

# ABT AUTHORS & PHOTOGRAPHERS Guidelines

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

Revised July 2020

## Article Categories

A note about article word count: Please recognize that tables, figures, and photographs add to the overall length of the article. One page of text has approximately 1,000 words, therefore a 1/4-page graphic will count for 250 words. More extensive graphics should be budgeted accordingly. 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*. Consider the following examples of content that would be suitable for the feature article category:

- Research on teaching alternatives, including evaluation of a new method, cooperative learning, concept maps, learning contracts, investigative experiences, educational technology, simulations and games, and biology and life science education standards
- Social and ethical implications of biology and how to teach such issues as genetic modification, energy production, agriculture, climate change, health care, nutrition, and cultural responsiveness
- Reviews and updates of recent advances in the life sciences in the form of an “Instant Update” that brings readers up-to-date in a specific area
- Imaginative views of the future of biology education and suggestions for adjusting to changes in schools, classrooms, and student populations
- Other timely, relevant, and interesting content such as discussions of the role of the Next Generation Science Standards in biology teaching, considerations of the nature of science with implications for the classroom, 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 4,500 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 3,500 words) is the section of *ABT* that features discussion 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 and/or linked to standards such as NGSS. Submissions should also be focused at a particular grade/age level of student and must include all necessary instructions, materials list, worksheets, and assessment tools. Other appropriate contributions in this category are laboratory experiences that engage students in inquiry.

**Tips, Tricks and Techniques** (up to 1,500 words but may be much shorter) features a range of suggestions useful 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.

## Writing & Style Guidelines

The *Chicago Manual of Style, 17th Edition* 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. Please review a past issue for examples. Use first person and a friendly tone 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.

While calls for specific themed issues of *ABT* are infrequent, February and April are traditionally themed editions on Evolution and the Environment, respectively.

## Preparing Tables, Figures, and Photographs

### General Requirements

- When your article is accepted, we will require that figures be submitted as individual figure files in higher resolution format. See below for file format and resolution requirements.
- Authors should be aware that color is limited within the journal. All artwork, figures, tables, etc. must be legible in black and white. If color is important to understanding your figures, please consider alternative ways of conveying 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 figure originates from a website, please include the URL in the figure caption. Please note that screen captures of figures from a website are normally 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 [manageditor@nabt.org](mailto:manageditor@nabt.org).

*continued*

## Submission Guidelines

**NOTE:** 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 at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ucpress-abt>

- Authors will be asked to register the first time they enter the site. Upon receiving a password, authors can proceed to upload their manuscripts through a step-by-step process. Assistance is available in the “Author Help” link found in the menu on the left side of the page. Additional assistance is available from the Managing Editor ([managingeditor@nabt.org](mailto:managingeditor@nabt.org)).
- Manuscripts must be submitted as Word or WordPerfect files.
- Format manuscripts for 8.5 × 11-inch paper, 12-point font, double-spaced throughout, including tables, figure legends, and references.
- Please 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 as figure files in higher resolution form. See section on *Preparing Tables, Figures, and Photographs*.

## Supplemental Materials

In order to maintain the word count for individual articles, we are pleased to facilitate publication of supplemental materials accompanying the online 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.

## Editorial Procedures

- Communications will be directed only to the first author of multiple-authored articles.
- Typically, three individuals 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, but the process can take six to eight months, with the actual date of publication to follow. Authors will be emailed editorial decisions as soon as they are available.
- 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.

## Submitting Images

### 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. *ABT* has high standards for cover image requirements and it is important for potential photographers to understand that 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.

- Email possible cover images to Kathleen Westrich at [kmwestrich@yahoo.com](mailto:kmwestrich@yahoo.com).
- *ABT* covers feature an almost-square image with a slight vertical orientation.
- Choose an image with a good story to tell. Do not crop the subject too tightly. It is best to provide an area of background around the subject.
- 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 in an email message.
- Include your name, home and email addresses, and phone numbers.
- Please ensure that the image meets the minimum standards for publication listed below and has not been edited or enhanced in any way. The digital file must meet the minimum resolution of 300 pixels per inch (PPI)—preferred is 400 PPI—and a size of 8.5 × 11.25". We accept TIFF or JPEG images only.

### BioMystery Images

Authors who have a photo that does not meet the high resolution required for a cover photo can consider submission as the “BioMystery” image. These submissions can be sent to [ABTEditor@nabt.org](mailto:ABTEditor@nabt.org) with a description of the subject of the image.

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

William McComas, Editor-in-Chief  
[ABTEditor@nabt.org](mailto:ABTEditor@nabt.org)

Valerie Haff, Managing Editor  
[managingeditor@nabt.org](mailto:managingeditor@nabt.org)