

What is an Author?

➤ **Assignment Overview:** Allows students to put themselves in the author's shoes and consider from that point of view what it means to be an author and what an author's rights are.

Description:

Divide the class into small groups.

Have each group discuss and consider the following questions and record ideas.

Reconvene the class for a large group discussion.

Role-play the plight of an author who discovers that someone is using his or her work without permission and earning lots of money for it.

Authorship, Rights of Authors, Responsible Use of Other's Work

In small groups, discuss the following questions and write your best answers in the spaces following:

- What or who is an author? What does it mean to create something?
- Are you an author? Name some of the things that you have created.
- Suppose you wrote a prize-winning essay about information literacy. You win a certificate and a handshake from the dean of your college. Then you find out that your roommate sent your essay to a magazine essay contest with his or her name on it instead of yours. Your roommate wins \$5,000 and a spot on a popular TV show. How do you feel about what just happened? What can you do about what your roommate did?
- Suppose your roommate took only one paragraph of your essay and still won the money and the TV experience. Would you feel any differently?
- Suppose your roommate took your ideas, changed the language just a little and won the money. Now how do you feel?
- What is plagiarism?
- Why is it important to cite your sources (tell others whose intellectual property you used) when writing or doing other kinds of research? List all possible reasons you can think of.

➤ **Purpose and Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrates an understanding of intellectual property, copyright, and fair use of copyrighted material.
2. Demonstrates an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism and does not represent work attributable to others as his/her own.

➤ **ACRL Information Literacy Standards incorporated in this assignment:**

Standard 5 - An understanding of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.