Ethical Use of Sources Exercise

Four ways sources are often used in student writing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ctrl – C</th>
<th>Remix</th>
<th>404 error</th>
<th>Find &amp; Replace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text is copied from the original source.</td>
<td>The original idea is present, but it is written in the student’s own words.</td>
<td>Text contains inaccurate information or misrepresents a source’s original idea.</td>
<td>The only changes made to the original text are replacing a few words or phrases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Original source

Taking an object that has been abandoned or given away is not considered theft. But copying the ideas of an anonymous author, or claiming credit for an idea given to you by a friend who does not wish to claim authorship, is considered plagiarism. If words and ideas were merely property, and plagiarism merely a form of theft, then there would be nothing wrong with buying the rights to authorship from another, as in the case of commercial term-paper services. But credit for authorship is not something that can be sold or given away. Credit for authorship is so undetachable that even the reverse of theft, falsely attributing one’s own work to another, is wrong; it constitutes forgery.

Text adapted from:

Each paragraph below is a different attempt to use the source material above, as in a student paper. Each represents a different one of the 4 types of use above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of source #1</th>
<th>Type of Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking an object that has been given away is not considered theft, but copying the ideas of an anonymous author is considered plagiarism. If words and ideas were merely property, and plagiarism merely a form of theft, then there would be nothing wrong with buying the rights to authorship from another, as in the case of commercial term-paper services. But credit for authorship is not something that can be sold or given away.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*What changes can you make to the paragraph above so the original source is being used ethically?*
Taking an object that has been abandoned or given away is not considered theft. But copying the ideas of an anonymous author, or claiming credit for an idea given to you by a friend who does not wish to claim authorship, is considered plagiarism. If words and ideas were merely property, and plagiarism merely a form of theft, then there would be nothing wrong with buying the rights to authorship from another, as in the case of commercial term-paper services. But credit for authorship is not something that can be sold or given away. Credit for authorship is so undetachable that even the reverse of theft, falsely attributing one’s own work to another, is wrong; it constitutes forgery.


**Use of source #2**

Taking an object that has been abandoned or given away is not considered stealing. But copying the ideas of an anonymous creator, or claiming credit for an idea given to you by a friend who does not wish to claim credit, is considered plagiarism. If words and ideas were merely property, and plagiarism merely a form of stealing, then there would be nothing wrong with buying the rights to authorship from another, as in the case of commercial term-paper services. But credit for authorship is not something that can be sold or given away.

*What changes can you make to the paragraph above so the original source is being used ethically?*

**Use of source #3**

Plagiarism is not just another form of theft, as words and ideas are not the same as property - the credit for creating the words and ideas will always rest with the author, even if those words and ideas could be sold or given away.

*What changes can you make to the paragraph above so the original source is being used ethically?*

**Use of source #4**

There is nothing wrong with buying the rights to authorship from another, as in the case of commercial term-paper services.

*What changes can you make to the paragraph above so the original source is being used ethically?*