

Educator guide

Academic integrity lesson ideas for remote learning

The following lesson ideas can help frame your classroom conversations about academic integrity, plagiarism and what constitutes original writing. They are organised by when in the writing process (**before**, **during** or **after**) these activities would be most effective.



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Academic integrity lesson ideas

We have created several activities throughout this guide that are accompanied by templates hosted in Google Docs. Copy and save the templates to your Google Classroom or Microsoft Teams account, then edit to fit the needs of your class. The templates are licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International Licence](#).

Note: For all activities, use texts that are accessible for students to read. Choose examples that are easy to decode and comprehend, so that students can focus their attention on identifying and avoiding plagiarism.

General tips for facilitating activities in a remote learning environment

- **Tip for assigning pairs/group work:** Depending on the activity, there are several ways students can virtually work in pairs/groups. Students can use 1) an email to share their document with another student and leave comments, 2) a video conferencing tool to share screens and discuss work, or 3) a collaborative application.
- **Tip for classroom discussion/instruction:** Classroom discussions are best facilitated using a 1) video conferencing tool to screen share, 2) discussion forum, or 3) collaborative application. If you'd like to address the class as a whole, consider recording and sharing mini instructional videos.
- **Tip for providing feedback on student work:** Provide feedback virtually on student work by 1) using a video conferencing tool to share your screen and discuss their work, 2) recording a video of you reviewing their work on the screen, or 3) using a classroom application (such as [Turnitin Feedback Studio](#)) to leave text and audio comments on their work.

Before

- **Think-aloud:** Demonstrate summarisation strategies by conducting a think-aloud either during a video class meeting or by recording and posting a video of yourself completing the activity. Present students with a short text on a familiar topic by sharing your screen with a document of the text. Identify the author of the source and emphasise that this text represents the author's ideas about the topic. Next, perform the think-aloud to model the metacognitive process of summarising. Discuss how one extracts the main idea of the text, highlighting key information and the most important details. Work to capture this information into your own words, and then use a word processing program to draft a sentence or two that accurately reflects the information in the passage. Finally, remind students that these ideas were not yours originally - they are a summary of the text provided - so you need to cite the author at the end of the summarised passage.

Note: Citations below adhere to the Chicago style guide. Educators may wish to edit the citation format to align to their institution's preferred style.

| Example text: | Correct summarisation: |
|--|--|
| <p>Since its first discovery by non-indigenous people in the mid-nineteenth century, Yosemite Valley has held a special, even religious, hold on the American conscience because its beauty makes it an incomparable valley and one of the grandest of all special temples of Nature. While Yosemite holds a special grip on the western mind, perceptions about the Valley have evolved over time due to changing politics, migration patterns and environmental concerns as man has become more attuned to his relationship and impact on nature.</p> <p>Work Cited: Harrick, C. "A Natural Setting." <i>Nature and its Discontents</i> 23.1 (1996): 41-50.</p> | <p>Yosemite Valley is revered as a special, sacred place, inspiring all to appreciate its beauty and value their connection and responsibility to nature.¹</p> <p>¹Harrick, "A Natural Setting," 43.</p> |

- **Analyse paraphrased text:** Provide students with a short text on a familiar topic (consider implementing the activity above first, then choosing a different text for this activity). After students have become familiar with the source, use a collaborative classroom application, such as tools available in Google Classroom (copy [template here](#)) or Microsoft Teams, and present them with at least three examples of "paraphrased" texts (consider the provided examples). Ask students to meet in pairs using a video conferencing tool and identify which of the three is the best example of how to paraphrase correctly. Have students share their answers and explain why the other two are incorrect approaches to paraphrasing during a virtual class meeting or by posting in a discussion forum or collaborative application.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Source text</p> | <p>Since its first discovery by non-indigenous people in the mid-nineteenth century, Yosemite Valley has held a special, even religious, hold on the American conscience because its beauty makes it an incomparable valley and one of the grandest of all special temples of Nature. While Yosemite holds a special grip on the western mind, perceptions about the Valley have evolved over time due to changing politics, migration patterns and environmental concerns as man has become more attuned to his relationship and impact on nature.</p> |
| <p>Correct paraphrasing</p> | <p>Throughout the last century, Yosemite Valley has amazed all who have visited it. While native cultures considered it sacred, more recent civilisations are beginning to appreciate not only the beauty of Yosemite Valley, but also how special it truly is. The way Americans treat the land is also beginning to change, as political discourse shifts to include conservationist principles that consider humans' responsibility to nature.¹</p> <p>¹ Harrick, "A Natural Setting," 43.</p> |
| <p>Incorrect (copied with no changes)</p> | <p>Since its first discovery by non-indigenous people in the mid-nineteenth century, Yosemite Valley has held a special, even religious, hold on the American conscience because its beauty makes it an incomparable valley and one of the grandest of all special temples of Nature. While Yosemite holds a special grip on the western mind, perceptions about the Valley have evolved over time due to changing politics, migration patterns and environmental concerns as man has become more attuned to his relationship and impact on nature.</p> |
| <p>Incorrect (only replaces some key words)</p> | <p>From the time of its first discovery by non-indigenous people in the mid-nineteenth century Yosemite Valley has held a special, even religious, possession on the American conscience because its beauty makes it an incomparable valley and one of the grandest of all special temples of Nature. And Yosemite holds a special grip on the western mind, while perceptions about the Valley have evolved over time due to changing politics, migration patterns and environmental concern as man has become more attuned to his relationship and impact or nature.</p> |
| <p>Incorrect (borrows mostly from source text and no citation)</p> | <p>From its first discovery by the Ahwahnechee in the mid-nineteenth century Yosemite Valley has held a unique, even religious, hold on the American conscience because its beauty makes it an incomparable valley and one of the grandest of all special temples of Nature. While Yosemite holds a special grip on the western mind, perceptions about the Valley have evolved over time reflecting changing politics, human migration patterns and the rise of environmental concerns as man has become more attuned to his relationship and impact on nature.</p> |

- **Identify evidence in an essay:** Provide students with an accessible text (consider these [student-voiced examples](#)) to practice finding evidence. Using a collaborative classroom application, such as tools available in Google Classroom (copy [template here](#)) or Microsoft Teams, copy/paste the text, then ask students to highlight the areas in which evidence from a source is being incorporated. Next, have students meet with a partner using a video conferencing tool to share their documents, compare answers and brainstorm the strategies used by the author to indicate source-based evidence (ex. quotation marks, source title/author's name is mentioned, transitional phrases, citations, etc.). Have students identify effective strategies for quoting information from sources with the class during a video class meeting or by posting in a discussion forum or collaborative application. Extension: Have students write a short-answer response to a prompt incorporating one or more of these strategies.
- **Summarise a text:** Compare summarising and paraphrasing during a video class meeting or by recording and posting an instructional video. Discuss the distinction between paraphrasing (putting someone else's ideas into your own words) and summarising (distilling the main point of a larger amount of information). Then, using a collaborative classroom application, such as tools available in Google Classroom (copy [template here](#)) or Microsoft Teams, provide students with a text on a familiar topic. After students have comprehended the source, have them work in pairs virtually to summarise its main point. Have students share their summaries in a discussion forum or collaborative application.
- **Paraphrase a sentence:** After completing the activity above, ask student pairs to choose two adjacent sentences to paraphrase. Using a collaborative classroom application, such as tools available in Google Classroom (copy [template here](#)) or Microsoft Teams, have them work independently to start, then virtually share their work with each other, allowing for revisions as needed. Have students share their paraphrased text in a discussion forum or collaborative application.
- **Compare types of plagiarism:** Using a collaborative classroom application, such as tools available in Google Classroom (copy [template here](#)) or Microsoft Teams, make a matching game out of the ten most common types of plagiarism. Note: The types of plagiarism are based on [The Plagiarism Spectrum](#). Assign students pairs and have them video conference to match the descriptions of each type of plagiarism to its example. Extension: Have students work individually or in pairs to appropriately summarise and/or paraphrase the content of the source text in The Plagiarism Spectrum.

During

- **Identify content from outside sources:** Ask students to highlight phrases/sentences in their essays that came from an outside source. Have students share their highlighted essays for feedback. Decide to either hold video conferences with students or record mini-videos providing feedback on their essays. When conferencing, consider using plagiarism-detection tools like this [Originality Report](#) to compare students' highlighted text to existing online and database sources. Acknowledge that textual evidence is expected in most forms of academic writing, but it is mandatory to properly cite the source from which it was acquired.
- **Formative feedback on paraphrasing, quoting and citing:** Have students share essays with you while drafting their work. Decide to either hold video conferences with students or record mini-videos providing feedback on their in-progress essays. Provide timely, formative feedback on what students are doing well and what needs to be improved before the final submission. Call out specific areas of the essay where students are appropriately paraphrasing, quoting and citing sources. Likewise, target areas of the writing where citations, paraphrasing or original ideas are needed. Consider these ready-to-use comments (made by veteran English educators) that provide actionable feedback to students on the key aspects of [plagiarism](#) and [academic integrity](#).

Source text

Since its first discovery by non-indigenous people in the mid-nineteenth century, Yosemite Valley has held a special, even religious, hold on the American conscience because its beauty makes it an incomparable valley and one of the grandest of all special temples of Nature. While Yosemite holds a special grip on the western mind, perceptions about the Valley have evolved over time due to changing politics, migration patterns and environmental concerns as man has become more attuned to his relationship and impact on nature.

After

- **Identify areas for improvement:** Set aside time to provide feedback on students' essays by hosting video conferences or by recording yourself talking about the essays while reviewing them on the screen. For developing writers, consider the readiness of the student when addressing academic integrity concerns. Some instances of plagiarism will be honest mistakes, so be objective when identifying the areas of the essay in question. Consider using [The Plagiarism Spectrum](#) and [these aligned comments](#) for Turnitin Feedback Studio to anchor your conversation and provide summative feedback on the task at hand. If possible, work together to identify a specific and measurable area for improvement (i.e. proper citation of sources) on which the student will focus during the next term.
- **Establish evaluation criteria for academic integrity:** Have consensus-building conversations about academic integrity with your colleagues. Articulate concerns (What factors indicate unintentional plagiarism vs. intentional plagiarism? What makes paraphrasing/summarising effective?) and clarify evaluation criteria (What are acceptable levels of paraphrased/summarised ideas? What is the threshold for escalating an incidence of academic dishonesty?) Come to a consensus around the appropriate norms for academic integrity and establish evaluation criteria that can be added to rubrics for formal writing (consider this [Paraphrasing Trait example](#) to springboard discussions).
 - Share virtual documents with colleagues representing a high-scoring example and a low-scoring example. Meet virtually and ask them to identify evidence of the academic integrity evaluation criteria. Compare and discuss selections. Then, show them the lower-scoring examples and repeat the process. Discuss what lead to score discrepancies amongst graders, come to consensus on the thresholds for performance levels, and identify specific examples from the essays for clear illustration (e.g. What factors determine whether writing is "proficient" or "advanced" in academic integrity?). When scoring norms are well-articulated, provide faculty with a set of new exemplars to be scored on the same rubric. Ask educators to score independently, then discuss their scores and rationales for scoring decisions.

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