Documentation: QUOTES vs. PLAGIARISM

**Documentation** or attribution, in the form of a footnote or parenthetical citation, is required for:

1. Direct quotes
2. Paraphrases (indirectly quoting)
3. Summaries

**Plagiarism**, from the Latin for “kidnapper,” is the “false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of [kidnapping] the product of another person’s mind” and presenting it as yours (Linney, 21). Or (Linney 21) for MLA format.

**Quotations** - “A well-constructed thesis can write your paper for you,” Rocque said - should be smoothly worked into a sentence and introduced by identifying phrases that can put it in context and even add some spin, tone, or point-of-view.

> Because it provides both organization and a summary, “[a] well-constructed thesis can write your paper for you,” claims Rocque, a self-proclaimed expert.

To avoid monotonous sentence structure, experiment with different methods of integrating source material into your papers.

▶ **Vary the verbs** you use for attribution

The author acknowledges...suggests...observes...warns...admits...implies...speculates...believes...observes...predicts...explains...finds...concludes...discloses...

“A well-constructed thesis can write your paper for you,” Rocque insisted.

▶ **Vary the insertion** of your attributing phrase: at the beginning, of course, but also at the end or even in the middle of the quote.

“A well-constructed thesis,” Rocque believes, “can write your paper for you.”

**Paraphrases** – restating the material in your own words, possibly shortening it or using synonyms – still have to give attribution if they are primarily someone else’s idea. It’s amazingly easy to borrow too much language from a source, so resist the temptation to look at the source while paraphrasing unless you’ve decided to directly quote parts of it. If you retain some choice word or phrase from the original, you will need to put quotes around that specific material even though the rest is in your own words.

Some experts feel that a “well-constructed thesis” will give a student a good start which can end up outlining a paper (Rocque, 2005).

**Summaries** are like paraphrases but they report the significant information in fewer words than the source. Neither a paraphrase nor a summary borrows extensive language from a source: it’s a matter of degree.