

JoLLE Manuscript Review Guidelines

Please answer every question beside each number with at least one complete sentence, building the format of your review into an essay. Your review should be NO LESS than one page and not more than three pages. In a document separate from the actual manuscript, write a review that provides the specific feedback below.

I. Content of Review (to be included in one coherent essay, 1-3 pages)

- 1) Quality of Content: Is the manuscript based on sound and in-depth scholarship pertaining to the theme? Are cited sources current and academically sound? Does it provide new information or insights and does this manuscript address issues of importance for education research? (The “so what” factor) Is the information accurate? Interesting to scholars and practitioners?
- 2) Is the article well-organized? Can you trace the logic of investigation consistently from the opening paragraphs to the conclusion? Does the theoretical framework guide the focus of the study or argument? The methodology? The research questions? The literature review? The method of collecting and analyzing data? In drawing conclusions about what the data say? Please explain.
- 3) Originality of Approach: Does the topic, research orientation, and/or author’s argument bring original, innovative, or fresh perspectives to the field of language and literacy education?
- 4) Quality of Writing: Is the writing clear, concise, logical, and accessible to practitioners and the general public? Grammatically correct?
- 5) Quality of Documentation: Are all references in the body of the text cited in the reference list and vice versa? Citations complete in the APA style? Are most references up-to-date (within the last 5-10 years)?
- 6) Adherence to Ethical Standards (only for research reports): How does the manuscript show evidence that professional and research ethical standards were properly applied in the research process?
- 7) Appropriateness of Research Methods and Design (only for research reports): Does it employ appropriate research methods and design? Good balance between the presentation of data and analysis/interpretation?
- 8) Usefulness/Practicality of Instructional Ideas or Programs (only for praxis articles): Are instructional ideas or programs discussed in the article useful in reaching current language and literacy goals in education?
- 9) Are the arguments/study believable? If not, what could be done to make the manuscript more trustworthy? Are there alternative interpretations that should be discussed? Is there a possibility for misinterpretation of the research results? Please explain.
- 10) Are there other resources the authors could use to strengthen their arguments?

II. Reviewer Decision

1. In a document separate from the actual manuscript, write a review that provides specific feedback.
2. We ask that you provide authors with constructive feedback. No matter how severe your judgment, we ask that you phrase your critique in a productive manner that fosters the academic conversation connected to the author's work. Because many contributors to scholarly journals are early-career researchers who become discouraged more by the tone of reviews than by the content, we feel that all reviews should be written with consideration for the author's potential as a developing researcher and thus should be written supportively as well as critically.
3. Your review should end /begin with one of the following four statements:
 1. Accept this manuscript with minor editing and technical revisions.
 2. Revise and resubmit this manuscript with minor revisions.
 3. This manuscript requires major revisions.
 4. This manuscript should not be published or invited for a second round of review
4. Think of your review as a scholarly document (albeit one that is not published.) That is, be thorough and precise, substantiating your judgments instead of stating them as opinions. Provide bibliographic guidance when you cite or refer to published sources. Be specific and to the point. Highlight clearly what is at the heart of your recommendation and why. What are the fatal flaws or key factors in a decision to reject? What exactly must an author do to make a manuscript acceptable for publication? Why should this manuscript be accepted? (Reviews clearly in favor of a manuscript's publication should give specific reasons and perhaps defend the manuscript against possible objections or limitations raised by others.) Make sure you address the key issues of significance, methodological rigor, and quality of presentation, although addressing these issues can be integrated into a variety of organizational formats. (See the next guideline.)
5. Be organized and provide a logical structure for your review. We don't want to be prescriptive, but we encourage you to imagine yourself being an editor or an author reading your review. We find it helpful to get a quick introductory summary of your overall reaction to the manuscript and your decision and the main reason for it. (Some reviewers prefer to start with a short summary of the study giving their interpretation of what the author did and found.) It is also helpful to enumerate main points and sub-points in the body of the review perhaps in outline form or with major headings. This makes for easy reference when we write a decision letter to the authors (e.g., "Note Reviewers 1's point 1.1;" or "Please address all of Reviewer 2's questions under the heading 'methodological concerns.'"). On the other hand, some of the least helpful reviews are "stream-of-consciousness" reviews that enumerate points found sequentially while reading the manuscript. This format often mixes major issues with minor ones making it difficult for editors and authors to see the big trees in the forest. It is sometimes helpful to have a separate section of minor details that might not be picked up by the copy editor. (See the next guideline).
6. We ask that your review be as concise as possible. The length of a good review varies from manuscript to manuscript and review to review. Some will require the equivalent of only one single-spaced page. Others will require 3 or more single-spaced pages.

7. Even if you are asked to review a manuscript that is in your area of interest but that employs a different theoretical or methodological orientation different from your own, we ask that you be open-minded. It is sometimes useful for editors to have a review from a different perspective. Evaluate the manuscript on its own terms, but don't be hesitant to indicate how the author might benefit from the expanded perspective you might offer.
8. Focus on the big issues. Be a reviewer not a copy editor. Substance is more important than form, the latter being generally more amenable to revision. Rejection should most often be justified on the basis of fatal conceptual or methodological flaws. On the other hand, when form is so deficient that the author would need to start from scratch that is a justification for rejection. On the other hand, do not hesitate to point out important details that might be missed by a copy editor (e.g., an inconsistency of numbers in the text and in a table).
9. Do not discuss or share manuscripts that you review with anyone other than the editors unless you are seeking some professional advice pertaining to the review of a manuscript. Be sensitive to conflict of interest and potential bias (this does not automatically mean that you cannot review a manuscript if you think that you know its author). Contact the editors if you have any concerns about ethical issues.