2003

The 'Write on Workshop: how to write articles and get them published' Quiz Show

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Publication details
van Beurden, E, Newell, S & Rissel, C 2003, 'The 'Write on Workshop: how to write articles and get them published' Quiz Show', paper presented to Australian Health Promotion Association NSW State Conference, Coffs Harbour, NSW.
The “Write on Workshop: How to write articles & get them published” Quiz Show

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Health Promotion Units:
1. Northern Rivers Area Health Service
2. Central Sydney Area Health Service

Australian Health Promotion
Association NSW State Conference
(May 2003)
Which side of your brain?

Quiz Rules:
1. Both teams start with 100 points.
2. Ten points for correct answer……but possibly more or less at discretion of totally impartial panel who are open to bribes but not coercion
3. Minus ten points for incorrect answer same goes
4. Novel, imaginative, humorous responses will attract extra points or deductions depending on the mood of the panel and host.
What are the quiz rules?
• First team to tap glass
• No pause or lose points
• We are the judges!!!!

BIG PRIZES TO BE WON
• Lunch with secret celebrities

Bonus starter points for identifying problems with abstract
THE "HOW TO WRITE ARTICLES AND GET THEM PUBLISHED" QUIZ SHOW.

Aim

This interactive workshop will dispel the myths and perceived barriers that enshroud the simple art of publication. Your self efficacy as a proficient writer will soar as you gather a plethora of useful tips and skills to assist in all stages of publication.

Method

Participants will be randomly assigned to one of two teams. The teams will then be pitted against each other in a mindful but merciless competition to gain ascendancy as ‘The Supreme Boffin Writer Team’. Topics include: what and why to write; choosing an appropriate journal; principles of good writing; communicating with editors; and responding to reviewers’ comments.

Results

Editors of health promotion journals worldwide have been overwhelmed by significant masses of quality manuscripts submitted by graduates of these workshops.

Implications and relevance for health promotion

This workshop will facilitate the deserved publication of many successful rural partnership projects (and hopefully the odd total flop) that Australian Health Promoters have implemented but been to afraid to write up.
Why Publish?

• Build theory
• Communicate
• Change practice
• Do justice to effort
• Esteem or career
• Get grants
What can I write?

• Letter to editor
• Book review
• Brief report
• Scientific paper
• Review
• Policy
• Theory
What personal qualities are required?

• Practice
• Patience
• Persistence
• A very thick skin
Should I write with coauthors?

(Two common sayings)

• Many hands make write work!
• Too many cooks spoil the plot!

• Guidelines
• Agreement every step
How can I focus my thoughts?
(What questions?)

• Why did we do it?
• What’s interesting about it?
• What’s new?
• What take home message?
• Who is it for?
How do I choose a journal?

• Audience

• Editorial goal

• Content, debate, style

• Credentials (Medline)
EDITORIAL GOAL
The purpose of the Health Promotion Journal of Australia is to facilitate communication between researchers, practitioners and policymakers involved in health promotion activities. Preference is given to practical examples of policies, theories, strategies and programs that utilise educational, organisational, economic and/or environmental approaches to health promotion. We welcome papers or brief reports on programs, professional viewpoints, guidelines for practice or evaluation methodologies.
How do I get started?

• 2 - 3 hr stints
• No distractions
• Read, read, read
• Succinct title
• Key points
• Prioritise
• Do an outline
What’s in an outline?

• Problem
• Purpose
• Theory
• Design
• Hypotheses
• Sample
• Measures
• Results
• Conclusions
• Recommendations
How can I test the water?

- Run outline by peers
- Ask editors
- Send outline
In what order do I write the sections?

- Methods
- Results
- Introduction
- Discussion/conclusions
- Abstract
- Acknowledgements
- References

Sallie’s preference
What are the contributors to readability?

- Wording
- Grammar
- Context
- Style
- Review
KISS word test

- accomplish = do
- additional = extra
- demonstrate = show
- fabricate = make
- subsequently = then
- terminate = stop
- utilise = use
KISS phrase test

• In view of the fact that    =    because
• If it is assumed that      =    if
• On a regular basis        =    regularly
• Make an adjustment to     =    amend
• Take into consideration   =    consider
• Try out                   =    test
• Count up                 =    add
• Have been shown to be     =    are
Context problems

• The printer was connected to the computer, but it was found to be defective.

• I lunched with a friend, who has just started a business with clients, at the café down the road.

• AMBIGUITY
Grammar problems

• Assessment of the problem should precede implementation of the program.

    (Passive verb)

• Did the horse get up Cuthbert

    (Poor punctuation)
What are some common style problems?

• Jargon
• Complicated, complex, convoluted expression
• Verbosity, extra, unneeded, needless words
• Boring buildups instead of punchy news
• Repetition
The intervention, conducted by the Unit’s health promotion staff, were well underway. And then they came up with an excellent strategy. With the aim of making the most of their limited resources, (like interventions of this kind never do), they recruited and trained volunteers to take on the running of the workshops on a ‘quid quo pro’ basis in exchange for free attendance for themselves plus a few pics in the local media. Success. In order not to appear uninvolved, the project officer, who was not inexperienced in working with volunteers, and enjoyed it, to the full, then took on the running of one of the workshops themselves. This strategy proved efficient, effective and efficacious if not entirely ethical.
Write rules

Verbs HAS to agree with their subjects.

Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.

And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.

It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.

Avoid clichés like the plague. (They're old hat)

Comparisons are as bad as clichés.

Also, always avoid annoying alliteration.

Be more or less specific.
A few more

Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.

Also too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.

No sentence fragments.

Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.

Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.

One should NEVER generalize.

Don't use no double negatives.
Last few

One-word sentences? Eliminate.

Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.

The passive voice is to be ignored.

Never use a big word when a diminutive one would suffice.

Use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.

If you've heard it once, you've heard it a thousand times:
Resist hyperbole; not one writer in a million can use it correctly.
What is the key to referencing?

• Electronic data base (Endnote, Reference Manager)

• Easy to edit

• Easy to change style
How many drafts?

• Quick rough first
• Careful second
• Coauthor third (track changes)
• Tidy fourth to send

• Reviewer comment rework to fifth

• Rewrite for another journal???
What does submission entail?

- Check ALL instructions
- Especially references
- Details on title page
- Number of copies/disks
- Cover letter with specific statements
- Mention of relevance and importance
Dear Professor Reeve,

Submission of article: *Primary School Physical Education lessons. How physically active are they?*

Please find enclosed our manuscript *Primary School Physical Education lessons. How physically active are they?* This manuscript represents results of original work that have not been published elsewhere (except as an abstract in conference proceedings). This manuscript has not and will not be submitted for publication elsewhere until a decision is made regarding its acceptability for publication in Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport. If accepted for publication, it will not be published elsewhere. Furthermore, if there are any perceived financial conflicts of interest related to the research reported in the manuscript, we have disclosed it in the Author’s Notes.

This manuscript reports on the results of one of three subgroups within a larger project (Measurement of physical activity in (a) Physical Education classes, (b) Fundamental Movement Skills, and (c) Playgrounds). It is anticipated to publish one paper per subgroup at baseline and one at completion plus a summary paper for the overall program. There may be up to 2 more papers on distinct intervention processes.

Yours sincerely
Dear Dr Bates,

In this our second submission from the Move it Groove it Program we explore an important issue regarding PE interventions that has been raised in recent theoretical discussions (eg Kemper’s 2000 review of pediatric exercise).

We know of no other published evaluation which addresses the problem of how to balance potentially competing objectives to both improve child fundamental movement skills and increase physical activity within the context of existing PE lessons.

We feel this will be of interest to your readers and contribute to thinking on best practice in the field. We hope you agree and look forward to the reviewers’ comments.

Regards,
What response might I expect?

- Rejection (10% if targeted)
- Noncommittal revision (20%)
- Accepted with changes (70%)
- Outright acceptance (<1%)
Dear Dr. Dietrich:
We are pleased to inform you that your paper is acceptable for publication provided minor revisions are made. Please carefully address the issues raised in the comments, point by point, and make appropriate changes in the manuscript, or provide a suitable rebuttal to any specific request for change that has not been made. The revised version should be submitted in triplicate (one single-sided and two double-sided), with a covering letter detailing and numbering your responses to each comment. The revision should be received within 4 weeks from the date of this letter.

To facilitate the processing of your manuscript and to reduce delays, we request that you submit an electronic version of your revised manuscript (both text and art) with the hard copies. Please consult any recent issue of the journal, or visit our website at www.academicpress.com/pm to ensure that you are in compliance with all components of our Information for Authors. Thank you for considering Preventive Medicine; we look forward to seeing your revised manuscript.

Yours
Comments from Reviewer I:
This paper used an observation system to estimate physical activity in children during break times in schools.

In the introduction and discussion important publications from Europe are not mentioned: Stratton G, J of Sport Pedagogy 1999; 2: 71-82; Stratton G, Ergonomics 2000; 43, 10: 1538-1546; van Mechelen et al, 2000; 32, 9:1610-1616 for European boys and girls and Kemper in Int J Sports Med 2000; 21: S118-S124. Although it is important that the CAST system is reliable and valid, in the methods and results it is too much described and has to be considerable condensed (from almost three pages to only one).
Page 5: delete paragraph of sample size calculation (not relevant for this paper).
Condense pages 6, 7, 9 and 11.
Delete table 2 and 3 (main results about reliability and validity in methods!)

Minor points:
MIGI is not adequate heading
Abstract: line 9: delete "a subset of MVPA"
Line 12, 13 no decimals in percentages
- Page 6, line 2: five (?) viewing areas
How should I respond?

- politely
- number comments
- indicate if they are wrong
- express any confusion
- ask clarification (but time.. email?)
- cross check reviewers
- thankfully
Dear Caroline,

Thank you for the very constructive comments on our paper: Fundamental Movement Skills – How do rural children perform? ‘Move it Groove it’ baseline findings. We feel the paper had benefited greatly and hope that it is now acceptable for publication. We are resubmitting having responded to the suggested changes as follows:

Re reviewer A’s comments

In general we agreed with most of the comments except the suggestion that we seriously compare our results with those of Smith et al. We do now make a very tentative comparison but as we have now explained in the discussion such comparisons must be viewed with caution because the studies themselves were different in important aspects including the classification and scoring of skill components.

1. Last sentence of abstract omitted as suggested.
2. Surplus ‘and’ removed from intro 1st para last sentence.
3. 2nd para 2nd sentence now refers to adult levels.
4. 5th para 1st sentence now in present tense and aim more ...

...
How long will it all take?

• 1 month for outline
• 1 month for notice of receipt
• 3 to 9 for 1st review
• 3 for acceptance of changes
• 3 to 6 to publication

• 1 to 2 years total!!
‘Good Luck’

Eric van Beurden, Sallie Newell ¹
Chris Rissel ²

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