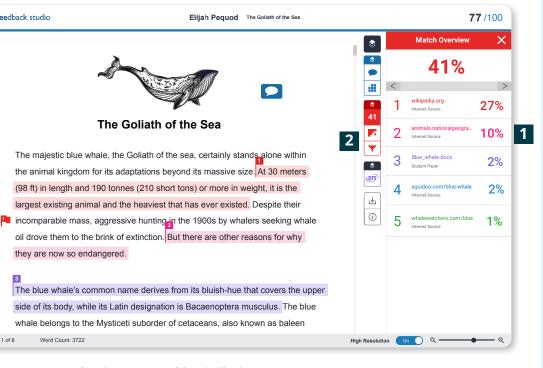# Understanding the Turnitin Similarity Report

A student guide

The Turnitin Similarity Report quantifies how similar your work is to other pieces of writing, highlighting any areas in your paper that match outside sources. Using that information, educators can determine if the matches are appropriate or not, based on assignment expectations and your school's acceptable thresholds. Continue reading to better understand what this information means and how you can use it to improve your writing.

Similarity Score

The Similarity Score represents the percentage of your writing that is similar to something found on the internet, in our databases, or in someone else's paper. Similarity does not mean that your work is plagiarized. Educators should be considering acceptable forms of similarity, like quotations, citations, and bibliographic material when they review the score.

What is a reasonable Similarity Score?

There is no fixed number to receive as a score in your Turnitin Similarity Report. Consult your educator for details on your school's acceptable threshold for assignments.

- A high Similarity Score means that very little of your paper is your own writing.
- Zero similarity means that you aren't including any source-based evidence, a requirement for many assignments.
- Some similarity is usually expected.

Review the chart at the end of this document for more information.

Match Overview [1]

The Match Overview offers a clear summary of sources that match text in your writing. A high percentage score shows a larger degree of text that is similar, and matches are highlighted in the same color.

Similarity Insights Panel [2]

The Match Overview reveals the overall Similarity Score and a list of sources that match your writing. The colors in this list match the colors highlighted in your writing.

All Sources
Every source that matches the text in your writing is available to review.

Filters and Settings
Use filters and settings to exclude citations, quotes, or bibliographic information from your writing.

- Settings are usually controlled by the educators during assignment set up. If quotations are being highlighted within your text, speak with your educator about the filters and settings for your assignment.

What can I do with the information in my report?

The information in your Turnitin Similarity Report should help you make decisions about how to improve your writing, whether that is in later drafts of the same assignment or on future assignments of a different nature. If you have the opportunity to revise your writing based on your Similarity Score, consider the following:

• Choose only the most significant quotes or parts of quotes to include from your sources.

• Summarize, paraphrase, or explain an idea in your own words rather than quoting it directly.

• Cite all of your evidence using the appropriate citation style.

What should I do if I need help with my score?

Educators can access the same Similarity Reports as students. If you have questions or concerns about your score or any information within your report, discuss it with your educator in a timely manner.

• Bring details and data from your paper and your report so you can have an informed conversation about your current score and how you can make changes to improve.

• Spend some time before this conversation reflecting on your work, noting areas that may need attention, and determining ways that you can revise your writing to improve your Similarity Score.

What should I do if:	Consider the following:
...my score is too high? This means that too much of your paper comes from other sources.	• Balance the information that you use from texts with your own writing. • Determine when it would be most appropriate to paraphrase, summarize, or explain an idea in your own words. • Properly cite each source that you reference.
...my score is too low? This means that too little of your paper comes from other sources.	• Balance your own writing with the information that you use from sources. • Determine when it would be most appropriate to quote directly from a source or paraphrase information to add research-based support for your claim. • Properly cite each source that you reference.
...large sections of my paper come from a source? This means that too much of your paper comes from other sources.	• Include your own words in your writing where necessary. • Select only the most important part of each quote, rather than including an entire paragraph that includes extraneous information. • Explain each quote that you reference, offering an analysis of how it applies to your claim.
...large sections of my paper are only my words? This means that too little of your paper comes from other sources.	• Include research-based information that can support your claim. • Properly cite each source that you reference.