

Publishing: An Editor's perspective

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Objectives

- Discuss why writing for publication is important
- Outline the steps in selecting a topic and a journal
- Develop a strategy for writing an article
- Identify issues surrounding plagiarism and reference errors
- Examine common pitfalls in the writing process

Why publish?

- Fame and fortune??
- Personal satisfaction
- Academic requirement
- Building a resume
- Making a contribution to your field





Fame and Fortune

- Fortune no- with the exception of commissioned work, most journals do not pay for articles.
- Consider this- in many science journals you can expect to PAY up to \$3000 for the privilege of having them publish your article

Fame

Publishing is a great way to get your name 'out there'. Often when groups are looking for a speaker they look to see who is publishing on their topic of interest.





Career Building

- Publishing is an excellent way to build your CV, work towards a promotion or raise or get prepared for an academic career.
- Masters or PhD in your future? It's a competitive world out there- publishing will set you apart from others at a similar point in your field

Contributing to your profession

- Advancing knowledge
- Clarifying thoughts
- Informing theory or practice
- Inviting help or criticism
- Stirring debate
- Sharing wisdom or innovation

Six Myths that Haunt Writers

K. Henson

- I am not sure I have what it takes
- I do not have time to write
- I do not have anything worth writing about
- The editor will reject my work because my name is not familiar to them
- My vocabulary and writing skills are too limited
- In my field there are few opportunities to publish

Henson, K. T. (1999). *Writing for professional education*. MA: Allyn & Bacon.

There is no 'WHY NOT'

- If you can read, think critically ...you are on your way to becoming a published author.

Getting Started

- Write, write, write
- Offer to review articles, do book reviews or critique colleagues work
- Read Read Read- be attentive to style, flow, what appeals to you in what you read and what irritates you.

Formula for success

- Brilliant idea + writing skill (or help) + good luck = Publication



Authorship

- Go it alone or work with other authors?



Coauthorship

- **Pros**

- share the work
- complementary expertise

- **cons**

- someone else's timeline
- different writing or practice styles
- changing priorities or commitment



A word about authorship

- All persons designated as authors should contribute—that is each author should have participated sufficiently in the process to take public credit for it (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)



Determining authorship



- Agree in advance
 - Who should be an author
 - In what order will authorship be listed
 - What are the rights and responsibilities of authors

Reasons for authorship problems

- Failure to discuss or agree at the beginning
- Failure to live up to commitment
- Change in participation levels over time



Step 1: Choosing a Topic

- 4 Basic topic Types

- Practical

- Applications of theory or research to improve professional practice
- Centered on questions of concern to those in the field

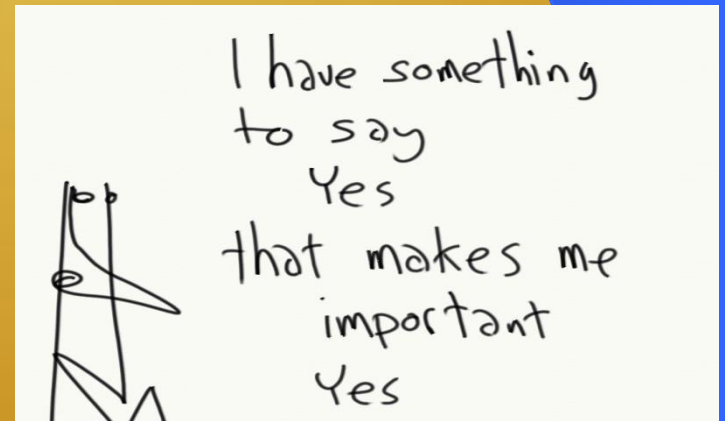
- Review or Theoretical Articles

- To synthesize what is known

- Research study

- To generate new knowledge

- Creative/artistic works





Some Questions to ask

- What area really interests you?
- What do you want to learn more about?
- What innovative solution to a problem have you developed?
- What does your work place do really well or in a special way
- Where are the gaps in current knowledge?

Solidifying your topic

- Read, read, read
 - Understand your field
 - Know where the gaps are
- Examine your own interests and strengths

Step 2: Finding a Journal

- Selected a topic
- Where to go next?



Choosing a Journal

- Think about the target audience
 - Managers, educators, those in the field
 - Beginning professionals or those with experience
 - Is the topic unique to only your region or will it appeal internationally?
 - Does it cross specialties or disciplines?
- Read a few issues of the targeted journal to be sure the topic fits and to see how the articles are written

Types of Journals

- Research Journals (peer reviewed)
- Applied Journals (peer reviewed)
- Journals for Specialty or Professional Groups (peer reviewed)
- General Journals (peer reviewed)
- Non-Peer Reviewed Journals
 - Newsletters
 - “Throw-away Journals”

Finding Journals

- Google search of journals
- Go to the website of large publishing houses
- Professional portals such as Nursing Centre
<http://www.nursingcenter.com/library/>

Making your choice

- How large is the circulation?
- What is the acceptance rate (high prestige journals have lower rates therefore harder to get accepted)
- Well-known editor, editorial board?
- High visibility in your field?
- Look for journals that publish similar types of work targeted for the same audience you want to reach

Tier 1 or Tier 2- does it matter?

- Top tier Journal
 - Bigger readership
 - More prestige
 - More brownie points
 - Usually researched focused
 - Much higher rejection rate

A word about



- What is an impact factor
 - a measure of the frequency with which the “average article” in a journal has been cited in a particular year
 - Journals are rated by the ISI Web of Knowledge (<http://isiknowledge.com>.)

Being in



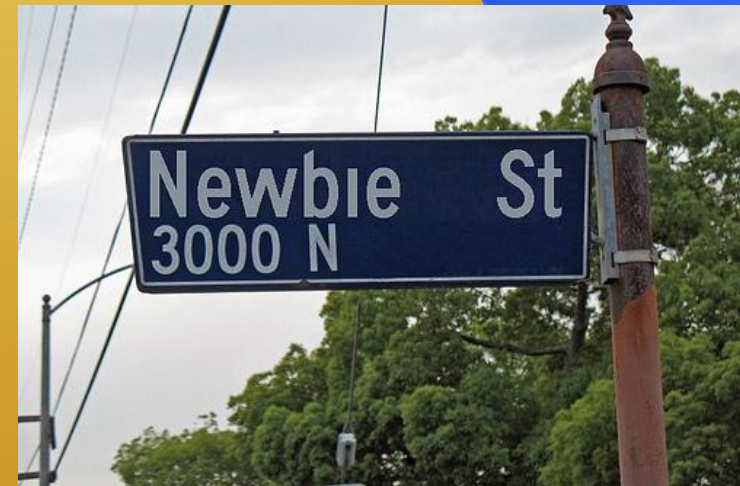
- Each journal has its own style (both for how an article is written and also what formal reference style is used)
- Author guidelines are often published in the journal
- Most journals publish their guidelines on the web
- Look at a few issues of the journal to get a sense of how articles are written

Style Issues to consider

- Formal vs informal
 - Professional language should always be used
 - Some journals publish articles in first person (We do this vs educators do this)
 - Some journals encourage pictures and figures, others do not
 - Some use a more ‘chatty style’, others a more formal approach to language

New author vs seasoned

- While writing for publication is within everyone's grasp, experience does help when putting together a polished manuscript.
- Many journals (especially applied journals) are willing to work with new authors.
- If you need help- just ask!



How will I know if the journal is interested in my article?

- Talk to the editor
 - E-mail a query
- Check the journal website for specific calls for articles

Do I need to talk to the editor?

- A query letter (e-mail) is not required but can save both you and the editor time
- The editor can tell you
 - if your topic is of interest or is already covered
 - If there is a particular to focus your topic
 - If there are any particular requirements for submission



Writing a Query Letter

- Query letters should include a short synopsis of what the article is about
- May include an outline of the topic or an abstract
- Keep it short and to the point

WRITE
TO THE
POINT



Writing a Query Letter

- Clarify submission guidelines or address any questions you may have
- Ask about the review process and when you will expect to hear back from the journal
- Remember, your query email is your ‘first impression’ with the editor and helps you make a personal connection that may come in handy later on.



Off on the wrong foot?

Hi,
im required to submit a paper for publication for my master's course.

Can u tell me what I should write about? Also can you send me a replay so that I can show my instructor and get my mark?

Thanks, Vanessa
Send to hotbabe_000@....



Not destined for success...

- Dear Editor

- I have written a paper for my theory class on the impact of video games in Tahiti. Would you be interested?
- Attached is my thesis. Can you tell me how to shorten it for publication?
-

Blockade 3: The writing process



Developing an Outline

- Clarify the following 3 things before you begin to write
 - Your purpose
 - Your audience
 - Scope of your material
- Other things to think about
 - Content- key points to be covered
 - Features- headings, tables, boxes
 - Deadline- give yourself a timeline to work



Value of the outline

- Wandering around in an idea is time-consuming – Marilyn Oermann
- Outline helps plan and organize the project, it also allows you to set goals and deadlines and track your progress
- Ensures all the important content is there
- Provides natural headings and subheadings for the manuscript



OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
 - A. Grab attention
 - B. State thesis
- II. Body
 - A. Build points
 - B. Develop ideas
 - C. Support main claim
- III. Conclusion
 - A. Reemphasize main idea

From:

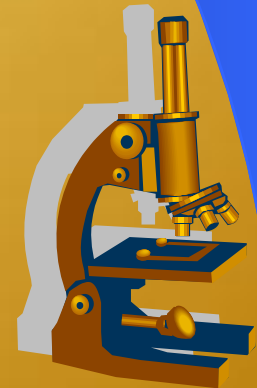
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/pp/writproc.PPT#258,3>, Why do you need a writing process?

Sample outline

- Title
- Introduction- what is the problem and why is it important
- Scope of the problem
- Literature review- what is known or not
- What should be done about the problem
- Implications- connect your research to the field

Pre-Writing Tips

- 1 Identify an important problem
- 2 Consult with a PhD researcher.
- 3. Know the guidelines for authors & read at least 2 research articles from your chosen journal



Outline for a Research Article

- **I. Introduction** (1 page)
 - A. Introduces the research problem
 - B. Address why studying this problem is important
 - C. State the purpose of the research

“a bad beginning makes a bad ending”
(Eunipdes)

Outline continued

- **II. Literature** (3 – 4 pages)
- Synthesis & *critique* of previous research related to your research problem (must be succinct!)
- What does prior research suggest needs to be done next?
- How does your work address this need
- State study question/research hypothesis

Outline continued

- **III. Methods (2-4 pages)**
- A. Design
- B. Sample, setting
- C. Instruments

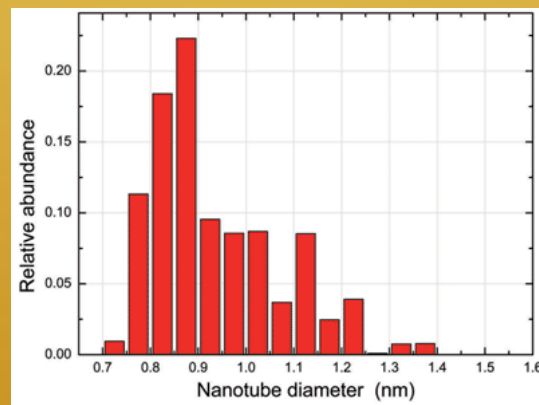
(include statement of

Ethics approval or exemption)



Outline continued

- **IV. Results (1 page)**
- A. State the analytic techniques or statistics you used
- B. Report the findings that answer the research question or hypothesis



Outline continued

- **V. Discussion** (3 – 4 pages)
 - A. Discuss your results r/t previous research findings
 - **B. Relate your findings to clinical practice**
 - C. Include study limitations
 - D. State what needs to be done from here

Outline continued

- **VI. Conclusion** (1 paragraph)
- Summarize your findings



Just to ReCap

- You've decided to write
- You've chosen a topic
- You found a journal
- You made an outline
- You settled on authorship
-Now you're ready to begin....

Strategies for Success

A decorative blue curved shape, resembling a stylized 'C' or a partial circle, is positioned on the right side of the slide. It starts near the top right and curves downwards towards the bottom right corner.

Most people don't plan to fail...they just fail to plan

Having a plan:

- Keeps goals realistic and achievable
- Motivates
- Helps maintain life-work-school balance
- Reduces the “last minute crunch”
- Allows you to produce your best work

Creating a Plan to Succeed

In the 168 hours per week on your calendar

(1) Block off time:

- to sleep, cook, eat, travel, work, errands, sports/activities, household jobs
- with family & friends, social obligations
- *Overestimate*

(2) Delegate ? Decline ? Postpone ?

(3) Make appointments with yourself for each stage of the writing process

- *Overestimate* your timelines & deadlines
- Prepare loved ones in advance...repeatedly

The Reading and Thinking Stage

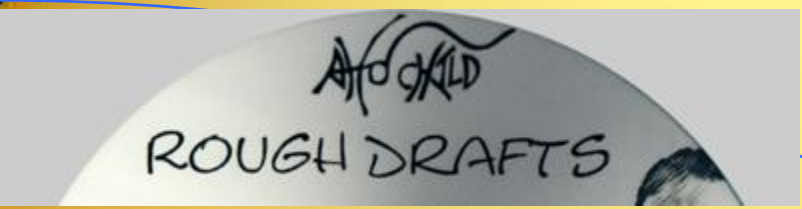
Give yourself abundant time to:

(a) Collect the sources

- Search
- Pick up books and journals at the library
- Make photocopies
- Document delivery

(b) Read the sources

- Highlight, underline, make comments in the margins
- Process and analyze individual authors' ideas
- Contrast and compare different authors' ideas
- Incorporate the ideas from the literature into beliefs about your practice



ROUGH DRAFTS

The First Draft Stage

The aim = to create a working draft

Write to:

- Get the words on the page/screen
- Establish & explain your key points

At this stage, don't worry about:

- Spelling and punctuation
- Grammar and sentence structure
- Formatting

Ernest Hemingway, when asked what was the most frightening thing he had ever encountered, answered, “A blank sheet of paper”.

The Second Draft Stage

The goal = to clarify



- Does it make sense?
- Have I supported my main points/arguments using reasons, examples, statistics, or research?
- Are the ideas logically connected?
- Have I used formal language?

Rewrite
Revise
Rethink
Re-research?

“Writing is nature’s way of showing you how sloppy your thinking is” (Guindon cartoon, 2005).



Subsequent Drafts

The aim = precision and attention to detail

At this stage, worry about:

- Spelling
- Grammar and sentence structure
- Punctuation
- Formatting

“Excellence is in the details. Give attention to the details and excellence will come” (Paxton, 2006)

Collecting your data



- Sources of data
 - Local library
 - Databases appropriate to your specialty
 - ERIC, EBSCO etc
 - Dissertation Abstracts
 - Internet search-
 - Using search engines (www.google .com)
 - Using encyclopedic sites
 - Government sites (www.nih.gov; www.cdc.gov)
 - Listservs- good for opinion and local practice



Internet Caution

- Anybody can publish almost anything on the Internet.
- Unlike most print sources, web sources do not have to be professionally accepted and edited to be published.



From Purdue University Writing Lab



Searching the literature

- Look for multiple sources of information
- Internet references are accepted by most journals but should not comprise your entire reference list
- Do not rely on open sources such as Wikipedia for critical information (drug doses for example)



Strategies for reviewing the literature

- Do your homework-include material that is relevant and recent
- Use the literature review to tell both what is known and what is not known about your topic

Reviewing the literature

- With the exception of classic works, the majority of your references should be published within the past five years.
- If little has been published on your topic- tell your reader that so they know you have done your homework.



Strategies for reviewing the literature

- Organize the literature review around the key concepts in your article. If your article is about educating elementary students then exclude articles about secondary or university education
- Do NOT cite all, rather cite what is relevant
- Be sure to include influential sources
- Read the sources you cite!

Tables

- an excellent way to summarize material and make your article more reader friendly.
- Tables can be created from material compiled from several sources (and referenced) or reprinted from another published source (with permission)
- Call out your tables and figures where you want them in your manuscript and include them at the end of your paper
- Provide a brief caption for each table

Figures and photos

- Another great way to enhance an article and illustrate your point.
- Like tables, pictures from other sources (including the internet) require permission from
- Again, provide a brief caption or explanation for each photo and figure

So what about references?



References



- Submit in the style of the journal (APA, Chicago, MLA etc)
- Include all references cited in your manuscript
- Don't include articles in your reference list that aren't cited in your paper
- Use the most recent edition of textbooks

Referencing

- Need a balance between too many and too few
 - If info is common knowledge- no need to ref
- Reference if
 - Citing another's work
 - Providing a definition
 - Citing statistics
 - Citing the results of research
 - Info is not general knowledge



Primary vs Secondary sources

- Primary sources are always be used
- What is a primary source- when a study is done by Smith- Smith's paper is the primary source.
- When you read a sentence that says "Smith found that ... and the reference is Jones then Jones is a secondary source and when you use Jones as your source you are relying on Jones to interpret the study rather than looking at the study yourself

Referencing

- References should generally be less than five years old unless classic
- “Several studies” need several references
- Problems:
 - Too many references
 - Too few references
 - Unclear references- should be clear which statement the reference refers to

Managing References

- ***Scrupulous attention to detail
 - As soon as you cite a reference, immediately put it into the reference section. Don't write the reference section at the end!
 - Compare the typed reference list to the original publication to ensure accuracy

Accuracy of References

- Check all references for the following
 - Consistency between references cited and listed references- use the find and replace feature in your WP program
 - Correct spelling of names
 - Accuracy of dates
 - Complete citation
 - Adherence to journal's guidelines

Time-saving tip

when making a copy of
an article make sure
all of the relevant info
for the citation is
included in the copy.

Referencing Tables

- Tables compiled from text or many sources- cite each source
- Table from only one source ? Permission needed-check?



Watch out for Plagiarism

- Fair use: limited amount of copying can be done as long as the source is acknowledged (150 words from journal article)
- Permission generally not required for articles in public domain (ie gov't documents)





Plagiarism

- This includes copying yourself
- Read “Guidelines on good publication practice” from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)
 - Available free at www.publicationethics.org.uk

Getting permission



- Permission required for any discretely formatted item (table, figure, illustration)
- Release/permission required if patient is recognizable

The Nitty-Gritty of Writing

Good writing

- According to William Kritsonis:
 - The difference between good writing and better writing is the number of hesitations the reader experiences as they read
- Or as Joseph Pulitzer advises:
 - “Put it to them briefly so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it picturesquely so they remember it and above all, accurately so they will be guided by its light”

Writing Tips

- Tip # 1 – Write in clear, straightforward style using an active voice. “We were told by the participants” rather than “The participants told us”
- e.g. "The practice of ____ is not recommended from the results of this study."
- Better: Based on our results, the practice of _____ needs further study.

Writing Tips

- Avoid anthropomorphizing- your study did not conclude anything, you did
- The literature did not recommend, experts did (or you did)

Writing Tips

- Tip #2 - Proof read, and have your manuscript reviewed by a peer or advisor.
- NOTE: Spell check will not catch everything, and grammar checks are often wrong!

Making an impact



- Start strong.
- The majority of readers never get beyond the first paragraph.
 - Open with a statement about people
 - Open in a provocative way that catches attention.
- Keep your audience in mind and tell them why they should be interested.
- Fulfill your promise to the reader by making sure your writing does what it says it will do.
- Answer the so-what question! Leave readers with what you most want them to remember. End strong!

Based on the writings of Robert Sternberg and Daryl Bem.



Orwell's rules for Writers

- Never use a long word when a short one will do.
- If possible to cut out a word, always cut it out.

Orwell: Politics and the English language - 1946

Writing for the reader

- Tips from Suzanne Hall Johnson (former editor Nurse Author and Editor)
 - Identify key points and make sure all paragraphs refer back to them
 - Do not repeat material
 - Use headings to organize the reader
 - One idea per paragraph
 - Short paragraphs
 - Use transition sentences to lead to the next point

“the author is doubtful about his facts or reasoning and retreats behind a protective cloud of ink” (Doug Savile)

Writing for the reader

- Use tables and boxes to summarize material. Bullet lists add white space and make reading easier. White space gives the reader's eyes a break and provides material they can refer back to or post

Pitfalls to avoid

- Spelling and grammar mistakes
- Wrong citation and reference format
- Old references rather than classics
- Disorganized thought progression
- Lack of peer review
- Writing for the wrong audience





More Pitfalls

- Jargon or local abbreviations
 - Always spell out abbreviations with first use
- Local practices
- Missing introduction and conclusion
- Long or complex sentences or paragraphs
- Lack of transition between paragraphs

..muddled writing means muddled thinking. . ."

*- Stanley Gilder [1909-]Medical Journal of Australia
I:957, 1962*

If you are the supervisor read your student's work

- The increased survival rate for low birthweight babies has rendered premature infants a new breed of humanity....

Writer's Block



Writer's Block

- Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.

--John Wooden

Overcoming Writer's Block

- Find an efficient system- a place to work with a functioning computer and printer
- Once you have decided start immediately
- Find a place to write and keep everything you need there
- Break the process into small sections



Overcoming Writer's Block

- Successful writers schedule time to write
- It ALWAYS takes longer than you think!
- Say NO if you don't have time to take on another project
- Tips for writer's block
 - Have confidence that you have something important to say
 - Organize your ideas before you write
 - Get your message down first, then go back and polish

What are the reviewers looking for?

- Accuracy
- Significance
- Clarity and creativity

OR

Is it true? Is it new? Is it important?

Reasons for Rejection of Research Papers

- 1. Central idea is not unique, not important, or does not offer anything new.

Reasons for Rejection

- 2. Faulty design or methods.



Reasons for Rejection

- 3. Manuscript is poorly written
- e.g. "Choosing the person object of attachment depends more on the degree of responsiveness and interaction dependence initiative, than in the satisfaction of the child's primary care."



Reasons for Rejection

- 4. Content is inaccurate.
- e.g. "Three nurses performed the procedure 87 times for a total of 1,044 measurements."
 - $[3 \times 87 = 261!]$

Reasons for Rejection

- 5. Conclusions unwarranted by results.
- e.g. Study of Parents' concerns after infant discharge from the NICU
- Discussion: States that telephone follow-up will decrease parental stress and increase parental self esteem. (that wasn't studied)

Reasons for Rejection

- 6. Manuscript is too much like a term paper or master's thesis.
- YES 50 pages and 300 references is over the top!!
- Hot tip: Take the course number off your title page!

Reasons for rejection

- Topic not suited for the audience
- Not a current topic and not worth revisiting
- Journal has just published on this topic
- Failure to even come close to the submission guidelines
- Plagiarism
- Major problems with references

Rookie Mistakes

- Too many quotes
- Secondary sources
- Missed key literature
- Abbreviations, jargon, regional practices
- Too many references
- Not having someone else read it!



What to Do Next

- Revise and resubmit
- Find an experienced writing partner to help revise the manuscript
- Submit to a different journal
- Begin again with a different topic
- Consider this a learning experience and move on

Writing Resources

- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>
- <http://www.cariboo.bc.ca/disciplines/>
- http://web.princeton.edu/sites/writing/Writing_Center/WCWritingRes.htm
- <http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu/writing.html>
- <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/resources/writingresources/>
- <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/publicationethics/>
- <http://www.wame.org/resources>
- <http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/>