

Criteria and Style Guidelines for *English Practice*

English Practice provides you with the opportunity to write and be read. Your viewpoints, lessons, opinions, research (formal or informal) are welcomed in formats ranging from strategies, lesson plans and units, to more formal compositions and narratives exploring big ideas in teaching and learning, to creative writing.

English Practice publishes contributions on all facets of language arts learning, teaching and research, focusing on the intermediate, middle and secondary grades. The journal offers teachers of grades 4 to 12 a practical, user-friendly guide to research-based practices.

We have four sections with the following guidelines to assist you in preparing and submitting your writing:

Teaching Ideas (teaching strategies, lesson plans, unit plans)

Articles should:

1. have a clear purpose (i.e. articulate specific learning goals for students)
2. acknowledge your perspective/background/role (i.e. grade 6 teacher; have used reading workshops for 10 years; trying to embed more targeted strategy instruction in my teaching)
3. provide a description of instruction that outlines how modeling or scaffolding is used
4. offer specific classroom practices that are grounded in research (backed up with current thinking, research reference(s))
5. be well organized and clear
6. ensure that any student samples, graphic organizers, and/or handouts are readable and reproducible
7. ensure that formative and summative assessment are aligned with instruction
8. include information on any student and/or professional resources that may be useful for readers
9. include a summary and/or reflection

Investigating Our Practice (action research, reflection on practice over time, narrative)

Articles should:

1. introduce and outline the purpose and process of inquiry
2. explore a big idea in teaching and learning over time
3. acknowledge your perspective/background/role in relation to issues, big ideas, and/or inquiry question(s) (i.e. “I believe in democratic schooling, but I hadn’t recently looked at how what I do was or was not working”; “I have been teaching for 18 years and oral language has always been important to me. However, I want to know how I can help my students actually improve their speaking and listening abilities.”)
4. include reflections made before and after the teaching practice
5. typically be narrative in style
6. relate your own thinking and practice to current thinking and research
7. be well organized and clear
8. include synthesis and/or next steps
9. include a list of references in APA format

Salon (literary and arts-based explorations, or opinion pieces)

Pieces should:

1. be related to teaching and learning, curriculum theory and philosophy, language and literacy, or English language arts
2. use form effectively
3. be engagingly written (first person, present tense, ideas are effectively linked and language choice heightens meaning)
4. acknowledge your perspective/background/role, especially in opinion pieces

Check This Out (includes reviews, announcements of contests and conferences)

Articles should

1. acknowledge your perspective/background/role (i.e. teach grades 9-12 English; looking for novels related to the theme of...; “I am always looking for new ideas related to diversity in the classroom”)
2. have clearly explained and supported ideas and/or opinions

Book, website, or other resource reviews should include a target audience and some ideas for application in the classroom.

Authors must not have a personal or a financial stake in what is being announced or reviewed.

Articles and reviews can be submitted to Pamela Richardson or Sara Davidson at: englishpracticejournal@gmail.com

Submission & Style Guidelines for *English Practice*

If you are considering submitting an article to *English Practice*, or have already done so, please take a few moments to review the information below. We, your co-editors, are also teachers, and if you can follow the guidelines below you will make our volunteer job as editors that much easier. In the end, it will also save you time with the revision/editing process. Thank you for both your article and your time spent on this process; both are significant contributions to the quality of *English Practice*—winner of an Honorable Mention for Affiliate Journal at the 2008 NCTE Annual Convention.

General Information

1. Submit all pieces in Microsoft Office Word (PC or Mac). Attachments should be in Word or PDF. If you want to attach photographs, please contact an editor first.
2. Please title your piece with your full name, such as JoannePanas.doc. This helps us with organizing. Revisions will be titled JoannePanasRev1.doc, JoannePanasRev2.doc, etc.
3. Use 12-point Times New Roman as your font, and single-space your article. Paragraphs will need to be indented rather than having spaces between them.
4. Use APA format for citing references within articles and in your reference list. If you are

unfamiliar with APA format, there are many online sources; we recommend the Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

5. If you are using footnotes, follow APA format (see OWL website), but single-space them.
6. Longer articles (2 or more pages) should be divided into sections with headings. As well, try to avoid many very long paragraphs.

Writing Guidelines

1. The tone of your writing should be one of openness, wondering and/or sharing; avoid didactic writing, chastising, or absolutes.
2. Unless you are quoting a source, please refer to your own experience rather than making generalizations. Rather than “Formative assessment benefits the learning of **our** students and also informs and guides **our** practice as teachers,” we prefer “Formative assessment benefits the learning of **my** students and also informs and guides **my** teaching practice.”
3. Whenever possible, refer to “students” or “my students,” not “**the** students.”
4. Whenever possible, introduce or lead into quotations; use the shortest possible quotation for the point you are making.
5. Avoid “educational-ese”; define academic or highly specific terms on first use (e.g. *in situ*, epistemology, socio-constructivist). Define abbreviations on first use.
6. Use the active voice over the passive. Rather than “A rubric was created by my students,” we prefer “My students created a rubric.”

Style Details

1. Italicize titles of books and journals (vs. underlining). Titles of shorter works such as journal titles, poems, and short stories should be in quotations.
2. Avoid contractions in formal or academic pieces.
3. Be consistent in your choice of American or British/Canadian spelling of words such as “colo(u)r” or “hono(u)r.”
4. Bold **main headings**, and italicize *sub-headings*; both should be on the left margin.
5. When using bullets, use square black bullets for main points, and round hollow bullets for sub-points as below:
 - Main point
 - Sub-point
6. Dashes should be two hyphens together which touch the words at either end—like this, not a single or double hyphen that “floats” between words – like this, or -- like this.
7. Longer quotations (40+ words) need to be inset, without quotation marks, and introduced using a colon.
8. Leave a single space between sentences and after colons (traditionally, writers have left two spaces after sentences and colons, but this is no longer necessary with current word processors and fonts).
9. We use the comments/track changes feature in Word when we review your pieces; please send back your revised version with our original comments/changes intact. You can respond within the body of the comment boxes or create your own. This will speed up and simplify the revision process.

Some Tips, or Things We Like to See

1. Consider integrating quotations from students into your article.
2. Include a few student samples and/or key handouts/organizers you used (these may need to be limited or shrunk for space).
3. Acknowledge your perspective/where you're coming from.
4. Make connections to the new English Language Arts K-7 and/or 8-12 Integrated Resource Packages.
5. Create an interesting title that will draw in readers; please keep it relatively short.

Finally...

With your submission, provide your **contact information**, including your email address, and phone number. Please create a **biography**, written in 3rd person. Feel free to be creative with your biography, but keep it within 35 words (don't include your last name in it). A sample for "Sam Lee" is provided (32 words):

Sam is a grade 6/7 teacher at Midtown Middle School in Prince George, and has a Masters in Literacy. Sam's passions include learning to support the wonderful diversity of students at Midtown.