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

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### 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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