

COPYRIGHT

WHAT IS COPYRIGHT?

Copyright law protects an individual's right to control the use of their intellectual property. Copyright law was created to protect the artist, creator or holder of the copyright from unlawful use of their material. Copyright law applies to literature, music, lyrics, plays, choreography, pictures, photos, sculptures, graphics, movies, audiovisual works and sound recordings.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Copyright doesn't last forever. Any work whose copyright has expired is considered to be in the public domain. An author's copyright on his/her work is for his/her lifetime plus seventy years after his/her death.

INFRINGEMENT

If you use copyrighted material without permission, you may be liable for copyright infringement. Copyright infringement can result in a lawsuit and some very heavy penalties for your publication and your school.

Quotes

Brief quotes are generally acceptable. Obviously, you can use quotes that are within the public domain. You can also quote public figures with appropriate attribution.

Cartoon Characters

Any cartoon character in a cartoon strip, TV show or movie is likely copyrighted, and is potentially protected by trademark law as well.

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Games such as Monopoly®, Trivial Pursuit®, etc. are also subject to copyright and trademark protection and cannot be reproduced without permission.

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Subject to "fair use" limitations, you may be able to use a limited number of lines of a song's lyrics without copyright infringement.

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Titles are not copyrightable because they are by their nature not sufficiently original. They are available to the public without compensation to the author. However, some titles may qualify as trademarks if they are used on merchandise.

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Photographs of celebrities are subject to copyright protection, with their rights usually owned by the person who took the photograph or the publisher of the photograph.

Currency

You can reproduce currency as long as it lacks reproductive detail. You can safely include images of currency in your publication as long as its size and color are not the same as the original.

INTERNET

Rights and issues relating to publicity and privacy, libel, obscenity, copyright and trademark must still be considered if the material is posted on the internet or taken from the internet.

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A phrase or a title cannot be copyrighted, but it can be trademarked. A trademark is a word, name, symbol, device or any combination of these items used to identify a product by a manufacturer. Most trademarks carry one of these symbols: ®, TM or SM.

The purpose of trademarks is to identify the source of a product and give a representation of consistent and desirable quality symbolized by that mark.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions on copyright or if you are unsure if you are using copyrighted material, please reach out to your Yearbook Representative. We have someone on staff who is able to review and give you an answer.