

Name _____

Copying from the Net

As you conduct your online research, you may be tempted to copy information for your report. Obviously, copying is very easy to do since you can transfer whole sections of a download into your report.

However, you may want to consider the following:

Copying is illegal. When you copy more than a small portion of written material, you break copyright laws. If you want to copy anything more than a short section, you need to obtain permission from the person or organization that holds the copyright. Plagiarism, that is, copying directly from a source (on the Internet or anywhere else), is a crime.

Your teacher will know. You may be a terrific writer, but you are not a professional, and your teacher knows the difference between professionally written material and material written by students. What is your teacher's or school's policy on plagiarism? Do you get an automatic F? Will you have to do the assignment again?

It defeats the purpose of the project. Copying does nothing but exercise your fingers. When you're given a research project, you're supposed to exercise your brain - in several ways. First, you're supposed to learn how to get information. But of equal significance, you're supposed to learn about a topic. If you copy, you're not learning. Actually, learning *how to* get information, and learning *about the topic* are interrelated. When you learn something, you look for related information that expands in a logical way upon what you've written. If you copy, you haven't learned. So you can't expand logically. A hypertext link will expand, but not necessarily logically.