source. Be sure the meaning of the source remains in your quotation. |

### Common Questions from Students

#### Can I Use the Sample Paper’s Pre-Built Citation?

Yes, please do. You will need to change the page number(s) in the pre-built citation **if** you use a different page. If you need to use a fact or quotation from a different page, you may do that, but look at the 4 Examples below.

#### Do I Need Citation and/or Quotation Marks?

| **What Kind of Fact Are You Using** | **Do You Need Citation (Page # etc.)?** | **Do You Need Quotation Marks (“”)?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A fact in **your own** words | Yes | No ***<Notice this.*** |
| A fact in the **author’s** words (in other words, you are *quoting)* | Yes | **Yes** ***<Notice this.*** |

#### 4 Examples So You Can Compare: Do I Need Citation & Do I Need Quotation Marks around These Words?

Look at all 4 examples to catch on. What you do depends:

* on what words the **author wrote**
* on what words **you want to write**

| **What the Author Wrote** | **What Words You Want to Write** | **Do I Need to Cite This Specifically?** | **Do You Need Quotation Marks (“”) and Why+ An Example** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| the Mississippi River | the Mississippi River | **No** - If **this fact and all** the words **before** your current citation come from the **same already cited** page. | **No** – Proper nouns (like Mississippi River) belong to all of us. |
| the green, roaring river | the river | Same as above | **No** – Common nouns (like river) belong to all of us. |
| the green, roaring Mississippi River | the roaring Mississippi River | **Yes**—if this fact is **not** from the **same already-cited source**, then you must  a) cite it individually and—unless it is the last sentence of the paragraph—  b) repeat your 1st citation. | **Yes** - These are the author’s unique string of words so you identify **his** words, with the “” made larger below so you can see them:  **Example**: Trade was harder because of the **“**roaring Mississippi River.**”** |
|  | roaring |  | **Yes** - This is the author’s labeling of a condition and it is easier to be clear by using the words, with the “” made larger below so you can see them:  **Example**: The author explained that the **“**roaring**”** river made trade more difficult. |

### Your Future & Plagiarism or “Half-copy” Plagiarism Being Marked in the Rubric for Your Project

Students are usually puzzled about plagiarism or “half-plagiarism” or “patchwriting” being marked if they lack this basic information.

1. Your submission of a paper with words **from an author without citation and/or without quotation marks** can be the **professor's evidence** that you **plagiarized.**   
   Some professors may not notice, but some may call it plagiarism and **act accordingly**. **CAUTION**: Unless they specifically said they do **not** care, do **not** hand a stranger evidence of work that is classified as cheating.

**CAUTIONs**: Do **not** assume past responses guarantee what future professors or future bosses will want**. FYI: I have set up my assignments so I can grade on these issues to alert you, not hurt you—but I will enter a 0 for a 1st Part F.I.O. Project copied from the Internet.**

1. If you do things in bullets below, some professors may label your work as “half-copy” plagiarism or “patchwriting” (terms from *The Bedford Handbook*, page 746) if you:

|  |
| --- |
| * Either **copy an author’s phrases without** quotation marks (“”) * And/or use the **author’s sentence structure and just swap a few words** with what you think are synonyms   **CAUTION**: Do **not** assume past responses guarantee what future professors or future bosses will want**. FYI: I have set up my assignments so I can grade on these issues to alert you, not hurt you.** |

### Optional: Plagiarism and “Half-copy” Plagiarism & Survival in the Workplace & in Personal Decision-Making

I have found this information helps some students:

* In my life, I never saw a safe decision made with anything but careful reading.
* In my life in varied industries, I **never** saw a job that **paid for** “half-copy” plagiarism and never saw a job **that paid well for passive reading.** FYI:
  + I did see some people demoted to a lesser job because they did not read correctly
  + I do not know for sure, but my guess is that some were fired.
* In my life in some industries, I saw some employees
  + Who knew and **understood** **all** company documents
  + Whose job meant they **carefully selected** words from company documents to use in their communication with customers.   
      
    Copying carefully selected words from company documents is **not** plagiarism if you are doing that for the company. It is a **company** employee using **company** documents for the **company’s** business.   
      
    ***CAUTIONS:*** It is, however, plagiarism (and perhaps a crime in a court) if you copy company documents to use in **your** own business. It is also plagiarism if you copied a paper (or parts of a paper) from the Internet and submitted it to this class as though you wrote it.
* In my life after returning to teaching in the community college, I have seen only **2** adult students in 13+ years (and that is working with over 5,000 students) who were in fields where they made a living copying words from one place to another.

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