



## Writing for *The Reading League Journal* (TRLJ)

### Submission Guidelines

The Reading League Journal (TRLJ) is a peer-reviewed journal, which welcomes contributions from both researchers and educational practitioners. The journal is in line with The Reading League's mission, which is to advance the awareness, understanding, and use of evidence-aligned reading instruction.

TRLJ is published three times a year. Manuscript acceptance is competitive.

#### What kind of articles does TRLJ publish?

TRLJ provides non-technical reviews of well-established findings from the reading research. It does not include new empirical research reports, opinion papers, or articles proposing new conceptual or theoretical ideas. It is intended to function as a conduit between the scientific research on reading and educational professionals who can benefit from this knowledge.

Researchers: Review scientific studies and present them in a format that is meaningful for educational professionals.

Educational Practitioners: Contribute articles related to the implementation of scientific research into practice.

The table below describes TRLJ's features and columns. Please be sure that any manuscript conforms to the descriptions below. Submissions that do not align with these categories will not be reviewed.

After reviewing the table and guidelines below, click on the link below to access our submission portal.

Feature / Column	Contributors	Description / Contributors	Word Count Limits
Feature Articles	Researchers	Semi-comprehensive summaries/reviews of a significant aspect of reading.	3,000 to 4,000 words <i>(including references)</i>
Brief Research Reviews	Researchers	Brief reviews of a specific topic related to reading. It could simply involve an integration of 2-3 related studies. This feature is designed to convey relevant findings in a short amount of time and space.	1,500 to 2,000 words <i>(including references)</i>
Game Changers: Research That Shaped the Science of Reading	Researchers	Summaries of landmark research reports or reviews that shaped the field of reading research and advanced our knowledge. Examples would be the major studies that prompted RTI (e.g., the National Reading Panel Report; Torgesen et al., 2001; etc.). Note: Before composing, please review previous TRLJ Game Changer columns so there is no duplication.	1,000 to 1,800 words <i>(including references)</i>
Brick by Brick	Researchers	Collections of brief, clear, and relevant descriptions of individual studies from across the decades (1/2 to 1 page) each, a few of which would appear in each issue.  Please contact <a href="mailto:comments@thereadingleague.org">comments@thereadingleague.org</a> prior to submitting.	350-600 words for individual studies <i>(including references)</i> . Total combined word count of all “bricks” should not exceed 3,000 words <i>(including references)</i> .
Changing Course: Large-Scale Implementation of the Science of Reading	Educational professionals	Descriptions of success in implementing scientifically validated practices in schools. This can range from school level to state level, written by administrators, state education personnel, teachers, and advocates.	1,500 to 2,500 words <i>(including references)</i>
Knowing Better, Doing Better: An Educator’s Transformation Story	Educational professionals	Educator descriptions of changes in their perspectives and teaching practices, including how they came upon their new perspective of adopting the science of reading to guide their teaching.	750 to 2,500 words <i>(Including references)</i>

## Writing Guidelines

### Who is the audience and how can I best write to engage them?

The primary audience for TRLJ is education professionals - classroom teachers, administrators, and specialists such as special educators and school psychologists. Many are new to the science of reading.

Many of these professionals did not receive classwork involving scientific research, so authors for TRLJ should write as if they are writing for a popular magazine, i.e., to those unfamiliar with the reading research. Many if not most of the readers are educators who have not had exposure to reading research or the rigors of scientific thinking/investigation. Write like you are explaining something to your college-educated next-door neighbor, not as if you are communicating with another scientist unfamiliar with your work. To do this:

- Avoid technical terminology. Avoid terms like *regression*, *variables*, *factor analysis*, *auto-regressor*, *lag design*, *path analysis*, etc. The concepts behind such terms should be expressed in other ways. For example, “regression analyses have demonstrated that [thus and such] accounts for unique variance in . . .” could be better expressed as “studies have shown that [thus and such] contributes to . . .” If the use of a technical term is unavoidable, be sure to define it and even illustrate it, if appropriate. Then, consider including parenthetical reminders when using such terms later on in the article to ensure comprehension.
- Avoid “academic” vocabulary when possible. This refers to more general words that readers might know, but they will not have encountered them except in very formal, academic writing (e.g., *array*, *construct*, *distal/proximal*, *foci*, etc.). When many of these low-frequency words are used in close proximity, reading becomes effortful and less enjoyable. Our goal is for each contribution to be a pleasurable, informative read.

### What about word limits, in-text citations, and references?

Provide in-text citations from the research literature to establish points. However, please limit them to just one or two (max three) for any given point. Limit the References section to 25 or fewer to comply with the style of this practitioner journal and word limits. \*\*Word limits *include* references, so better to use words to inform educators than refer them to sources that they might not be able to access. See the next sections for more information on formatting.

Please do not exceed recommended word limits. Unfortunately, doing so may result in rejection of the manuscript, or a lot of editing in order to meet word limits. TRLJ has a specific page count that it must adhere to for publication, and exceeded word limits is not allowed as a result.

### Do I need to include an abstract?

TRLJ is not an academic journal, therefore it does not include abstracts. You do not need to include an abstract when you upload your manuscript.

## What format guidelines should I follow?

Please follow APA format guidelines, 7th Edition. TRLJ does not have a large team of copyeditors so it is the responsibility of the author(s) to follow APA format and catch deviations, in both the main body of the article and the references section.

Here is a great APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition resource to consult as you write:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/apa\\_changes\\_7th\\_edition.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_changes_7th_edition.html)

## APA Tips on Spacing, Margins, and Font

ALL lines of text in your manuscript should be double-spaced. This includes spacing between paragraphs, quotes, references, etc.

Use 1" margins on all sides.

The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA manual recommends widely available fonts. The Reading League Journal recommends 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Calibri, or 11-point Arial.

## Some Common Deviations from APA Format

(Page numbers refer to where more information can be found in the APA 7th edition manual)

### In-Text Citations

- Articles by three or more authors: use the first author's last name plus et al., even in the very first citation (p. 266)
- Use an ampersand (&) in parentheses (p. 266)  
*Incorrect:* (Carpenter and Just, 1987)  
*Correct:* (Carpenter & Just, 1987)
- Use the printed word 'and' in running text (p. 266)  
*Incorrect:* Carpenter & Just (1987) described how . . .  
*Correct:* Carpenter and Just (1987) described how . . .

### Underlining

- Do not use underlining for emphasis.

### Quotation Marks

- Use double quotation marks (" ") for quotes and several other purposes (see p. 157-159) and only uses single quotation marks ( ' ') when a quote is within a quote (p. 277).

## Commas

- Use the Oxford comma in a series of three or more items (p. 155).  
*Incorrect:* height, width and depth  
*Correct:* height, width, and depth

## Hyphens and Dashes

- Long and short hyphens (called dashes in the APA manual) have differing usages. When authors use a dash to mark a parenthetical thought, a long dash is used (called an *em-dash*). There are no spaces on either side of the dash. A short dash is used to create a compound adjective (called an *en dash*), and it also has no spaces on either side (e.g., “an at-risk student”; p. 157)).

## Italics

- Italics are used when introducing new terms, not quotation marks (p. 170).  
*Incorrect:* This is referred to as a “global inference.”  
*Correct:* This is referred to as a *global inference*.

## Abbreviations

- The abbreviation for “for example” is e.g.  
*Incorrect:* She reinforced skills he knew such as closed syllables without blends and silent-e syllables (ex., cob, lime, pan/cake).  
*Correct:* She reinforced skills he knew such as closed syllables without blends and silent-e syllables (e.g., cob, lime, pan/cake).
- The abbreviation for “that is” is i.e.  
Oral reading fluency (ORF) benchmarks are typically administered three times per year (i.e., fall, winter, and spring).
- Abbreviations for “page” and “pages” are p. and pp., not pg. or pgs.  
*Correct:* *The National Research Council report outlined many of these concerns (Snow et al., 1998, pp. 255-258)*

## Paragraphs

- Indent all paragraphs, including the first paragraph of the article and the first paragraph of each section.

## Headings

- Do not tab headings

*Incorrect:*

Extension to Text Reading

Beyond the early years, children's vocabularies grow substantially from reading text (Nagy & Scott, 2000).

*Correct:*

(There are several correct heading types in APA format (see p. 48), one of which is depicted below.)

### Extension to Text Reading

Beyond the early years, children's vocabularies grow substantially from reading text (Nagy & Scott, 2000).

### Numbers

- Plurals of numbers have no apostrophe (p. 181)  
*Incorrect:* the 1960's; 30's and 40's  
*Correct:* the 1960s; 30s and 40s
- Grade levels are indicated with uppercase in the name if the word *grade* or *year* precedes the grade level (e.g., Grade 4; Year 1), yet lowercase when following the level (e.g., a student in fourth grade; a 1<sup>st</sup> year student). (p. 179).
- Sentences never begin with numerals  
*Incorrect:* 21% of students and 10% of teachers report that they . . .  
*Correct:* Twenty-one percent of students and 10% of teachers report . . .
- TRLJ does not use superscript for ordinal numbers (e.g., use 10<sup>th</sup> not 10<sup>th</sup>), and this should be consistent throughout the article (p. 179).

### Reference Section

- TRLJ does not presently require DOIs after references in the reference section because the journal is offered in print only. Please do not include them.
- Cities of publishers of books are no longer listed according to APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition, only publishers.  
*Incorrect:* Perfetti, C. (1985). *Reading ability*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.  
*Correct:* Perfetti, C. (1985). *Reading ability*. Oxford University Press.
- The use of uppercase for article titles and book titles should only occur in the first word in a title and the first word in a subtitle (and proper nouns). Another common mistake is using lowercase in titles, including the first word in a subtitle.  
*Incorrect (1):* Ehri, L. C. (2005). Learning to Read Words: Theory, Findings, and Issues. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 9(2), 167-188.  
*Incorrect (2):* Ehri, L. C. (2005). Learning to read words: theory, findings, and issues. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 9(2), 167-188.

Correct: Ehri, L. C. (2005). Learning to read words: Theory, findings, and issues. *Scientific Studies of Reading*,

## International Considerations

TRLJ is international in scope. It honors the writing conventions and spelling patterns of the country of the author. For example, in the U.S., periods and commas are always inside quotation marks, and that is reflected in the APA style manual. However, to respect the style of international authors from the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, periods and commas appear outside quotation marks.

Also, TRLJ respects the variations in spellings (e.g., *behaviour/behavior; practise/practice*). There is a note about preserving international writing conventions and spellings on the copyright page of TRLJ. If during the draft process our editors accidentally “Americanize” writing or spellings, please note that and we will correct it.