

# ABT AUTHORS & PHOTOGRAPHERS Guidelines

This peer-reviewed journal includes articles for practitioners at every level, with a special focus on high school and post-secondary biology instruction. We invite our readers, biologists with teaching interests, and biology educators in general, to write for *The American Biology Teacher*.

## Article Categories

**A note about article word count:** Please recognize that tables, figures, and photographs add to the total length of the article. One page of text has approximately 1,000 words, therefore a 1/4-page graphic will count for 250 words. References are also included in the final article word count.

**Feature Article** (up to 4,500 words) includes topics of general interest to readers of *ABT*. Examples include:

- Research on teaching, including evaluation of a new method, cooperative learning, concept maps, investigative experiences, educational technology, and biology and life science education standards.
- Social and ethical implications of biology, including how to teach issues such as genetic modification, energy production, agriculture, climate change, healthcare, nutrition, and cultural responsiveness.
- Reviews and updates of recent advances in the life sciences in the form of an "Instant Update" to bring readers up to date in a specific area.
- Imaginative views of the future of biology education and suggested changes to schools, classrooms, and student populations.
- Other timely, relevant, and interesting content, including discussions of the role of the science standards in biology teaching, considerations of the nature of science with implications for the classroom, and considerations of the continuum of biology instruction from K-12 to post-secondary teaching environments, or contributions that consider the likely/ideal future of science and biology instruction.

**Research on Learning** (up to 5,000 words) includes reports of original research on innovative teaching strategies, learning methods, or curriculum comparisons. Studies should be based on sound research questions, hypotheses, discussion of appropriate design and procedures, data and analysis, discussion on study limitations, and recommendations for improved learning outcomes.

**Inquiry and Investigations** (up to 4,000 words) features discussions of innovative laboratory and field-based strategies. Strategies in this section should be original, engaging, practical, and related to either a particular program, such as AP science, or linked to standards, such as NGSS. Submissions should also be focused on a particular grade/age level of students and must include all necessary instructions, materials list, worksheets, and assessment tools. Other appropriate contributions include laboratory experiences that engage students in inquiry.

**Tips, Tricks and Techniques** (up to 1,700 words but may be much shorter) features a range of suggestions helpful for teachers, including laboratory, field, and classroom activities; motivational strategies to assist students in learning specific concepts; modifications of traditional activities; new ways to prepare some aspect of laboratory instruction, etc.

**Guest Commentaries** (up to 900 words) on some topic of importance or current interest to the biology teaching community are featured in each issue. If you would like to propose a guest commentary, please contact the *ABT* Editor for more information ([ABTEditor@nabt.org](mailto:ABTEditor@nabt.org)).

**Themed issues** of the *ABT* traditionally occur in February (Evolution) and April (Ecology).

## Writing & Style Guidelines

**APA Style (current edition):** All manuscripts should be written using the APA style, which is the guide for questions of punctuation, abbreviation, and style. List all references in alphabetical order on a separate page at the end of the manuscript. Use a friendly tone and first-person perspective whenever appropriate. Use concise words to emphasize your point rather than capitalization, underlining, italics, or boldface. Use the SI (metric) system for all weights and measures.

**Accessibility:** Accepted articles are required to meet accessibility criteria that comply with government mandates. Authors are responsible for ensuring that their accepted content conforms to NABT and UC Press's Accessibility Guidelines found at <https://bit.ly/UCPaccessguidelines>

**AI Guidelines:** Authors are responsible and legally accountable for the content of their work. AI-assisted improvements to human-generated texts for readability, formatting, and style, and to ensure that the texts are free of errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and tone are permitted. However, authors who use AI tools to produce text or images/graphics, or to collect or process data, must inform their editors of this use. Please see the AI guidelines at <https://www.ucpress.edu/about/ai-guidelines> to ensure compliance.

## Editorial Procedures

- Individuals (typically three) who have expertise in the respective content area will review each article.
- The editors attempt to make decisions on articles as soon as possible after receipt; however, the process can take multiple months, with the actual publication date to follow.
- Authors will be emailed editorial decisions as soon as they are available.
  - Communications will be directed only to the first author of multiple-authored articles.
- Accepted manuscripts will be forwarded to the Copy Editor for editing
  - This process may involve making changes in style and content. However, the author is ultimately responsible for scientific and technical accuracy.
- Page proofs will be sent to authors for final review before publication, at which time only minor changes can be made.

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## Submission Guidelines

**All authors must be current members of NABT, or a charge of \$100 per page is due before publication.**

**All manuscripts must be submitted online using Scholastica at <https://abt.scholasticahq.com/for-authors>**

- Authors will be asked to register the first time they enter the Scholastica site.
- Upon receiving a password, authors can proceed to upload their manuscripts through a step-by-step process.
  - Assistance is available by using the "Help" button, located in the bottom right corner of most pages.
  - Additional assistance is available from the Managing Editor ([managingeditor@nabt.org](mailto:managingeditor@nabt.org)).
- Manuscripts must be submitted as Word files (.docx).
- Format manuscripts for 8.5 x 11-inch paper, 12-point font, double-spaced throughout, with line numbers. Include tables, figure legends, and references.
  - Place figures (including photos) and tables where they are first cited in the text, along with appropriate labels.
  - Make sure to include figure and table citations in the text, as it is not always obvious where they should be placed.
  - At the time of initial submission, figures, tables and images should be low resolution so that the final file size remains manageable.
  - If your article is accepted, the editors will require that figures be submitted in a higher resolution form. See section on *Preparing Tables, Figures, and Photographs*.

## Preparing Tables, Figures, and Photographs

Upon article acceptance, accompanying figures must be submitted as individual files in a higher resolution format.

Color is limited within the printed version of the ABT. All artwork, figures, tables, etc. must be legible in black and white. If color is important for understanding your figures, please consider alternative ways to convey the information.

### Article Photographs

Digital files must meet the following guidelines:

- Minimum resolution of 300 DPI, 600 DPI is preferred
- Acceptable file formats are TIFF and JPEG
- Set to one-column (3.5" wide) or two-column size (7" wide)
- If the figure originates from a website, include the URL in the figure caption. *Please note that screen captures of figures from a website are usually too low in resolution for use.*

### Tables and Figures

- Minimum resolution of 600 DPI, 1200 DPI is preferred
- Acceptable file formats are TIFF, BMP, and EPS
- Set to one-column (3.5" wide) or two-column size (7" wide)

*If you have any questions, contact Valerie Haff at [managingeditor@nabt.org](mailto:managingeditor@nabt.org)*

## Supplemental Materials

To maintain the word count for individual articles, we will accept supplemental materials to accompany the online versions of the issue. If authors have materials (figures, examples, worksheets, appendices, multimedia files, etc.) that support but are not essential to the printed text of the article, authors can include those as separate files with their article submission.

## Submitting Cover Images

Submissions of cover photographs from NABT members are strongly encouraged. Covers are selected based on the quality of the image, originality, composition, and overall interest to life science educators.

Cover images require high standards, and the required size of the cover image generally precludes images taken with cell phones, point-and-shoot cameras, and even some older model digital SLR cameras.

Please follow the requirements listed below:

- Minimum resolution of pixels per inch (PPI)—preferred 400 PPI—and a size of 8.5 x 11.25".
- Acceptable file formats are TIFF and JPEG.
- The image should not be edited or enhanced in anyway.
- ABT covers feature an almost-square image with a slight vertical orientation.
- Do not crop the subject too tightly. It is best to provide some background around the subject.
- Choose an image with a good story to tell. Include a brief description of the image, details of the shot (i.e., circumstances, time of day, location, type of camera, camera settings, etc.), and your biographical information (name, home and email addresses, and phone number) in an email message to [jminbile@colum.edu](mailto:jminbile@colum.edu).

*Email possible cover images to Julie Minbile at [jminbile@colum.edu](mailto:jminbile@colum.edu).*

Thank you for your interest in  
*The American Biology Teacher*.  
We look forward to receiving  
your manuscripts.

William McComas, Editor-in-Chief  
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