How to Recognize Plagiarism: Tutorials and Tests

Protecting your Data and Privacy

You are in charge of how you use our website on how to recognize plagiarism. You can choose which parts to use or not use. It's up to you.

Your Registration and Certification Test Results

We store your registration information on secure Indiana University computers. If you pass a Certification Test, we also store your unique test ID, the date and time at which you passed, the IP address of the device you used to take the test, duration of the test, and the test level (Undergraduate or Graduate).

You can later access your own information by logging in with your e-mail address and the password you created when registering. Your instructors can validate your Certificate only if you provide them with your unique test ID number and one other piece of information on the Certificate.

Improving this Instruction

In order to improve this online instruction, we use Google Analytics to record which parts of our website you use.

- We do **not** share individual information about how you specifically use our website.
- We do **not** share your registration information with Google.

In order for us to learn which parts of our website best help you succeed by passing a Certification Test, we use Google Analytics as a software tool to summarize overall patterns of our website usage. This website usage information is reported in aggregate form, which means that you cannot be identified individually, separately from the millions of other users of our website. To repeat, we do not share your Certification Test registration information with Google, and we do not share information with others about how you, in particular, specifically use our website.

If you want to obscure the location of your device (IP address), we recommend that you use VPN. If you do not want to be tracked by Google Analytics on this website, we recommend that you set your browser to its privacy mode, or instead use a browser which prevents tracking of website usage (e.g., *Brave*, *DuckDuckGo, etc.*).

We do not control how our learning resources are utilized by others.

We have no control over whether or not your teacher or school expects you to pass a Certification Test. We have not been specifically paid to develop and maintain these tutorials and tests. See our volunteers, who have made significant donations of their time and expertise to help students learn to recognize plagiarism--from 2002 to the present, now in our 3rd decade. Your school is not paying us, you are not paying us, we accept no paid advertising, nor do we sell your data to advertisers. See our privacy policy. We provide these tutorials and tests for free in good faith, as they are, with no guarantees or warranties implied. If you need extra help, we advise you to ask your teacher for assistance.

Logs of Certification Tests taken

Our testing software also stores logs of tests taken. These logs are purged on a regular basis because of high usage of Certification Tests and the amount of storage space required. During a busy week, more than 50,000 tests are taken (e.g., early in a semester in 2021-22), and on a busy day over 2,000 tests are passed.

The logs are primarily used for daily monitoring of usage of the testing system. Sometimes when users report problems, these logs can be helpful. For example, users occasionally have reported that they were "sure" they passed a Certification Test, but the system did not award them their Certificate. What we invariably found in the logs were one or more tests taken by that user which resulted in incorrectly answering 2 or more questions of the same type on that test, which in turn resulted in only *one link* to the *type of error* in their test result feedback. These users had incorrectly inferred that they only missed one question. This led us to add a new FAQ:

- I only missed one question. Why did I not pass the test? Is there something wrong with the test?

We also modified the wording on the test feedback page to further emphasize that these were types of mistakes, not how many questions were answered incorrectly. For each type of mistake, we revised the description of its associated plagiarism pattern to help students better understand why their answer was incorrect. We further added a link to the decision rules applied to determine the correct answer.

We do not share these logs with others, nor do we share a student's own test taking records with that student or with their teacher. These logs are primarily used for internal monitoring purposes, and they can help us detect abnormal activities--including attempts to hack or abuse the testing system. Logs are stored in a highly secure location at Indiana University, not on the Web, inaccessible by Web browsers, and restricted to a few Certification Test developers with proper authentication.

Logs further provide information about patterns of passing and failing Certification Tests. As an example, when we see the same student repeatedly failing one test after another, each with durations under one minute, this usually means that they are guessing answers and not carefully reading the test questions. This observation has led to adding yet another FAQ answer about the chances of passing a test solely by guessing.

Credits for Design and Development of this Instruction

Comments or questions? E-mail us.

Privacy Policy

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