

Common copyright questions:

Question: I print out pages from the Internet, photocopy them, and pass them along to my faculty for professional development discussions. May I legally print out pages from the Internet and duplicate them?

Answer: Under fair use you may make a single copy of up to a chapter of a book or an article of a magazine (not the entire work) for your own personal use and education, including use in teaching. These teachers aren't your students so they don't qualify for the fair use exemption. (If they were your students, you would have some limited ability to make multiple copies.) You will need permission to make the copies you describe.

Question: A teacher shows feature films (students bring them from home) on Friday afternoons. The teacher says that watching movies is part of their lesson plan focused on social skills. Is this a copyright infringement?

Answer: A film where the characters are forced to make decisions may fit within the fair use guidelines. The film must be legally obtained (purchased or rented). The teacher would stop the film; the students would discuss the options and possible repercussions. The students would then watch the rest of the film and see what happened. At the end they would discuss what had happened and why. This could qualify as fair use. However, showing cartoons or films for reward is specifically prohibited – no matter what someone writes down in a lesson. Such use requires performance rights.

Question: I bought a book of worksheets, cut the worksheets apart to create a new sheet, scanned the new worksheet and am distributing copies to the class. Is that acceptable?

Answer: You will need to receive permission from the publisher of the consumable material. Just because the technology exists to reproduce an item electronically, the user of the technology does not have the right to do so.

Example of permission letter/e-mail:

Dear Permissions Editor:

I am in the process of creating (describe project). I would like your permission to include the following material for this project:

(list citation with source information)

The project will be used (describe how the material will be used). It will be accessible by (describe users/participants). I would greatly appreciate your consent to my request. If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

(signature)

(typed name, address, phone number and e-mail address)

Examples of permission statement to include on any document:

Reprinted with permission

Phi Delta Kappan

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OR

Permission granted from ASCD.

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