

Lesson Skill: Plagiarism and crediting sources

Strand Research

SOL 3.11

4.9

5.9

Materials

- Sticky notes
- Chart paper or available technology
- Highlighters, markers
- Toy or picture of toy

Lesson

Before the start of this lesson, write a model paragraph about a favorite toy from childhood.

1. Show students your favorite toy (or a picture of it). Read your paragraph to students, but do not display the written version yet. Ask students to help write a paragraph describing your favorite toy. First, have them share descriptions of the toy, and display all of the sentences. As you write, include some of your own sentences.
2. Display your original paragraph next to the class paragraph. Have students highlight or underline sentences that are identical in both paragraphs. Introduce the concept of plagiarism, and relate it to copying your sentences as part of the student paragraph.
3. Give students five minutes to write about their own favorite toy then read it to a partner. Have partners take five to ten minutes to write about each other's toy. Ask partners to talk about the following:
 - What would happen if you stole a classmate's pencil? What if you stole a car?
 - What is the consequence for stealing?
 - As students discuss, display the definition of plagiarism. Ask, "Did you know that in addition to stealing objects, you can also steal someone else's ideas and words?"
 - What does it mean to use someone else's ideas? How would you feel if someone stole your ideas?
 - How do you think you give another person "credit"?
4. Have students return their partner's writing, and give them three to five minutes to highlight where their partner wrote their same ideas. Allow students to talk over where ideas and words were the same.
5. Explain that students must give credit to an original writer so they won't be "stealing" ideas. Explain that giving credit to the author prevents plagiarism.
6. Have a class discussion of the following questions:
 - Is it easy to copy someone else's ideas and words?
 - How do you think you will prevent copying/stealing other's ideas in the future?
 - What if you are doing research and you need to record information from a Web site or book? Discuss copyright issues.

- What do you have to give the author if you copy their ideas? (credit)

Strategies for Differentiation

- Use two writing examples with obvious plagiarism to explain the concept.
- Role-play the act of stealing, and relate plagiarism to stealing.
- Preteach relevant vocabulary.