

## **Writing and Publishing**

### **Asking Critical Questions**

- Does the manuscript move the field forward? (Limited space demands selectivity.)
- Is the manuscript free of fatal flaws that cannot be overcome through revision?
- Is the content unique? (Read the journal you want to publish in and become familiar with topics and how they have been presented.)
- Will the manuscript appeal to the readership of the journal?
- Is the article well-written? These are some characteristics of a well-written manuscript:
  1. Tight convincing arguments
  2. Immediately catches the reader
  3. Cohesion both within and across paragraphs
  4. Flows; includes headings and subheadings that help the reader
  5. Discussion at the end makes the case for how questions were answered or problems resolved
  6. Integrates manuscript content with existing theory to make a case that will move the field forward(Suggestions: If a reviewer or the editor struggles with comprehension due to writing, readers will have the same difficulty. Consider having a critical friend read your manuscript. Get involved in a writer's group. Members read each other's writing and provide comments. As the author, you probably know where you are struggling—writing group members can help you with that struggle.)
- Does the manuscript match the genre of the journal?

### **Handling Revisions and Rejections**

- Read the reviewers' and editors' comments carefully.
- Don't hesitate to correspond with the editor during the review process.
- Editor may ask for a detailed letter in which you discuss how you have handled the requests for revision.
- Rejections. Have faith in yourself. Don't get discouraged. Editors can accept only a small percentage of the manuscripts submitted. Take the reviewers' comments, revise, and submit to another journal.

### **Avoiding Common Problems**

- Term papers (content limited to previously published information).
- Lists with no theoretical connection among the items.
- Manuscripts with the flavor of a textbook chapter (i.e., didactic quality, dense content).
- Don't get into an argument with an editor.

Submitted by:

Priscilla L. Griffith, Ph.D.

Professor and Chair

Department of Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum

University of Oklahoma

820 Van Vleet Oval, Room 114

Norman, OK 73072

\*\*Past Editor of *The Reading Teacher* and current Coeditor of *Action in Teacher Education*