A HANDBOOK FOR CONTRIBUTORS TO JOURNALS
OF STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS

A Field Report
Presented to
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Drake University

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Master of Science in Education

by
Ruth L. DuPuis
August 1958
A HANDBOOK FOR CONTRIBUTORS TO JOURNALS

OF STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS

by

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<td>27</td>
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The basic goal of any journal of a state education association is service to the members of the association. Every publication of this kind strives to present useful techniques and ideas that will be of value to its readers. It is the instrument of communication among members of the education profession and the realization of its goal depends upon cooperative participation and contribution by the members themselves.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this report was, first, to determine through a survey of editors their opinions as to the present effectiveness of journals of state education associations as organs of the associations they serve. Effectiveness here was judged by degree of member participation and contribution.

Information gained from the survey was also examined to learn the specific problems and needs of journal editors relative to types of materials and forms of manuscripts submitted to them.

Based on these findings a handbook for contributors to journals of state education associations was compiled.

Significance of the problem. Since the educational journal is the "house organ" of the profession, it is reasonable to assume that it should provide information, instruction, and entertainment for members of the profession. The logical source of material of this sort lies
within the group. Discovery of the fact that this source is not at present utilized to any great extent indicated a need for both motivation and instruction for writing articles that would be acceptable for publication. Both interviews and correspondence revealed a desire on the part of educational editors for a formal compilation of such information. This desire was further expressed in notes and letters accompanying questionnaires returned by the responding editors.

II. PROCEDURE

Procedure for this report began with an interview of the editor of the local state educational journal. His statements regarding the need for a handbook for contributors to state educational journals were further emphasized when the problem was presented to editors meeting in a regional session of the Educational Press Association of America in St. Louis, Missouri. Four of these editors were then contacted by mail at which time they received both letters of transmittal and tentative questionnaires relative to the problem.

From responses to this contact a questionnaire was devised to cover problems facing editors and elements they felt should be included in a handbook for contributors to their journals.

Questionnaires were mailed to editors of sixty-two journals of state education associations. All forty-eight states and Hawaii were included and in the thirteen states with two associations, both were contacted. There were thirty-five replies. Three of these, however, were uncompleted forms accompanied by notations. One notation indicated that the publication had merged with another in the same state, and two
editors stated that the questionnaire was not completed because the publication was a weekly tabloid newspaper. However, appreciation was expressed by these editors for efforts to put out a handbook.

Sources of data. The primary sources of data for this report were the questionnaires and textbooks, handbooks, and pamphlets dealing with article writing and related topics. Correspondence and interviews with educational editors were also sources of primary importance.

Plan of procedure. The method in this preparation of a handbook for contributors to journals of state education associations was to ascertain, from questionnaires, correspondence, and interviews, the needs of the journal editors, to read accessible books and periodicals on the subject of article writing, and to utilize information from the latter sources that was applicable to the specific problems of the educational journal.

In surveying the literature related to article writing the questionnaire with its subdivisions was used as a guide. Specifically, the subdivisions included problems the editors face regarding content and style; problems regarding form and submission of manuscripts; and types of articles editors consider appropriate to educational journals.

With the exception of a reprint of an article by the editor of NEA Journal, there was no literature available which dealt exclusively with educational article writing. Consequently, it was necessary to examine literature of a general nature and utilize pertinent facts discovered therein for the handbook. Sources examined for this purpose
are listed in the bibliography of this report.

The organization of the report. The organization of this report includes three chapters. The introductory chapter contains a statement of the problem and its significance, the plan of procedure, sources of data for the study, and the organization of the report.

Chapter II presents a report of the results of the survey.

Chapter III consists of summary, conclusions and recommendations.

Appendix C is the handbook for contributors to journals of state education associations. It is entitled Write It Up!
CHAPTER II

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

For purposes of discussion and tabulation results from thirty-two usable forms were used. In a few cases, either because the information was not available to the respondent, or through an oversight on his part, not all portions of the form were completed. Due to the nature of this report and its ultimate purpose, however, it was not necessary to exclude these.

Copies of the questionnaire and the letter of transmittal may be examined in Appendix A. Tables referred to in this section and not located in the text will be found in Appendix B.

I. POTENTIAL VERSUS ACTUAL MEMBER CONTRIBUTORS

The purpose of the first section of the questionnaire was to determine what portion of the textual material used in state educational journals was obtained from members of the associations the journals serve. Groupings to be checked contained ten percentage points each and the editor was asked to indicate the group which most nearly described the portion of member-contributed material used in his publication.

Responses ranged from two in the 20-29 per cent group to four in the 90-99 per cent group, but the largest number, eight, came in the 80-88 per cent area. (See Table IV, Appendix B.)

In order that a more detailed and significant picture of the contributor might be obtained, the editors were then asked for
information concerning the proportion of association membership from various teaching levels and the proportion of material submitted and accepted from each. Teaching level groups listed were: elementary teachers, secondary teachers, administrators, and college or university instructors.

The elementary group was the largest in terms of membership in every case. It was followed by secondary, administrators, and college or university groups, in that order. (See Table V, Appendix B.) However, with a very few exceptions, the portion of contributors from those groups was in inverse order. That is, the two largest membership groups were represented least often in the association journals. One editor listed contributions from college or university personnel as high as 80 per cent, and this from a group which comprised only 5 per cent of the membership. On the other hand, one association with a 45 per cent elementary membership showed no representation from that group in its publication.

II. PROBLEMS OF THE EDITOR

In this section of the questionnaire editors were asked to judge the caliber of material submitted to them by association members. They were also asked whether they would use more of such material if it were of improved quality. Further, they were requested to check as "major," "minor," or "no problem" six reasons for rejecting material. These reasons included: "inappropriate to this type of publication;" "of unsuitable length;" "poorly timed;" "crowded out by 'must' material;"
"displays unsound philosophy;" and "requires too much illustrating."
The same sort of check list was provided regarding form in which manu-
scripts were submitted and the reasons here were: "faulty mechanics--
grammar, spelling, and so forth;" "loosely organized;" "illegible copy;"
and "literalness versus implication." There was also space provided to
list others that might occur to the respondents.

Caliber of material submitted. Material submitted by association
members was judged "high" by only two editors and "low" by an equal
number. Twenty-eight respondents considered it only average. In response
to the question concerning the use of more material from members if it were
of higher quality, twenty-four answered "yes" and seven, "no." One indi-
vidual inserted the word "doubtful." Two of the "yes" respondents said
they were using as much as space permitted. Another said, "Use of manu-
scripts is on a selective basis--have now a backlog of over 100." And
still another, "We reject much more than we can use now, but we'd welcome
better quality."

Reasons for rejecting manuscripts. In checking major problems
regarding reasons for rejecting manuscripts, "crowded out by 'must'
material" was listed by the largest number (nineteen) of editors. (See
Table I.) Twenty of them listed "poorly timed" and "displays unsound
philosophy" as minor problems and these were followed closely by
"unsuitable length" and "inappropriate to this type of publication."
The fact that articles require too much illustration was apparently not
a serious problem, however, since it was checked in the "no problem"
column by eighteen respondents and in the "minor" column by nine. One editor stated in a marginal comment that he received "term papers instead of magazine articles," and another that the subject was often unimportant to anyone except the author. Five questionnaires indicated that a major reason for rejection was uninteresting and poorly written and structured manuscripts, and another charged that they were "dull descriptions of dull practices."

"Loosely organized" was most often checked (twenty-one times) as a major problem in the portion of the questionnaire dealing with form of the manuscript. (See Table II.) It was listed as a minor problem by eight editors and as no problem by only one. One editor stated, "We'll organize 'em if they've got anything worthwhile." Faulty mechanics" received the largest number of checks in the "minor" column while illegible copy was apparently only a minor problem to most editors and no problem at all to fourteen. Included in the comments were these: "Written in research 'edusese' rather than readable journalistic or magazine style;" and "too wordy--paragraphs and sentences are too long--words too technical."

III. SUGGESTED ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE HANDBOOK

In this portion of the questionnaire the editors were asked to respond to questions concerning the items they felt would be of value if included in a handbook for contributors to educational journals. These items were divided into sections involving general questions regarding the advisability of querying the editor, of illustrating
### TABLE I

**REASONS FOR REJECTING MATERIAL SUBMITTED TO JOURNALS OF STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS AS REPORTED BY THIRTY-TWO JOURNAL EDITORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Rejection</th>
<th>Major Reason</th>
<th>Minor Reason</th>
<th>No Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate to this type of publication</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of suitable length</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly timed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowded out by &quot;must&quot; material</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displays unsound philosophy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requires too much illustrating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE II

**PROBLEMS RELATIVE TO FORM OF MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED TO JOURNALS OF STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS AS REPORTED BY THIRTY-TWO JOURNAL EDITORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Problems</th>
<th>Major Problem</th>
<th>Minor Problem</th>
<th>No Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faulty mechanics—grammar, spelling, and so forth</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loose organisation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegible copy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literalness vs. implication</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
articles, and of dealing with controversial topics. Included in this general group, also, was a request for information about the use of a style book for the publication the editor represented. More specific questions dealt with methods of motivating contributors, choice of subjects, preparation of manuscripts and treatment of material.

**Querying the editor.** The term "query" as here used may be defined as a short letter of inquiry to an editor concerning the advisability of submitting a manuscript on a certain subject. With the exception of three who were indifferent, the editors were equally divided on the matter of being queried before a manuscript is submitted. One of the "indifferent" respondents stated that an "in person" query is of value but one by letter is not. Another said, "We don't commit on anything until we've seen it anyhow; premature OK is dangerous pitfall."

**Illustration of articles.** The question as stated attempted to determine whether editors show preference to articles which are accompanied by illustrations. The term "illustration" referred to any picture, sketch, or diagram that accompanies a manuscript. Responses were overwhelmingly in favor of the illustrated article. Of the thirty-one who answered this question, twenty-three stated that they showed preference to illustrated articles, six said they did not, one said, "sometimes," and another, "not necessarily." Accompanying some of the "no" answers were such comments as: "It might make the difference sometimes;" "We are glad to get illustrations but is not a deciding factor;" and "No, but pictures surely help!"
Handling of controversial material. Controversial material was defined in the questionnaire as that dealing with race, religion, or politics, and the inquiry relative to it was made in two parts. First, the respondent was asked whether it was his policy to "feature it," "include it," or "avoid it." If he checked either of the first two, he was then asked whether he attempted to present "both sides" or "the right side."

Responses were least consistent in this area. Only one editor claimed to feature controversial material while sixteen said they included it and thirteen that they avoided it. The inconsistency lies in the fact that, although seventeen said they either featured or included such material and seventeen stated that they presented both sides, these responses did not involve the same seventeen questionnaires. While some stated that they avoided the issue, still they claimed to present both sides. Others answered the first portion of the question and not the last. Two respondents checked all blanks and wrote in "advisedly" or "sometimes."

There were numerous interesting comments accompanying this section of the questionnaire leading to the assumption that it is a knotty problem with editors. One stated that there is an attempt to "avoid controversial topics 'generally speaking!'" Another said, "We don't crusade; we have other problems;" and still another, "Avoid controversial topics unless the association has a fixed policy about it."

Although both sides were claimed to be presented in most cases, one respondent said he presented "bi-partisan politics" and avoided
other controversial issues entirely, and another that he presented both sides only "if necessary." Three of the editors queried said they presented only "the right side" of any controversial topic.

**Methods of motivating contributors.** To determine what editors consider valuable ways of motivating association members to contribute to their educational journals, editors were asked to check one or more of the following: "emphasis on sharing ideas," "benefits to education in general," "personal growth and satisfaction," and "financial reward." Relative to the latter each was further asked to state the policy of his publication regarding payment for manuscripts.

Results showed preferred emphasis to be on sharing ideas. This was followed closely by personal growth and benefits to education, in that order. Financial reward as a motivator, however, received no checks at all. The request for statement of policy brought such comments as: "No money;" "No fees in budget;" and "We do not pay for any material used except an occasional commercial photo." Two respondents did say they paid in rare instances when material was submitted by "repeat contributors" or by "non-members such as professional newspaper writers and so forth who contribute."

**Choice of subjects.** The editors were asked to check kinds of subjects or article types they felt should be discussed in a handbook for contributors to educational journals. Listed were: personal experience article, third person experience article, convention or committee report, "How-to-do-it" article, information article, current news article, and personality piece. "How-to-do-it" was the type most
frequently checked and it was closely followed by the personal experience article, the information article, and convention or committee report. The personality piece and the third person experience types were least frequently marked. Seven of the thirty-two editors checked all of the types and one of the seven made the marginal comment, "Discuss relative uses and treatment." Another such comment indicated that the staff of that particular publication did the types not marked. A complete tabulation of the results of this section may be found in Table III.

Preparation of manuscripts. There was a similar inquiry made concerning topics that should be discussed with regard to preparation of manuscripts. Items for checking included: a form to be followed, discussion of time element involved in submitting material, and discussion of appropriate length. Length and poor timing of manuscripts were apparently the most serious problems for editors. Twenty-six of them checked the former and twenty-four the latter, whereas only seventeen indicated that a definite form should be set up for the writer to follow. In fact, one respondent stated, "I think teachers write more original, thought-provoking articles if they do not try to follow a set pattern."

Following the check list there was space provided for respondents to list other items that might be discussed. There was a wide range of suggestions which included the following: "What we don't want;" "Ways to give article interest;" "Need for duplicate copies;" "Keep the language simple--write to inform rather than to impress;" "Shorter paragraphs and sentences;" "Style of magazine;" and "Need for elimination of extraneous detail."
TABLE III

TYPES OF ARTICLE MERITING HANDBOOK DISCUSSION AS INDICATED
BY THIRTY-TWO EDITORS OF EDUCATION ASSOCIATION JOURNALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article Types</th>
<th>Number of Editors Checking This Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal experience</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person experience</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report (convention, meeting, and so forth)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;How-to-do-it&quot;</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information article</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current news article</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality piece</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related to this, editors were asked to state whether they had a style book or anything to suggest their ways of handling manuscripts. If they answered affirmatively, they were further asked to submit a copy for examination. Only five respondents indicated they did use a style book of some kind and of this number there was only one that had been compiled exclusively for the specific publication. This one was submitted for examination. Another editor indicated that a style book for his publication was in preparation. General style references listed included: AP Style Book; Words Into Type by Skillin, Gay and others; Iowa Newspaper Desk Book; and MLA General Style Sheet.

Treatment of material. The final portion of the questionnaire asked that editors check each of the following if they felt they merited
discussion in the handbook: choice of title, slanting of material, logical organization, and human touch. Human touch, with twenty-nine checks, and logical organization, with twenty-six, were the favored topics, whereas slant, with fourteen, and choice of title, with only eleven, were apparently considered to be of less importance.

Space was provided for other suggestions and these included:

"Revision--your booklet could touch on this--so many think once a piece is written it's sacred and cannot be improved. An exercise in revision is good for any contributor;" "Contributors should have some knowledge of public relations;" "Write in narrative style--no outlines or numerations;" "Avoid submitting any 'lesson plan' style unit-of-subject-matter reports."

Two respondents who did not check choice of title inserted the following comments: "We rarely ever use author's title!" and "I always rewrite."

Some additional comments are included here since they seem indicative of some of the problems educational editors face: "A term paper is not an article;" "Do not try to impress us with a bookish vocabulary or the large amount of research you have done;" "Do not tabulate material or send in copy sprinkled with footnotes;" and "Chief fault of all so-called educational writing is--it's DULL, DULL, DULL."
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this report was two-fold. The first was to determine, through a survey of editors, their opinion regarding the present effectiveness of journals of state education associations and also to learn the specific problems and needs of the editors relative to types of materials and forms of manuscripts submitted to them. The second purpose was to produce, from analysis of this material and a survey of literature concerned with article writing, a handbook for contributors to such journals.

I. SUMMARY

Investigation in the form of a survey by questionnaire was conducted to determine what portion of material published in state educational journals is contributed by association members and what topics might be profitably covered in a handbook for such contributors. A letter of transmittal accompanying the questionnaire explained to the editors that the purpose of the project was to improve contributions both as to quantity and quality thus making the journal of greater service to association members.

Suggestions obtained from editors through the questionnaires, as well as through correspondence and interviews, were used as a framework around which the handbook was built. These suggestions were augmented with material from textbooks, handbooks and pamphlets on the general
subject of article writing. The result was a handbook keyed to the
specific needs of the writer of articles for educational journals.

II. CONCLUSIONS

From examination of data from questionnaires returned by editors
of journals of state education associations it was concluded that there
was a definite need for a handbook to be used by contributors to those
journals. The examination further revealed areas the editors felt should
be covered in such a work. This evidence was sufficient to justify
producing the handbook which is included as Appendix C of this report.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Appendix C of this report, which consti-
tutes the handbook entitled Write It Up! be lifted from the report and
published in the form of a pamphlet with illustrations. Such a pamphlet,
if distributed by state education associations to prospective contributors
to their journals might lead to the improvement of the quality and
effectiveness of the journals.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS


B. PUBLICATION OF THE GOVERNMENT, LEARNED SOCIETIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS


C. PERIODICAL

Dear Editor:

Would you like to find manuscripts in your morning mail that you just can't resist publishing in your journal because they are of such vital interest to your readers? Perhaps this is a millenium that can be achieved only in an editor's dreams, but it is one worth striving for and with your help some progress may be made toward it.

The enclosed questionnaire will be used as a device for determining the types of problems you as an educational editor have with your contributors and, even more important, what can be done about them. Data obtained from it will be used in two ways. It will be incorporated into a report on editorial problems and will serve as the basis for preparation of a handbook for contributors to educational publications.

Many state organizations have a large untapped source of potential contributors within their memberships. Teachers and administrators are negligent about communicating the many fine ideas they use successfully in their classrooms and offices. Surely this deficiency is not owing to a lack of interest or desire to share such ideas with others, but more probably a lack of "know-how" in the mere preparation of the material for publication. Perhaps a handbook written especially for them will improve this situation.

Your prompt completion of the brief questionnaire will be appreciated so that data may be compiled and the handbook ready for you in the coming school year. You will notice that there is a stamped addressed envelope for its return.

Yours very truly,

/Ruth Dubuis
RUTH DUBUIS
QUESTIONNAIRE TO EDITORS OF STATE EDUCATIONAL JOURNALS

Note: Please answer all questions in order that a complete picture of your situation may be obtained. Any marginal comments you may wish to make will be welcome.

I. Potential vs. actual member contributors:
A. What portion of material used in your journal comes from members of your state association?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>1-9%</th>
<th>10-19%</th>
<th>20-29%</th>
<th>30-39%</th>
<th>40-49%</th>
<th>50-59%</th>
<th>60-69%</th>
<th>70-79%</th>
<th>80-89%</th>
<th>90-99%</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29%</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>30-39%</td>
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B. Presumably every state organization consists of persons from each of the groups listed below. Please note in column 1 the approximate per cent of your membership in that group. In column 2 note the approximate per cent of your total number of contributions that come from that group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
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<tr>
<td>College or university</td>
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</table>

II. Problems of the editor:
A. In general how would you judge the caliber of material submitted to you by members? (check one)

High_____ Average_____ Low_____ 

B. Would you use more of such material if it were of improved quality? (check one)

Yes_____ No_____ 

C. The following are possible reasons for rejecting material submitted to you. Please indicate whether each is a major or minor reason for you personally. If you feel the problem does not exist, use the third column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>No Problem</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate to this type of publication</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Of unsuitable length</td>
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</table>
Poorly timed
Crowded out by "must" material
Displays unsound philosophy
Requires too much illustrating

List any others you may have encountered

D. Please indicate in the same manner as in Section C, the degree to which the following problems exist regarding the form in which manuscripts are submitted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>No Problem</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faulty mechanics—grammar, spelling, etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Loosely organized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Illegible copy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Literalness vs. implication</td>
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</table>

List others that may occur to you.

III. Suggested items to be included in the handbook:

A. General inquiries

1. Do you prefer that a writer query you before submitting an article? Yes ___ No ___

2. Do you show preference to articles which are accompanied by pictures or other illustrations? Yes ___ No ___

3. Do you have a style book or anything to suggest your way of handling manuscripts? Yes ___ No ___ (If answer is yes, a copy of such material would be helpful if you have one you could part with temporarily.)

4. With regard to controversial topics related to race, religion, politics etc., is it your policy to:
   Feature it ___ Include it ___ Avoid it ___
   If you do use such material do you attempt to present:
      Both sides ___ The right side ___

B. Methods of motivating contributors

Please indicate with an "x" the items you feel should be discussed.

Emphasis on sharing ideas ___

Benefits to education in general ___

Personal growth and satisfaction ___
Financial reward  
(Please state below the policy of your publication regarding payment for manuscripts.)

C. Choice of subjects
1. Please place an "X" beside the types of articles you feel merit discussion in a handbook for contributors.

   Personal experience
   Third person experience
   Report (convention, meeting, etc.)
   "How-to-do-it"
   Information article
   Current news article
   Personality piece

2. Place an "X" beside the following if you feel they might be of assistance to the contributor in preparing a manuscript.

   A form to be followed
   Discussion of time element in submitting material
   Discussion of appropriate length
   List other suggestions below.

3. Indicate with an "X" the items below that you feel should be covered regarding the treatment of material for your journal.

   Choice of title
   Slanting of material
   Logical organization
   Human touch
   List others below.
Thank you so much for your promptness and cooperation in completing this form. If you have further suggestions for the handbook, they will be most welcome.

Now, if you will place the completed form in the stamped addressed envelope and get it in the mail, work will be under way very soon to produce something that may lighten your workload and improve educational journalism at the same time.

Again thank you,

Ruth DuPuis
2816 Cottage Grove
Des Moines 11, Iowa
### TABLE IV

PERCENTAGE OF PUBLISHED JOURNAL MATERIAL CONTRIBUTED BY ASSOCIATION MEMBERS AS REPORTED BY THIRTY-ONE JOURNAL EDITORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Cent Contributed by Members</th>
<th>Number of Journals Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-9</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>20-29</td>
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<td>30-39</td>
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<td>40-49</td>
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<td>50-59</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-99</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>
### TABLE V

PERCENTAGE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS, SECONDARY TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND COLLEGE PERSONNEL REPRESENTED IN MEMBERSHIP
OF 24 STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS, AND PERCENTAGE OF
THOSE GROUPS CONTRIBUTING TO STATE EDUCATION ASSOC-
ICATION JOURNALS AS REPORTED BY JOURNAL EDITORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>College or University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>Contributors</td>
<td>Members</td>
<td>Contributors</td>
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<td>74</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>70</td>
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**Note:** Eight questionnaires were not tabulated since they were incomplete in this section.
Almost everyone at some time in his life has wanted to write and be published. The fact that you have picked up this pamphlet shows that you've thought about it, and the fact that you are an educator has already put you in an excellent position to realize these literary plans, however tentative. For one thing, as teacher or administrator, you have access to one of the best sources for stories and articles anywhere; namely, the classrooms and offices of school systems all over the country. Furthermore, you already have a market for your product in the many educational journals which serve these schools.

Writing for an educational journal can be a very satisfying and profitable experience. By sharing your ideas with others through its columns you can be of help to teachers and administrators everywhere and, even though most educational journals can afford to make no payments in money to their contributors, the personal growth and satisfaction that comes from sharing, not to mention the prestige that comes to recognized writers in this field, will repay you many times over for the effort expended.

Too often we put off the job of writing up interesting projects or teaching ideas for two reasons. The one we give most frequently to others is, "I just haven't the time." The other, the one we grudgingly
give to ourselves, goes something like this: "Oh, it's a fine idea, but I just don't how to present it."

Although no way has yet been devised to add extra hours to the day, the amount of time needed to complete a writing task can be cut to a minimum if you know exactly how to go about it. With this in mind, editors of educational journals were surveyed to determine the kinds of materials they would like to have from you and how they would like to have them presented.

In the pages that follow, the information obtained from them has been reduced to a few concise suggestions which you can use in writing your articles.

HOW CAN YOU BEST TELL YOUR STORY?

Choosing the topic. First of all, you must decide on something to write about. Choose a topic you know something about and go to work on it. Personal methods and ideas that seem second nature to you may be just the sort of thing the reader has been looking for. Many of your experiences, both in the classroom and outside it, can sooner or later be written up as articles. Anything that seems fresh, important, or appealing to you can be made so to your reader.

Your first consideration must always be the reader and since you are aiming for an educational journal, there can be no question about your audience. It will be made up of individuals who are just as weary of reading term papers as you are—so let that be a warning. Keep it human! Don't pound the pulpit or try to lay down the law to your colleagues—at least not too obviously!
Furthermore, in between the times when you are roughing out your article, it's a good idea to study with some care the magazine you are planning to send it to. What sort of things do the editors feature? What do they seem to like? Editors frequently complain that the contributions that reach them are too much like term papers and theses and not like magazine articles at all.

The subject of an article has to be something about which people want to read, so an intelligent writer will begin his subject search with people and their interests. You are fairly safe in assuming that those for whom you write are interested in much the same sort of thing you are, so as a beginning you might list examples of possible article subjects growing out of a thoughtful analysis of your particular classroom or school day. Include things you might relate at the dinner table or over a cup of coffee before a faculty meeting comes to order. Probably no day in the life of a teacher is void of interesting anecdotes and many of these can be built into articles.

Presenting your ideas. When you first decide to write you may discard one idea after another, feeling that each is "old stuff," but things that seem obvious to you may be, if properly handled, of great interest to your reader. George L. Bird says, "No subjects are dull. There are only dull ways of looking at them."

For example, you may think of doing an article about teaching courtesy to elementary children. You can grind out sentence after sentence of theory about teaching children to be courteous but who will read it?
On the other hand, if you are able to illustrate the use of these theories in a definite situation—a bus trip to a local bakery or a visit to a neighborhood garden—you can present the same information in a much more readable manner. Anecdote, especially if it contains bits of significant conversation, can "bring to life" whole libraries of etiquette.

**Experience articles.** Most editors seem to prefer experience stories in either the first or the third person. An experience story has the weight and impressiveness of direct testimony. In it you are saying, "This really happened and I think it is worth passing on to you." When you say that you inject the most desirable quality of any kind of writing—human interest.

What does human interest mean? It involves the creation of a sort of sympathetic emotion to which we attach the rather ambiguous term of "human." Let's say a foreign student comes to attend your school. Nothing particularly earth shattering about that since there is an almost constant stream of them into both large and small schools throughout the country. However, this boy is different. He is a refugee whose parents were persecuted and his life has been filled thus far with the notion that he must fight for whatever he gets. How do you instill in him the democratic ideal of "live and let live," and how does his attitude affect those who must associate with him? Human interest? Yes, definitely. Here is a real problem, not only for the boy but for his classmates and his teacher as well.

Achieving this human quality depends not only on your material but on your style of writing. This will be taken up a little later but for the
present keep in mind this one thing. There is really not much new in the world. Most new things are adaptations of the old using new angles, points of view, combinations and interpretations. All these devices can be employed in the experience article. The main thing to remember is that your presentation should be so vivid and concrete that the reader will come to feel that he can apply your methods to his own problems.

The "how-to-do-it" article. Closely related to the experience article is the "how-to-do-it" kind. It is a more objective, step by step, sort of thing with the primary purpose of telling the reader how to perform a particular operation or how to make or do something.

To illustrate, there is a clever Christmas centerpiece that children can make from cones of paper, marbles, pressurized shaving cream and a medium-sized dress box. In a process, or "how-to-do-it" article, you would need to list all the materials necessary for the project and also to describe in detail the various steps leading to the finished product. It is a good idea, too, to include any hints that might be helpful to the teacher and to define terms that could be misunderstood.

The personality piece. Another type of writing that has almost sure-fire readership, if properly handled, is the personality piece. Here is human interest in its purest form. The chief danger in submitting a manuscript dealing with this type of subject is that the interest may be localized and therefore not appropriate to a journal of wide distribution. This can be avoided by choosing a personality with characteristics so universally appealing that they make good reading for anyone.
How about the algebra teacher who works in her classroom until well after five o'clock and then walks or rides a bus many blocks to visit one of her students who is ill? A person who shows this kind of genuine interest in other people would surely offer material for a story. The more cynical may say, "They don't make them like that any more," but don't listen. There are still some around. They may be teachers, administrators, custodians or bus drivers, but somewhere in your experience you are sure to find a "personality" you can use to illustrate the kind of worthwhile living that deserves an article.

Personality information is obtained from interview and personal acquaintance and its purpose may vary from entertainment to guidance and illustration. It is highly readable, particularly when some devices of fiction such as description and dialog are used to bring intimate details to life.

The interview. Interviewing, of course, may be used for another purpose than to obtain information for a personality piece. Information obtained in this manner may be the sole basis for an article. In any case, the person interviewed must be interesting, important, or possess fascinating information, and the interviewer must be well prepared. A careful interviewer will try to brush up a bit on the subject before seeking an interview, will exhibit tact and consideration while the interview is in progress, and finally, will report accurately all the information that he receives. It is best to include the actual opinions of the interviewee and to use quotes when they are particularly striking or important.
Presenting your final copy to the interviewee for his approval is a courtesy for him and protection for you.

The report. In suggesting types of articles there is a temptation to omit the conference or committee report since it is considered the most deadly dull of any. However, it is necessarily included in many educational journals, particularly those put out by professional organizations, and so is worthy of some consideration.

The best reports of meetings of any kind are made in the first person. Unless a writer has actually attended he is not able to inject into them those small human details that lift them out of the realm of the purely factual. The word "human" seems to creep into these pages frequently, but it cannot be overcome. Humanness and readability are practically synonymous, and if you intend to write a report on a conference or convention you are attending, keep your eyes open for details that will bring the report to life. Steer away from a step by step recital of:

We arose early on Friday morning for a tour of the city. This was followed by luncheon at the headquarters hotel. The speaker was Dr. Henry von Blow who spoke on 'Education in Japan.' There was also a demonstration of Japanese dancing by children from a local elementary school.

Perhaps the dance demonstration was the most colorful event of the entire day. If this is the case, use it as a peg on which to hang your entire story. Set the stage with it and then weave the less colorful things around it. Some parts of a convention day are inevitably drab and if you feel they must be included, try sneaking them in on the coattails of something that will hold your reader's attention.
The current news story. Generally articles in educational journals are not "on the spot" things and, while no magazine has the currency of a newspaper, still it is possible to achieve the effect of freshness by careful planning. This involves, more than anything else, anticipating the calendar. Naturally some things cannot be anticipated and these must be left to the newspaper reporter. However, anything seasonal can be planned in advance and with proper handling will appear to be current at the time it appears in the publication. Incidentally, editors prefer that seasonal articles be submitted as much as six months in advance.

There are other topics that can be anticipated for "current" release. Anything pertaining to legislation slated for action in the next session of congress or your state legislature will have timeliness. For example, bills concerning retirement benefits, income tax, or school aid would have high readership.

Pre-planned stories about convention speakers or events also offer a fine opportunity for currency. If you are really interested in producing material that will gladden the heart of the editor, don't limit your writing to reports of past events. Keep a calendar handy and jot down coming attractions that might produce article subjects.

Some pertinent questions. Before leaving this discussion of presenting material, let's summarize by listing three questions for you to ask yourself:

1. For whom am I going to write?
2. What is the idea I want to put across?
3. What type of article will best express this idea?
Where and how to start. When you have answered the three questions above, you are ready to get down to the business of writing. Very likely you will sit for a while and stare at the empty sheet of white in your typewriter and finally ask yourself, "Where do I start?"

The answer to this is, "Start anywhere." Probably the first thing that pops into your mind will be the most interesting point of the story you wish to tell. Even if it doesn't turn out to be, get it down on paper. Start writing as though you are having a personal conversation with a friend. Remember, the words in your vocabulary will be good enough for this article with the "human touch." Save the scholarship for some future thesis or dissertation. Many would-be writers fall short of their mark because they have not learned to write simply.

Graves and Hodges suggest, "Whenever anyone sits down to write he should imagine a crowd of his prospective readers rather than a grammarian in cap and gown looking over his shoulder." This advice is probably more applicable to those in the teaching profession than any other.

A good writer fills his paragraphs with illustrations for they keep the reader reading. He isn't pontifical but writes agreeably, with good humor and with an effect of informality.

Once you have started, write and write until you have written yourself out on the subject before making any attempt to rewrite or cut. What you have when you finish this exhaustive coverage of your topic will no doubt be far too long to fit the space any magazine will have available. Most journal articles run from one to two thousand words. However, mere words typed on sheets of paper do not constitute a sacred thing that can never be tampered with. The pages can be cut and slashed or thrown in
the waste basket for they will have served their purpose in permitting you to see all your ideas on paper and to select those worthy of use in the finished article.

There is no substitute for firsthand knowledge in writing but neither is there a law against supplementing it with research when such will add to the value of the information you are presenting. If you see some vacant spaces during the process of revision, make a trip to the library and fill them in.

Revising the rough draft. When revising it will be a good idea to stop and think how people read articles. You will want your story to be a structural unit the reader can follow without confusion. In order to accomplish this unified effect it will be necessary to pick out and perhaps list the sub-topics you wish to cover. This does not mean the tired old device of the outline but rather implies some sort of plan so that when he finishes your article the reader will know where he has been and find some satisfaction in reaching his destination.

Organization of the article. There are several plans of organization that may be followed. The one with greatest reader appeal is perhaps that used in the news story where the most interesting and important items are presented first. This design should have one alteration, however, when used in a magazine article. There needs to be some drawing together of facts and ideas at the close.

Another plan is the chronological one where events are reported as they occurred. This is the only possible arrangement for some stories
but it can be an unfortunate choice if the project under discussion got off to a slow start.

The third method of presentation is by logical cause and effect relationship—as a result of this practice, this event occurred. This is often good because it offers much opportunity for illustration.

**Style of writing.** Whatever plan you select it is a good idea to keep in mind the qualities of effective writing—clarity, color, variety, tempo, tone and concreteness. Each will be discussed and illustrated here in some detail for they make up that aspect of your writing which is often referred to as "style."

**Achieving clarity.** Clarity, the first quality, is largely dependent upon plan as mentioned earlier. Here point of view often spells success or failure. You should understand what you are trying to do and why you are trying to do it. In other words, if there is lack of clarity in your own mind, it will be difficult to promote it in the mind of the reader. Exclude all matter unassociated with your purpose. If a statement isn't entertaining or helpful, strike it out.

As you continue revision of your first effort, read through the opening paragraph with a critical eye. Remember, few readers will stick by you if your beginning isn't both interesting and clear. The purpose of the beginning is to catch the reader's eye, arouse his interest and entice him to read further. It may seem a difficult assignment but it's possible sometimes to arrive at this happy combination through the back door. As an example, a manuscript was submitted with this kind of beginning:
The basis for the integration of English and the social studies is the concept of change involving progress. Since the United States government has extended the use of electricity to the rural sections of its domain, there has been a change from the use of sad irons to the use of electric irons. The farmer's wife realizes that she can do the family ironing within a shorter period of time and with less effort. She would consider this change from the use of sad irons to the use of electric irons a progressive action on the part of the United States government.

By the time the reader wades through that paragraph he isn't going to know what it's all about. How much more enticing the article would have been had the author begun with the illustration and drawn his conclusions at the close of the paragraph. Like this, for instance:

Any farmer's wife who has made the change from sad irons to an electric iron would be willing to serve as a witness for progressive action on the part of the United States government. She can do her family ironing in much less time and with much less effort since the government extended the use of electricity to the rural sections. This is just one example of change involving progress, the concept which is the basis for the integration of English and the social studies.

Notice again, though, that included in the purpose of the beginning are the words "to entice him (the reader) to read further." This points up the fact that an anecdotal beginning is not going to be enough. Items of human interest and touches of humor or striking illustrations must be offered periodically throughout the article or he is going to lose interest.

Often the objective of an article can be clarified sharply in the very first sentence. A manuscript dealing with teacher recruitment was submitted with the following rather involved opening paragraph:

If the number of children who enter school next September is greatly increased--and we hear it will be--and the number of teachers has decreased--as they say it has--there will be a
situation which can be serious and may have unwholesome con-
sequences. No person can teach sixty children and do a good
piece of work for each. Then what happens to our ideals for
considering the individual and adjusting to differences in
mental ability, physical strength, emotional attitudes and
previous training?

This might have been stated briefly and to the point with:

More children plus fewer teachers will equal a destruc-
tion of our ideals of considering Tommy as an individual.

No doubt the writer would go on to mention all the facts previously
listed but why try to crowd them all into the first sentence? An
illustration of some socially misunderstood "Tommy" lost in the oblivion
of a classroom with sixty children and one harassed teacher would bring
the problem into focus much more sharply than all the facts and figures
statisticians could provide.

Illustrative beginnings have been shown first as they are probably
accepted most quickly by the reader. However, the shortest path between
writer and reader is the direct address--the use of "you." The best
possible way to make an idea seem important is to show the individual how
it affects him as a person. Often this can be accomplished through a
question:

Did you ever try taking thirty-five first graders
on a picnic?

There is a good chance that you never did try it but you have an immediate
mental image of thirty-five slippery little beings starting off in all
directions to fall in the creek, tumble from the jungle jim or be bashed
in the mouth by a baseball bat. Just out of curiosity you will want to
read on to find how the writer managed to survive the ordeal.
As soon as you are satisfied with your beginning, go through the main body of the article with the same degree of critical analysis. Take it apart. (If you don't, someone else will and all your work will have been in vain!) Is it a unit rather than just a hodge-podge of ideas? Does it have coherence—that is, does it stick together? Does it emphasize the point of view you want emphasized? These are the standards by which you may judge your own work. Common sense will help you here. Nothing else can.

Finally in the matter of structure of your article we come to the ending. A magazine article should have "a sting in its tail," according to Fletcher Pratt. This sting ideally will consist of a final illustration pointing up the conclusions you wish the reader to reach from the article. However, if the material does not lend itself to illustration, make sure that it is summarized by some means so that the point gets across to the reader clearly and firmly. You have kept him reading this far and you won't want to let him down now.

**Putting life into the article.** When you have organized your manuscript it is time to go back and inject more life into it. The most frequent criticisms editors have of the articles contributed to their magazines are, "I have trouble getting good, live, sparkling manuscripts," and "Writing is dull, dull, dull!"

Facts are dull unless they are deliberately brightened and the only medium the writer has for communicating his ideas and feelings is the language he uses. Grammar, rhythm, diction, and tone are aspects of this medium.
The importance of diction. Diction includes the qualities of the individual words even beyond their bare dictionary definitions, for words may be either subjective or objective. Words like "book," "desk," and "chalk" are objective, that is, they merely point to an object. On the other hand, "cheating," "failure," and "discipline" are subjective—they contain emotional overtones. The objective ones are good enough for presenting fact, but to stimulate feeling or emotion calls for a dip into the subjective supply. A good writer will use a blend of the two varieties and will keep in mind that color and clarity are obtained by the discriminating use of words.

Note the use of the word "discriminating" in the preceding paragraph. When most writers think of introducing color into the language they first think of figurative speech. It is true that figurative speech helps set the imagination to work. However, if trite or overdone, it loses its power. Inexperienced writers tend to over-use adjectives. Each one must add something essential to the description or it only leads to a cluttered confusion in the article. One person might write:

It was as though the sodden gray clouds had been upended and were pouring their contents on the already drenched earth and I was soaked to the skin when I entered Miss Allen's third grade classroom. However, the atmosphere in the room was in direct contrast to the weather. The bright, shining, happy faces of the children, the splash of golden color from an arrangement of daffodils on the bookcase, the many-hued finger paintings displayed on the bulletin board all conspired to produce a feeling that I had just entered a golden airy sunroom and Miss Allen, attired in a dress as blue as the sky and with an infectious, radiant smile on her pretty face, completed the illusion.

He might have said this much more effectively by a more discriminating use of words:

On the day of my visit the atmosphere in Miss Allen's third grade classroom was in direct contrast to the dismal out-of-doors.
The room had the airiness and color of a sunroom with a southern exposure and this feeling was reflected in the radiant expressions on the faces of the busy students and their teacher.

The same effect has been created in the second example, but in a much simpler way and without entangling the reader in a dozen superfluous adjectives.

Keep in mind, also, in your choice of words and phrases that, although you have been urged previously to keep "a conversational tone" in your writing, many things slip by unnoticed in conversation that will not bear close scrutiny on the printed page. Some of the following are colloquialisms and others are plain errors, but all, and many others like them, should be avoided.

- being that
- try and
- should of
- towards
- neither--or
- between each
- after having taught
- if I would have known

for

since

try to

should have

toward

neither--nor

between the two

having taught

if I had known

This is a very short list and one that could be enlarged many times by referring to such texts and handbooks as: **Writer's Guide and Index to English** by Porter G. Ferrin, **Modern Rhetoric** by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, and **The Secretary's Handbook** by Sarah Taintor and Kate M. Monro.

**Tone of the article.** Tone in writing is like the tone of voice one uses in speaking. It implies the writer's relationship to his reader and to his subject and involves diction, rhythm, and sentence structure.
The most important thing here is to try to express your own personality and point of view in the way you say things. Instead of writing down to your reader, converse with him as though he were in the room with you. Talk of things that are familiar both to you and to him.

The following will illustrate tone or writer-reader relationship. Every elementary teacher tries to encourage supplementary reading and there are dozens of devices used for the purpose. Most of these devices can be found in sources available to the teacher, but they seem much more interesting and convincing when they are backed up by an actual presentation of things you have successfully accomplished in your own classroom.

Such an article might begin:

The 'free reading corner' in my second grade classroom is seldom without two or three blue-jeaned or pig-tailed creatures in a variety of informal poses. Their eyes travel quickly over the pages of books on subjects that vary from dogs and horses to space travel and rockets.

Your reader will immediately wonder how you managed to capture in such a small space and for such a passive activity these normally explosive boys and girls. It is your job then to go on and tell him how you did it—where you got the idea, what materials you used and what the results were. You may introduce conversation, anecdote and incident, all devices of fiction which create and hold interest.

What about tempo? Every piece of writing has a tempo or pace. This, too, is a product of choice of words and word patterns. Keep your reader moving from one point to another through sentences and paragraphs full of variety and action. The movement from one idea to another may be through chronological time or through relative importance. As
mentioned earlier, it is better to consider points as they relate to one another than in the order of their occurrence.

Avoid repetition unless it is combined with variety and some progression in the treatment of the subject. Teachers seem overly prone toward the use of repetition, probably because it is such a time-worn educational device. Its use, however, is apt to give your reader a feeling of standing still. Such is the case in the following example:

A smoothly running school lunch line is difficult to attain. While most school administrators and their teachers spend countless weary hours attempting to work out ways of getting boys and girls through the lunch line, it often seems that little progress is made. However, at Lincoln High School we have, after expending much effort, worked out a plan that we feel is worth passing on in the hope that it will help you solve this difficult problem in your school.

Surely nothing could be that hard work and even if it is, don't give it to the reader all at once. He may become too tired to read any further.

In the following short paragraph the problem is presented and a possible solution suggested in fairly short order:

For the past two years we have been struggling at Lincoln High School with a problem that has become common to all administrators and teachers in schools with lunch programs—that of attaining a smoothly running lunch line. Our solution involves issuing tickets to all participating students at the beginning of each week.

Instead of keeping the reader standing still, or, worse, bogging him down completely, the second example has carried him along. The result will be that he will want to read on to find the rest of the solution.

Much has been said elsewhere about paragraph and sentence length. There have even been formulas worked out for the writer to use. However,
the best rule to follow is to see that each sentence and paragraph does its work as simply and briefly as possible. The human eye tires from too long paragraphs. A series of short sentences gives a choppy effect while numerous long ones strung together give the reader the feeling of wading through deep water with his boots on. Mix them up to create a change of pace that will be refreshing.

Concrete presentation. No matter how important an idea is, it is lost if the words are blundering. Unhappily the "intellectual," and almost every person in education likes to think himself one, has a preference for abstractions and generalizations as against concrete realities. Most of us are overloaded with blind beliefs which we enshrine in generalities when we speak, and especially when we write. Unfortunately for us, most readers are alert enough to recognize these at a glance and discard them as unworthy of their time. As an example, what does the following sentence actually tell?

Sixth graders at Lincoln School are acquiring one of the most important concepts of democracy in education—that of democratic behavior in a classroom situation.

Take a look at the words "concepts," "democracy," "education," "democratic," and "behavior." Each is a perfectly good word by itself but strung together without relief they form the kind of vague generality which communicates very little in an extremely dull fashion. To interpret the general one must use the particular. This might be done for the preceding statement by using the refugee student mentioned earlier and presenting a concrete example in this way:
Helping a foreign refugee member of their class learn the 'give and take' and 'live and let live' of American education has brought these democratic ideas into sharper focus for sixth graders at Lincoln School.

Essentially the same thing is said in both examples but the second is far more enticing to the reader because it offers something concrete. Here is a real classroom with real children. A mental image of the true situation is created.

In a similar category falls the so-called educational "jargon."

Far too many articles have been padded with such cliched phrases as "educational concepts" and "the thinking of the educators," and the poor reader has been "correlated" and "culminated" to death. A writer producing a piece of work that is fresh will avoid these and talk in straightforward conversational language.

Illustrations of any kind explain by presenting an example. They express the general by presenting the particular and this may be done through either comparison or contrast. In comparison a subject is clarified by indicating similarities between two or more things; in contrast, by indicating differences. The example used earlier concerning the shortage of teachers might be illustrated by contrast as follows:

There were two sixth grade teaching vacancies this spring, one at Lincoln School in Centerville, and the other at a school in a city across the state line. The salary schedules are the same, the buildings are both new. Centerville has had only two applicants, neither of whom could qualify, while the position across the line was filled the second day after it was announced. The reason? In the Centerville classroom there will be fifty-five students come September; across the line less than half that many.

Comparison and contrast may be organized in either of two ways. You may present one item and then fully present another, or you may present part
of one and part of another until all parts relevant to the comparison or contrast have been touched upon.

As a writer you want to give your reader a unified impression so you must select details which will suggest the whole object and set his imagination to work. Decide which are vivid and significant and, above all, make them concrete.

Choosing a title. When your article is written, rewritten and revised to your satisfaction you have the problem of choosing a title. No doubt you have had one in mind—most every author uses a "working title" to guide him and help keep his thoughts in-bounds—but now one must be chosen to go on the final manuscript. Although the title may very likely be changed by the editor—nearly half of the editors surveyed stated that they did change them—still, it is important as a selling point for the manuscript.

The length and tone, or appeal, will be guided by the style of the magazine to which you are submitting the article. A title should be accurate, exact, attractive and concise and the best things you can appeal to are the reader's success or personal well-being. Conciseness is achieved by careful selection of words and every word must be important. A good title has action and also eye appeal.

Below on the left are listed some possible titles and on the right improved versions that might be applied to the same articles:

**Possible**

"Square Dancing As A Physical Education Activity"

"Training the Adolescent Boy's Voice"

"Scheduling the School Day"

**Improved**

"They Swing Their Partners!"

"Keep Him Singing"

"How Many Minutes In An Hour?"
It is best to make a list of several titles from which the most appropriate may be chosen.

**Illustrating the article.** Many educational journals now use pictures profusely, so if you have a camera, or a friend with a camera, try to get some good action shots to illustrate your article. Most editors indicate that photographs are valuable when submitted with an article even though they may not be used in the magazine.

Pictures should be dynamic and should tell a story or dramatize your idea. Close-ups of individuals are better than distance shots, and make sure that the thing you are attempting to illustrate dominates the picture. For example, if you are taking a picture of an art student sketching the landscape, concentrate on the person, his hands and his sketching pad—perhaps the studied look on his face—rather than on the landscape.

Unposed action shots are most desirable. If you can’t get actual candid shots, at least make them look candid. Glossy prints are best for photographs and the size may be 6 x 8, 7 x 9, or 8 x 10. Be sure to protect illustrated manuscripts with cardboard.

Sketches may be submitted also, either for actual use or as guides to the editor. Pencil sketches are adequate if they are to be used only as suggestions, but those for actual use in the magazine should be in black India ink on white drawing board.

Always submit cutlines or captions to explain your illustrations. Never type these on the illustrated material, but paste them, together with your name and address, on the back.
Form of the manuscript. While most editors do not list the form of a manuscript as a serious problem to them, this handbook would not seem complete without a few suggestions regarding that aspect of preparation.

All manuscripts should be typed double-spaced and as perfectly as possible on good quality white bond paper. The first page should have the writer's name and address in the upper left corner an inch and a half from the top. The title, in capital letters, is placed a third of the way down the page and writing begins eight to ten lines below the title. Paragraphs are indented eight or ten spaces from the margin which is an inch and a half on the left and one inch on the right. The second and all following pages should have the writer's last name in the upper left corner with the page number in the center of the same line.

Always use a good black ribbon, make sure the type is clean, and make a carbon. Proof-read for errors and see that all are corrected. An error-ridden manuscript impresses an editor very badly and does not do justice to the ideas you are expressing.

WHAT ARE THE BEST METHODS OF PREPARING AND SUBMITTING AN ARTICLE?

Submitting the article. Submitting an article to an editor is a fairly simple operation, but there are a few hints that will be useful to you.

Often you select the magazine before you start to write, and this is the ideal way since it enables you to slant and style your article
before the choice is made. If you do this, or even if you complete the
article before the choice is made, it may be profitable for you to query
the editor to see if it is the sort of thing he can use. Some editors
say they prefer queries while others say they are not necessary. In any
case, a query can do no harm and may save you time and postage.

A query is simply a briefly stated question to the editor asking
whether he would be interested in what you have written or are about to
write. Such a question is particularly important if your subject matter
is controversial or involves anything that might conflict with the policy
of the magazine.

Regardless of whether you make inquiry of the editor, be sure that
your article is submitted well in advance of when it may appear, particu-
larly if it is seasonal.

**Mailing suggestions.** There are several things you will need
before you can mail your manuscript—two sizes of strong manila envelopes
(a smaller one for return), stamps to clip to the return envelope, and
cardboard backing (if illustrations are included.) Remember, manuscripts
must be sent and returned first class, so be sure you have included enough
postage. Use large enough envelopes so that the manuscript will be folded
as little as possible. In fact, if it runs over a very few pages, it is
best to mail it flat.

A manuscript must speak for itself, so an accompanying letter is
usually unnecessary. If you must write one, keep it brief. Never submit
an article to more than one editor at the same time—what if they both
took it?
Acceptance or rejection. After the mailing chore is completed, forget the whole thing, at least for five or six weeks. Watching the mailbox won't hurry the busy editor one bit. Most educational publications are sadly understaffed and the careful reading of manuscripts takes time. If you haven't received a reply of any kind after a reasonable length of time, a gentle reminder will probably bring one.

If your article is accepted, a feeling of exhilaration is guaranteed. Even if it is rejected, you have gained much more than you have lost in the few cents of postage invested. Rejection is often necessary for reasons other than lack of quality. The editor may have a large inventory of unused articles or he may not feel your article is suitable to his particular publication.

You may react in one of two ways to a rejection slip. You may toss the article away in disgust or you may revise it and submit it to someone else, but whatever you do, don't give up! Keep on writing and writing. It may become a fascinating and even profitable hobby!

You will never have more time to write than you have at present. Keep in mind that magazine editing is an eternal search for a fresh idea. Yours is just as good as the next person's so sit down and write it up!