# Handout on Recognizing Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is commonly defined as representing as one's own the ideas and/or writing of another. This includes using another author's sentences or paragraphs, or significant portions thereof, without quotation marks and an appropriate citation, and also conveying information that is not commonly known without citing the authors whose original discovery or insight that information represents. Suppose that a biology student reads the following from a published paper while preparing an essay:

> "A class of maize mutants, collectively known as disease lesion mimics, display discrete disease-like symptoms in the absence of pathogens. It is intriguing that a majority of these lesion mimics behave as dominant gain-of-function mutations. The production of lesions is strongly influenced by light, temperature, developmental state and genetic background. Presently, the biological significance of this lesion mimicry is not clear, although suggestions have been made that they may represent defects in the plants' recognition of, or response to, pathogens. ... In this paper we argue that this might be the case ..."
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> - G.S. Johal, S.H. Hulbert, and S.P. Briggs. 1995. "Disease lesion mimics of maize: a model for cell death in plants." *BioEssays* 17:685-692.

Read each of the following sentences as if it turned up in the student's essay. In each blank, write "P" for plagiarism, "NP" for not plagiarism, "D" for depends on the circumstances, and "?" for unsure.

____ 1. Currently, the biological significance of lesion mimicry in plants is not known, although suggestions have been made that they may represent defects in the plants' recognition of, or response to, pathogens.

____ 2. Currently, the biological significance of lesion mimicry in plants is not known, although suggestions have been made that they may represent defects in the plants' recognition of, or response to, pathogens (Johal et al. 1995).

____ 3. "Currently, the biological significance of lesion mimicry in plants is not known, although suggestions have been made that they may represent defects in the plants' recognition of, or response to, pathogens" (Johal et al. 1995).

____ 4. The biological significance of lesion mimicry in plants is currently not known, although some researchers believe that they may represent defects in the ability of plants to recognize or respond to pathogens.

____ 5. The biological significance of lesion mimicry in plants is currently not known, although some researchers believe that they may represent defects in the ability of plants to recognize or respond to pathogens (Johal et al. 1995).

____ 6. Lesion mimicry has been proposed to be due to mutations in genes controlling the ability of plants to detect and respond to pathogens.

____ 7. Lesion mimicry has been proposed to be due to mutations in genes controlling the ability of plants to detect and respond to pathogens (Johal et al. 1995).

____ 8. Disease-like lesions in plants may be due to mutations in genes controlling the ability of plants to defend themselves against pathogens (Johal et al. 1995).

***This exercise was developed by Professor Charlotte Bronson, Department of Plant Pathology, Iowa State University.**