

The Black and White of Copyright

Galadriel Chilton, August 2003

The black and white of copyright is gray.
It all depends on what the judge will say.
But you don't have to think of servin' time
If you listen to the pointers in this rhyme.

For one, consider spontaneity.
You find, one night, a perfect piece-or three
That fit the next day's lesson plan so well
You run off 30 copies and it's swell.

With copying, remember brevity.
Just 10 percent when using books is key.
For short poems or an illustration,
Copy the whole thing on one occasion.

My third point is cumulative effect,
A principle it's sinful to neglect.
Copy once from an author or a book,
Nine handouts a course skirts the legal hook.

Your copies need a copyright statement,
A sign in place of royalty arrangement.
Ignore these points and risk, please understand,
Fines upwards of, oh my, 100 grand.

Duplicate this rhyme, there's no commission
Just ask me once, I'll give permission.
Keep this poem as a choice possession
To avoid copyright transgression.

But, there is more to copyright advice
Than stringing out some stanzas that sound nice.
Complicated concepts do not all rhyme,
So talk with your librarian sometime.