Where do you draw the line?

Number 1. is plagiarism. Number 6. is not. Where do you draw the line?

Note: for this exercise, a bibliography is defined as a list of books relevant to the piece of writing but not necessarily cited in the text; a reference list contains all the sources cited in the text.

1. Copying a paragraph verbatim from a source without any acknowledgement

2. Copying a paragraph and making small changes - e.g. replacing two verbs with different verbs, replacing an adjective with a synonym. Listing the original source in the list of references

3. Constructing a paragraph by using sentences from the original but omitting one or two and putting one or two sentences in a different order. There is an in-text acknowledgement at the end [ (Jones, 1999) ] plus the original source is included in the reference list

4. Composing a paragraph by taking short phrases of 10 to 15 words from a number of sources and putting them together, adding words of your own to make a coherent whole paragraph; including all the original sources in the reference list.

5. Writing a paragraph based on something you have read with the points in a different order. The new version will also have changes in the amount of detail used and the examples cited; including an in-text acknowledgement e.g. (Jones, 1999) and listing the original source in the reference list

6. Quoting a paragraph by placing it in block format with the source cited in text & list of references.

Based on an exercise in Academic Writing for Graduate Students by Swales and Feak, University of Michigan, 1993

Scroll down for the answer:
Answer: Numbers 5 and 6 are not plagiarism. Number 5 is an example of what you should try to do – paraphrase and acknowledge the source of the work.