Whose words are they?

Topic
This lesson plan seeks to identify how students use written information from the Internet for school projects. Discussion and reflection on current practice is used to identify and initiate ‘best practice’ guidelines to encourage students to avoid plagiarism and create their own works.

- Students will reflect on how they currently use reference materials and sources from the Internet.
- Students will identify what plagiarism is and discuss why it is inappropriate.
- Students will devise and use best practice guidelines to avoid plagiarism.

Year levels: Middle Childhood (8–11 years)

Values for Australian Schooling
- Care and compassion
- Doing your best
- Fair go
- Honesty and trustworthiness
- Integrity
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Understanding, tolerance and inclusion

KLA
- English
- Society and Environment
- Technology

Lesson plan

Introductory activity

Activity 1
Review key points about effective group work by asking students to brainstorm as a class. Ideas they could come up with include:
- giving everyone a fair go
- listening to and respecting others’ opinions
- being honest
- all members contributing to the work to the best of their ability
- being responsible.

Guided inquiry

Activity 2
Ask students to work in small groups. Each group will need to elect a facilitator, a recorder, a reporter and a timekeeper.
- The role of the facilitator is to ask the questions (see below) and ensure everyone contributes to the discussion.
The role of the recorder is to jot down some key points from the discussion.

The role of the reporter is to report back to the class the main points from the discussion.

The timekeeper ensures everyone in the groups stays focused and completes the task within the set time.

The group is to discuss different scenarios (see below) and decide whether they involve stealing/cheating and how they would feel if they were involved in such scenarios.

**Scenarios**

**Scenario 1**: You do a piece of artwork that you are proud of. A week later you see it printed in the school magazine under someone else’s name.

**Scenario 2**: You are doing a test and the person beside you copies some of your answers. When you get your results back, you find that the person who copied from you has got a better score than you.

**Scenario 3**: You put a lot of work into writing an essay and you think you should get a good grade. You put the essay in your desk ready to hand it in. When the teacher asks for all essays to be handed in, you discover it is not in your desk. You tell the teacher who does not believe you. The next day in class, the teacher reads out a model essay written by a classmate. It is your essay that someone is claiming as their own work.

**Questions**

In small groups, discuss each scenario by answering the following questions:

- Is this stealing/cheating?
- What might you do in the situation?
- How do you handle the situation?
- Is this fair? Why or why not?
- Is this honest? Why or why not?
- Is this respectful? Why or why not?
- Is this responsible? Why or why not?
- How does it make people feel?
- Would we want people to do that to us?

Remind students of the specific roles within the group, ie a facilitator, a recorder, a reporter and a timekeeper.

Each group is to report back to the class. Were there any similarities in each group’s responses? What were the similarities? Were there any differences in each group’s responses? Why or why not?

As a class discuss the following questions, reflecting on their initial brainstorm of effective group work.

- How did they work as a team?
- Did they think they worked effectively as a group? Why or why not?
- Is there anything they think they would do differently when they worked in a group next time?

**Activity 3**

Brainstorm with students what plagiarism is and come up with an agreed definition. Students can look up the meaning in the dictionary and use it as part of the class’s agreed definition.
Ask students to reflect on how they use the Internet currently for researching and writing up assignments. Some prompt questions could include:

- How do you access information?
- How do you answer questions?
- Do you show responsibility when referencing your information/sources?
- What changes do you need to make to avoid plagiarism?

In small groups, students work out a checklist of points to be used to avoid plagiarism when using the Internet. Groups create PowerPoint presentations of their findings and show these to the class.

**Culminating activity**

**Activity 4**

Students use the anti-plagiarism strategy/guidelines they have devised to complete a set research task. The research task could be to investigate the topic ‘plagiarism’. Set a word limit for this task, eg 200 words. The assessment criteria will include marks for writing in their own words, quoting their sources and showing evidence of following the principles. Ask the students to reflect on their plagiarism checklist and modify it, if necessary, after completing the task.

Individually, students write a response to the following questions in their workbooks:

- How do you show responsibility when completing research work?
- How does referencing your work correctly show respect?
- How does referencing your work show honesty?
- How do you do your best when completing research work?

Ask students to consider how they would use the checklist in the future? Where will they put the checklist for easy access for everyone, eg hang it in the classroom, place it on the Intranet?