

CSULB Graduate Studies Resource Center (GSRC)
Adapted from Cornell University's "Recognizing and Avoiding Plagiarism" page
URL: <https://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/exercises/questions.cfm>

Case 1. Source: Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fate of Human Societies*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1999. 159.

"The ways in which domesticated animals have diverged from their wild ancestors include the following. Many species changed in size: cows, pigs, and sheep became smaller under domestication, while guinea pigs became larger."

(1) Student Writing Sample

There are many differences between domesticated and wild animals.

Does this writing sample use sources correctly?

(2) Student Writing Sample

Domesticated animals diverged from their wild ancestors in numerous ways. Animals such as cows became smaller, while animals such as guinea pigs became larger.

Does this writing sample use sources correctly?

(3) Student Writing Sample

A careful examination of the ways in which domesticated animals have diverged from their wild ancestors shows that cows, pigs, and sheep became smaller under domestication, while guinea pigs became larger.

Does this writing sample use sources correctly?

Case 2. Source: Moers, Ellen. "Female Gothic: The Monster's Mother." *Frankenstein*. Ed. J. Paul Hunter. New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1996. 214.

"In Gothic writings fantasy predominates over reality, the strange over the commonplace, and the supernatural over the natural, with one definite authorial intent: to scare. Not, that is, to reach down into the depths of the soul and purge it with pity and terror (as we say tragedy does), but to get to the body itself, its glands, epidermis, muscles, and circulatory system, quickly arousing and quickly allaying the physical reactions to fear."

(4) Student Writing Sample

According to Ellen Moers, Gothic writings "get to the body itself, its glands, epidermis, muscles, and circulatory system, quickly arousing and quickly allaying the physical reactions to fear" (214).

Does this writing sample use sources correctly?

(5) Student Writing Sample

Gothic novels such as *Frankenstein* were written with one definite authorial intent: to scare (Moers 214).

Does this writing sample use sources correctly?

(6) Student Writing Sample

While tragedy affects the soul, Gothic writings affect the body.

Does this writing sample use sources correctly?

Case 3. Source: Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Ed. J. Paul Hunter. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1996. 70.

"I greedily devoured the remnants of the shepherd's breakfast, which consisted of bread, cheese, milk, and wine; the latter, however, I did not like."

(7) Student Writing Sample

In his tale, *Frankenstein's* monster recounts how he greedily devoured the remnants of the shepherd's breakfast, thus showing his extreme hunger.

Does this writing sample use sources correctly?

Case 4 Introduction Source: Morisy, Michael. "'Extinct' Woodpecker Found." *Cornell Daily Sun* 29 April 2005: 1, 4.

The search for the woodpecker began earnestly after a Feb. 11, 2004 sighting by a kayaker in Cache River National Wildlife Refuge. A report of the sighting eventually worked its way to Tim Gallagher, the editor-in-chief of *Living Bird*, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's quarterly magazine.

(8) Student Writing Sample

Occasionally, species once thought extinct resurface when researchers examine possible new habitats. The ivory-billed woodpecker, for example, has just been rediscovered in the wild by Cornell researchers, who launched a search after an amateur sighting in February of 2004 (Morisy 1).

Works Cited: Morisy, Michael. "'Extinct' Woodpecker Found." *Cornell Daily Sun* 29 April 2005: 1, 4.

Does this writing sample use sources correctly?

Answers

- (1) Yes. By definition, domesticated and wild animals are different; thus, the student has not reproduced an idea or piece of research unique to Diamond's work.
- (2) No. This sample uses information and ideas from Diamond's passage that are not common knowledge. The writer simply rephrases each of Diamond's sentences in the original order. Since the student uses no documentation whatsoever, this sample involves plagiarism.
- (3) No. This writing sample quotes two passages verbatim from Diamond: "the ways in which domesticated animals have diverged from their wild ancestors" and "cows, pigs, and sheep became smaller under domestication, while guinea pigs became larger." Although the student strings these quotations together in his/her own sentence, both the ideas and phrasing belong to Diamond. Without quotation marks or an attribution to Diamond, this writing sample clearly constitutes plagiarism.
- (4) Yes. This writing sample introduces the quote with an attribution to Moers, then puts her words within quotation marks and gives the appropriate page number. The reader knows exactly which words belong to Moers and where to find the quote in her work. Following MLA format, the full bibliographic information for Moers's article then appears in a "Works Cited" list at the end of the essay; other citation methods may be used in different fields, so check with your instructor for the required format.
- (5) No. This is a tricky case. Although the student cites Moers and the page number in parentheses, there is an unmarked direct quotation in the sentence (i.e. "with one definite authorial intent: to scare"). Without quotation marks to set off this phrase, the reader assumes that only the idea comes from Moers, not the actual words. Furthermore, verbatim use of a striking phrase may make readers who are familiar with the source suspicious of your integrity.
- (6) No. This writing sample summarizes Moers's opinion about the difference between tragic and Gothic writing. Her definitions of tragedy and Gothic are not common, dictionary definitions; instead, she proposes a specialized way of viewing both genres as part of her overall theory. In addition, the student borrows Moer's opposition between soul and body, tragedy and Gothic (i.e. why not Gothic and comedy? Gothic and satire? Gothic and epic?). This writing sample thus needs to document its sources.
- (7) No. The student here is using a word-for-word quotation (i.e. "greedily devoured the remnants of the shepherd's breakfast") to support the claim that Frankenstein's monster suffered from extreme hunger. While the claim belongs to the student, the phrasing of the evidence belongs to Shelley; to avoid plagiarism, therefore, this direct quotation needs to be set off by quotation marks and properly documented.
- (8) Yes. Although many details from the original newspaper article have been omitted, the article should be cited as a source if the writer paraphrases its content or draws upon it for specific information. To acknowledge this indebtedness to the Cornell Sun article, the student uses a brief parenthetical citation within the text, supplemented by the full bibliographic entry in a "Works Cited" page at the end.