



Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism: Plagiarism Examples and Solutions

Here are some examples of common incidents of plagiarism, and some explanations for how they can be easily fixed.

Original material:

“Although the findings seemed to contradict von Hess’s claims that fish were unable to perceive hues, Von Frisch ended on a solicitous note” (37).

Original Source (in MLA format):

Munz, Tania. *The Dancing Bees: Karl Von Frisch and the Discovery of the Honeybee Language*. University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Problem 1: Quotation marks but no reference or citation is included:

Von Frisch’s work apparently “contradict[s] von Hess’s claims that fish were unable to perceive hues”

Solution: add in the reference at the end of the sentence (here in MLA format):

Von Frisch’s work apparently “contradict[s] von Hess’s claims that fish were unable to perceive hues” (Munz 37).

Problem 2: Exact words are being used without quotation marks:

Von Frisch’s work disagreed with **von Hess’s claims that fish were unable to perceive hues**.

Solution: add in quotation marks and a citation (here in MLA format):

Von Frisch’s work disagreed with “von Hess’s claims that fish were unable to perceive hues” (Munz 37).

Problem 3: Copying the exact words from a source without using quotation marks, even if it is cited:

Von Hess and Von Frisch disagree about fish. Von Hess claims that fish are unable to perceive hues (Munz 37).

Solution: add in quotation marks around the quoted phrase (here in MLA format):

Von Hess and Von Frisch disagree about fish. Von Hess “claims that fish are unable to perceive hues” (Munz 37).

Problem 4: Paraphrasing (putting an idea into your own words) without citing the source being paraphrased.

Von Frisch disagreed with von Hess’s argument that fish can’t see hues.

Solution: include citation (here in MLA format):

Von Frisch disagreed with von Hess’s argument that fish can’t see hues (Munz 37).

Problem 5: Including too many of the original words and phrases, even if you do cite the source

Remember: even if you change a few words here and there, you are still plagiarizing, even if you cite your source (here in MLA format):

To paraphrase properly, you must:

- 1) change the words used
- 2) change the structure of the original

Von Frisch was **solicitous** even though he disagreed with von Hess, who argued **that fish can’t see hues** (Munz 37).

“Solicitous” is a specific (and particular) word used in the original, and changing “perceive” to “see” is not enough to suggest a structural change.

Solution: Von Hess argues that fish can’t see shades of colour, but Von Frisch disagrees (Munz 37).

This example demonstrates a change in the words used, and also a change in the structure from the original. This is a correct paraphrase that does not include plagiarism.

