Skills Boost: Referencing and Plagiarism

Activity: Is this plagiarism?
Which of the following examples do you think are instances of plagiarism?

Copying the work of another student with their permission?
Sam has already finished his assignment and has emailed it to Adele to read. Sam says that if there is anything in his essay that Adele wants to use, she is free to copy it and doesn’t need to acknowledge him. Adele includes several paragraphs of Sam’s essay in her own assignment and does not credit Sam.

Plagiarism? Yes □ No □

Quoting a small section of text from a website without including a reference?
Idris has found a great website about the treatment of ceruminous adenoma. He copies one sentence into his own dissertation. Although Idris puts the sentence in quotation marks, it is so short that he doesn’t include a reference to the website.

Plagiarism? Yes □ No □

Including a well-known fact in your essay without including a reference?
Daisy is working on her presentation. One of her slides indicates that the currency of the United Kingdom is the Pound Sterling. Daisy hasn’t included a reference.

Plagiarism? Yes □ No □

Copying a diagram from a book and not including a reference?
Marina is completing her assignment on plant cell walls. She has included a diagram showing AGP distribution in tobacco BY-2 cells, which she found in a journal article. Marina doesn’t reference the article, but she hasn’t included any of the article’s text – only the diagram.

Plagiarism? Yes □ No □

Using ideas from another author without including a reference, but putting them into your own words?
Lionel has read a very long article about law and morality by Joseph Raz, but has not quoted Raz directly in his essay. However, Lionel has summarised some of Raz’s ideas and has always made sure to use his own words. Lionel has not referenced Raz.

Plagiarism? Yes □ No □