



## Cheating: Here, There, Everywhere

When it comes to cheating, we've all heard the same old songs:

- "It's only cheating if you do it on a test."
- "Our teacher doesn't seem to care or notice, so it's okay to cheat."
- "I'm only cheating this one time because I didn't have a chance to study."
- "Everybody's doing it, so it's alright for me to do it, too!"

Being a student means being exposed to all sorts of \_\_\_\_\_ situations, and deciding what's right and what's wrong can be pretty \_\_\_\_\_. Even if you're \_\_\_\_\_ about school, it's normal to find yourself tempted to \_\_\_\_\_, especially when you're under a lot of \_\_\_\_\_. It's also common to think that since so \_\_\_\_\_ other students are \_\_\_\_\_, it's really not a big deal-especially if \_\_\_\_\_.

But no matter what you've heard or what excuses you can come up with, \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ deal. It can make \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ for you not just in school, but also with your family, friends, and, sometimes most importantly, \_\_\_\_\_.

## Cheating: What Counts, What Doesn't

In February 2003, a sixth-grade boy in Florida sneaked onto his teacher's computer and changed five of his assignment grades. He got caught, suspended, and then expelled from school.

Okay, so that's obviously \_\_\_\_\_. But sometimes it's not so easy to figure out if something counts as \_\_\_\_\_ or not, and it seems like everyone has his or her own opinion. So how can you decide for \_\_\_\_\_?

\_\_\_\_\_ in school is mostly about two things: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ **the** \_\_\_\_\_.



## **Cheating: Ways People Do It**

As you probably know, students can get pretty creative about how they \_\_\_\_\_. See how many of these have taken place in your school:

**Test copying**    *"There's this girl who sits next to me in Social Studies. She never covers her paper during a test. I can totally see what she writes, and I just write the same thing."*

\_\_\_\_\_ off a classmate's test is probably the most basic way of \_\_\_\_\_. Everybody gets frustrated when the answer to a test question just won't come, and it can be tempting to take a peek and see what someone else has put down. Other kids try to swap answers by whispering, passing notes, or even using hand signals. It's almost impossible to \_\_\_\_\_ this way without cooperation. If you let someone \_\_\_\_\_ off you or let another kid know \_\_\_\_\_ answers, you're just as \_\_\_\_\_ as he is, and you can get into just as much \_\_\_\_\_.

**Cheat sheets**    *"I had an important test that I was really worried about, so at lunch period I wrote a bunch of stuff on my ankle, and looked at it during the test."*

\_\_\_\_\_ figure out some pretty clever ways to sneak notes or answers into a test. They write facts on little pieces of paper, on the sleeves of a shirt, and even on their skin. Some hide open books under their desks or in their laps. Students have even found ways to use cell phones and pagers as \_\_\_\_\_ sheets, by sending themselves text messages! Imagine if they spent that creative effort actually \_\_\_\_\_ the material before the test!

**Homework copying**    *"My friend Melanie and me are in the same math class, and we have a homework deal. She does the odd numbered problems, I do the evens, and we trade answers on the bus the next day."*

\_\_\_\_\_ all or part of a homework assignment or project from another student is the same as copying off another kid's test paper. It's a form of \_\_\_\_\_.



## **Cheating: Excuses, Excuses**

Most kids who \_\_\_\_\_ in school know that \_\_\_\_\_ is wrong. But because they don't want to think of themselves as " \_\_\_\_\_," they come up with a whole bunch of reasons why they have to \_\_\_\_\_. Let's take a look at some of the popular ones:

### **I. THE EXCUSE: School is hard.**

*All my classes are totally hard, and I can't keep up. If I don't \_\_\_\_\_, my grades will be terrible."*

**Why It's Lame:** School isn't supposed to be \_\_\_\_\_. If you already knew all the answers, you wouldn't actually \_\_\_\_\_ anything. If you try your best and the material still seems way harder for you than anybody else, it's time to talk to your teacher, counselor or parent. \_\_\_\_\_ to get better grades will just hide the problem and, in the long run, just make school even more \_\_\_\_\_.

### **II. THE EXCUSE: School is unfair.**

*"Other kids have advantages over me. Some are smart, some are teacher's pets, and some even get private tutors. The only way I can get the same grades is to cheat sometimes."*

**Why It's Lame:** Yep, some kids make it all look \_\_\_\_\_, and that can seem unfair. But \_\_\_\_\_ is just another way of being \_\_\_\_\_, isn't it? Let's say that you're the high scorer on your school's basketball team. Another kid sees you making it look easy, and thinks this gives her an excuse to \_\_\_\_\_. You'd be angry, right? Breaking the \_\_\_\_\_ is not the way to even things up.

### **III. THE EXCUSE: Everybody's doing it.**

*" \_\_\_\_\_ is no big deal because all the kids do it, and only the ones who are obvious get caught."*

**Why It's Lame:** People -- kids *and* adults -- do all sorts of things because they think everyone else does them, like taking towels from hotel rooms or driving through "Stop" signs. However, the fact that a lot of people do it and don't get \_\_\_\_\_ doesn't make it any less \_\_\_\_\_. Cheating is against the \_\_\_\_\_ for very good reasons, and the fact that someone else did it and got away with it doesn't change this. Try to make your own \_\_\_\_\_ about what's right and wrong, and stay true to them.

#### **IV. THE EXCUSE: It's only cheating if you do it on tests.**

*My friends and I give each other the answers on homework and other stuff we do in class. It's not the same as \_\_\_\_\_ on a test."*

**Why It's Lame:** Homework and class projects are important ways to learn, and all students are supposed to finish their work on their \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ on tests is one kind of \_\_\_\_\_, but it's not the only kind. Any time you \_\_\_\_\_ someone else's work or take credit for something you didn't do, it's still \_\_\_\_\_, and it's still \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **V. THE EXCUSE: It's not cheating, it's teamwork.**

*"We're supposed to cooperate with other kids, right? So why can't we work together and trade answers?"*

**Why It's Lame:** Sometimes teachers will assign \_\_\_\_\_ projects where you work with other students. But most assignments are supposed to be done by each student on his or her \_\_\_\_\_, because this makes sure everyone understands every part of the lesson. If you only do \_\_\_\_\_ an assignment, and your friend does the other \_\_\_\_\_, then each of you is only learning \_\_\_\_\_ the material, instead of both of you learning all of it. Even on group projects, each student is supposed to work hard, and if somebody ends up doing a lot less, this is a form of \_\_\_\_\_.

## VI. THE EXCUSE: This subject isn't important.

*"I never \_\_\_\_\_ in my favorite classes, but some classes are just dumb, and the things they teach have nothing to do with my life."*

**Why It's Lame:** There are only so many hours in the school day, and teachers work hard to make sure the subjects that get taught are the most important ones. There may be classes that you don't like or that don't come as easy to you, but this doesn't mean that the lessons aren't important. Getting a complete and well-rounded education means learning all kinds of \_\_\_\_\_ things, and you can't \_\_\_\_\_ if you \_\_\_\_\_.

## VII. THE EXCUSE: I don't like my teacher.

*"I don't like my teacher, and I don't think he likes me. So I just think it's okay to \_\_\_\_\_ in his class."*

**Why It's Lame:** Your feelings about your teacher shouldn't have anything to do with how you do your assignments and take tests. Although it's \_\_\_\_\_ to have a teacher that you like, the main \_\_\_\_\_ of a teacher is to help you \_\_\_\_\_, and you're expected TO TRY and to do your work and not \_\_\_\_\_ no matter who your teacher is.

## VIII. THE EXCUSE: I don't have time to study.

*"I'm stressed for time every day. When I cheat, it's only because I've got so much going on that there's no time left to study."*

**Why It's Lame:** If you don't have enough \_\_\_\_\_ to study, consider cutting back on your other \_\_\_\_\_, not your \_\_\_\_\_. Like it or not, school is meant to be your top \_\_\_\_\_, and if other interests are taking too much \_\_\_\_\_ and energy \_\_\_\_\_ from it, things probably have to \_\_\_\_\_. Ask a parent to help you rearrange your schedule so you have \_\_\_\_\_ time for \_\_\_\_\_ every single day.

## IX. THE EXCUSE: My parents expect perfect grades.

*"My mom and dad put soooo much pressure on me about grades, they complain when I get B's and C's. I need A's. So I \_\_\_\_\_."*

**Why It's Lame:** Most parents want their kids to get good grades because of what the grades represent: working \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. In other words, it's \_\_\_\_\_ the grade, not the \_\_\_\_\_ itself, that's important. If you're having trouble earning the grades a parent expects of you, consider talking to her or him about what it would take to do \_\_\_\_\_, including more \_\_\_\_\_ set aside for \_\_\_\_\_ or outside tutoring. If you feel your parent's \_\_\_\_\_ are too \_\_\_\_\_ or putting too much \_\_\_\_\_ on you, you may want to discuss this with a school \_\_\_\_\_.

## Cheating: Why It's Wrong



### Cheating: Take Action!

Perhaps the most important thing to learn about \_\_\_\_\_ is that there are many, many ways to help keep it \_\_\_\_\_ of your life. Here are some ideas:

#### Work with a parent or guardian

- Understand your family's attitudes about \_\_\_\_\_
- Talk about school, and be \_\_\_\_\_ about how you're doing in your class.
- If you've been feeling a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ about grades, \_\_\_\_\_ about how these expectations make you feel.
- Ask for \_\_\_\_\_ on doing better in school without having to \_\_\_\_\_.
- If you're \_\_\_\_\_, discuss \_\_\_\_\_ like extra help or school study programs.
- If you don't have enough time, talk about cutting \_\_\_\_\_ on other activities.
- Ask adults what they did about the problem of \_\_\_\_\_ when they were in school.
- Discuss the difference between \_\_\_\_\_ good grades and getting them by \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Work with your teachers or school counselors

- Make sure you understand which activities your teacher views as \_\_\_\_\_ so that there's no \_\_\_\_\_ about it.
- Make sure you know all the \_\_\_\_\_ and requirements for assignments and tests, and when it's \_\_\_\_\_ to work with other students.
- When writing papers and projects, make sure you know all the rules about giving credit for quotes and other people's ideas.
- Make sure you know your school's official penalties for \_\_\_\_\_.
- If you're struggling in \_\_\_\_\_ or finding the work too \_\_\_\_\_, tell your teacher or counselor about it.

- If you feel your \_\_\_\_\_ could do more to prevent \_\_\_\_\_, be honest about it.
- If you know of ways that kids are getting away with \_\_\_\_\_, discuss it with your \_\_\_\_\_ or counselor.

### **Work with your friends**

- Make sure your friends know that you want to \_\_\_\_\_ the grades that you get.
- If you feel that \_\_\_\_\_ is a big deal, make sure your friends \_\_\_\_\_ this.
- Talk about how \_\_\_\_\_ is the same thing as \_\_\_\_\_.
- Talk about how cheating is \_\_\_\_\_ to those who actually do the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Don't agree to \_\_\_\_\_ answers on any assignments or tests.
- It's okay to \_\_\_\_\_ together, but remember that homework assignments should be \_\_\_\_\_ alone.
- Don't \_\_\_\_\_ your homework or assignments for anyone else to \_\_\_\_\_ at, and don't ask to \_\_\_\_\_ at anyone else's.
- Try not to sit near anyone who you know to be a \_\_\_\_\_.
- Try not to \_\_\_\_\_ or congratulate anyone who finds a way to \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Make it easy to resist the temptation to cheat**

- Take as little as possible into the test, like just your pencil and your \_\_\_\_\_.
- Don't write notes on anything that you could \_\_\_\_\_ at during a test.
- Keep all your books and papers where you can't easily see them.
- Keep your \_\_\_\_\_ on your paper, and \_\_\_\_\_ away from your friends if you can.
- If somebody starts whispering to you, pretend you don't \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- Cover up your paper so that others can't \_\_\_\_\_ off you.
- Try not to do anything that you would have to \_\_\_\_\_ from your teacher.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and focus on the answers that you do know.
- Try to accept that it isn't always possible to get a perfect grade, and do your \_\_\_\_\_.

## **CHRISTIAN:**

Christian isn't the top student in the 6th grade, but he tries very hard to do his best and gets decent grades. At the beginning of the year, his parents made a deal with him: if he gets all A's and B's on his midterm report card, they'll let him take that river rafting trip with his best friend over the summer. Math is the subject Christian has the most trouble with. He knows that the upcoming math midterm is the one thing that can really mess up his chances of getting to take his summer trip. As the big test gets closer, Christian decides to overcome his fear of fractions and goes to afterschool math tutoring every day for two weeks straight. Each night after dinner, instead of watching TV or playing PS2 with his brother, he hits the books.

When test day arrives, Christian feels ready. He's sitting in class with his sharpened No. 2 pencil, waiting for the teacher to pass back the test, when he notices Jessica, who sits next to him, scribbling down numbers on a small piece of paper. She's making a cheat sheet! Jessica slips the sheet into her pocket. During the whole exam, Christian sees that she keeps looking at it for answers and the teacher never notices!

At the end of the period, Jessica hands in her test and walks out of the classroom, totally getting away with everything. Christian feels he did okay on the test, but knows Jessica will probably get a better grade than him. "It's not fair!" he thinks to himself as he leaves the classroom without saying a word to the teacher.

### **1. Do you think Christian should tell on Jessica?**

- Yes! She deserves to be exposed for the cheater that she is.
- No way! Christian shouldn't tattle-tale on a fellow classmate.
- It depends how he does on the test. If he doesn't do as well as he hoped, he should tell on her to "even things up."

### **2. If Christian does decide to say something to the teacher, what's the best way for him to do it?**

- Tell the teacher what he saw, but ask her not to tell anyone how she found out.
- Write an anonymous note to the teacher.
- Go to Jessica and tell her that if she doesn't say anything, he will.

### **3. Would you rather study and get a lower grade, or cheat and get a higher one?**

- I'd rather work for a grade, even if it's lower than I'd like.
- I'd rather get a higher grade, even if it involves cheating.
- Sometimes one, sometimes the other; it depends on the situation

## **Ashlee and Jenelle**

Ashlee and Jenelle have been best friends since the 2nd grade. They sit next to each other in every class, eat lunch at the same table, and spend most weekends at each other's house.

When Jenelle suddenly gets a chance for her and a friend to go to a B2K concert one night, she and Ashlee are totally psyched. But then Ashlee remembers that she's gotten really behind in her Social Studies workbook. She has to finish twenty pages before tomorrow's class if she's going to keep her A. It's difficult, but Ashlee decides to stay home and work while Jenelle goes to the concert. It takes a long time, but Ashlee finally finishes her pages and feels good about her decision.

The next day, before Social Studies class, Jenelle's freaking. She tells Ashlee that because of the concert, she couldn't finish her workbook. "Can I copy yours?" she asks Ashlee. Ashlee knows that this is risky, because their teacher will probably notice that their answers are the same. "It's not fair," she thinks. "Why should Jenelle get to go to the concert *and* hand in her work on time, when I had to choose between them?" She tells Jenelle no, and Jenelle gets so upset that she says she doesn't want to be friends anymore.

### **1. Was Jenelle overreacting to Ashlee's decision to not help her cheat?**

- Yes! She should know that cheating is wrong, especially off your best friend.
- I don't think so! If Ashlee was her real friend, she would have helped her out.
- I see why she was mad at first, but she should understand Ashlee's decision and forgive her.

### **2. What would you have done in Ashlee's situation?**

- I would have done the same thing.
- I would have let Jenelle copy my work.
- I would have gone to the concert with Jenelle!

### **3. What do you do when a friend asks to copy your work?**

- I let them, and they do the same for me when I need it.
- I tell them no, but offer to help if they need it.
- Sometimes I say yes, sometimes I say no. It depends on the situation

## **Kiyoke**

Kiyoke does well in all of her subjects except Geography -- she thinks learning about different countries is boring. When her teacher has the class do reports on different countries, she's NOT excited. Even worse, she got assigned some weird country she's never even heard of!

When Kiyoke gets home that day, she's bummed out over having to write the report, and tells her older brother Sammy about the whole thing. Sammy tells her he had to do the same report, on the same country, two years ago, and he actually still has it on the computer! To help give her some ideas for her own paper, he opens up the old file for Kiyoke to look at.

Sitting at the computer, Kiyoke realizes it would be really easy to just replace her brother's name with her own, change a few things here and there, then hand it in. It would be plagiarizing since the work isn't hers, but it would be A LOT easier than writing the paper herself, and she could focus on the classwork she likes more.

### **1. Should Kiyoke turn in her brother's paper as her own?**

- Yes! The teacher won't remember a paper from two years ago.
- No, because the teacher would probably figure out it wasn't her work.
- No, because it's wrong to turn in work that isn't yours.

### **2. What do you think is the worst that could happen if Kiyoke gets caught plagiarizing her brother's paper?**

- She could fail her assignment.
- She could get kicked out of school.
- She'd betray her teacher and family's trust.

### **3. Have you ever plagiarized? What happened?**

- I got caught and I failed the assignment.
- I got away with it.
- I've never plagiarized anything