

# Plagiarism

Source: Wilmot, CJR and Harrison, TM (2003) *Journal of Biological Education* 37(3) p 139 – 140  
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Taking someone else's words or ideas and presenting them as your own work is known as plagiarism. But how much do you need to change something before it becomes a legitimate re-working?

The sentence below is taken from *Pharmacology* (4<sup>th</sup> edition 1999) by Rang, Dale and Ritter. Study the essay extracts in the table and decide whether you consider the author of the work to be guilty of plagiarism. Some may be more obvious than others!

“During the last 60 years the development of effective and safe drugs to deal with bacterial infection has revolutionised medical treatment, and the morbidity and mortality from microbial disease have been drastically reduced.”

Essay extract	Plagiarism? (Y or N)
1. During the last 60 years the development of effective and safe drugs to deal with bacterial infection has revolutionised medical treatment, and the morbidity and mortality from microbial disease have been drastically reduced.	
2. During the last 60 years the development of effective and safe drugs to deal with bacterial infection has revolutionised medical treatment, and the morbidity and mortality from microbial disease have been drastically reduced. (Rang <i>et al.</i> , 1999)	
3. ‘During the last 60 years the development of effective and safe drugs to deal with bacterial infection has revolutionised medical treatment, and the morbidity and mortality from microbial disease have been drastically reduced.’ (Rang <i>et al.</i> , 1999)	
4. In the 4 <sup>th</sup> edition of their textbook <i>Pharmacology</i> (1999), Rang, Dale and Ritter state that: ‘During the last 60 years the development of effective and safe drugs to deal with bacterial infection has revolutionised medical treatment, and the morbidity and mortality from microbial disease have been drastically reduced.’ Such a bold assertion understates the ongoing threat posed by bacterial infection. It is estimated, for example, that worldwide there were over 8 million cases of tuberculosis in 1998 (WHO, 2000).	
5. The development of safe and effective drugs to deal with bacterial infections has dramatically reduced the death rate arising from microbial diseases.	
6. During the post-war years, the development of effective and safe drugs to deal with bacterial infections has transformed medical treatment, and death and illness resulting from microbial disease has been dramatically reduced.	
7. The availability of antimicrobial compounds has transformed healthcare in the period since the second world war. People are far less likely to die or even be seriously ill than they had been prior to the introduction of these drugs.	