



Article Types: Choosing What Is Best

Some Definitions:

Abstract -- A brief overview of the content of an article which provides details about the article. An abstract might be written by the author of the article, as is the case with most professional journals, or might be contributed by professional indexers, as is the case with many articles included in research databases.

Article -- Much shorter than a book, an article can be as short as a paragraph or two or as long as several dozen pages. Articles can address any topic that the author decides to explore and can reflect opinion, news, research, reviews, instruction, nearly any focus. Articles appear in newspapers, magazines, trade publication, journals, and even in books. Because of their relative brevity, articles typically are used to provide up-to-date information on a wide variety of topics.

Book Review -- A usually brief article that provides an evaluation and appreciation of a book. A review might assess the importance of a book's contributions to a particular field of study or might make recommendations to potential readers of the book. Reviews of fiction will usually comment on originality, style, and readability. While an important tool for helping a researcher assess the value of a book to his or her research topic, a book review, by itself, is usually not sufficient for use as a source in a research project.

Issue -- A single, regular publication of a journal, magazine, newspaper, newsletter, or trade publication. A magazine or journal that publishes monthly will have twelve issues in a year. News magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek* publish weekly and will have 52 issues in a year. Newspapers might publish daily or weekly. A daily will have 365 issues in a year. Issues are usually numbered, so a journal that publishes twelve issues in a year starting with January will number each issue sequentially (issue 1, January; issue 2, February; issue 3, March; etc.).

Journal -- A regularly published collection of articles that focus on topics specific to a particular academic discipline or profession. Journals might be published monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or even annually. Probably the most common publication frequencies are monthly and quarterly. Journal articles are typically of substantial length (often more than 10 pages) and usually reflect research, whether it be surveys of existing research or presentations of original research. Most journal articles will be prefaced with an abstract and will include extensive documentation within the article or at the end of the article. Most research begins with a survey of existing literature on a topic and proceeds with the development of new ideas or new research into a topic. Articles are usually written by experts in their fields, although journals might also publish letters from their readership commenting on articles that have been published in previous issues. Journals might also include opinion articles or editorials. Examples of journals include *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *American Sociological Review*, *Psychological Reports*, *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, *Educational Research Quarterly*, and *Evolutionary Biology*.

Literature Review -- An important part of nearly any research project, a literature review consists of a survey of previously published or unpublished materials that focus on a particular subject under investigation. For example, a researcher looking into whether there is a relationship between musical aptitude and academic achievement in elementary age students would begin by looking for articles, books, and other materials that reflected previous research

into this topic. The function of the review is to identify what is already known about the topic and to provide a knowledge foundation for the current study.

Magazine -- A regularly published collection of articles that might focus on any topic in general or on topics of interest to a specific group, such as sports fans or music fans or home decorators. Magazines might be published weekly, monthly, semi-monthly or only several times a year. More commonly, magazines are published weekly or monthly. Articles in magazines are typically written for the general reading public and don't reflect in-depth research (an exception might be an investigative report written in a news magazine that involved weeks or months of research and interviews to complete). Most magazine articles do not list references and are written by the magazine's own staff writers. In general, magazine articles are easy to read, are fairly brief in length, and may include illustrations or photographs. Magazines also rely heavily on advertisements targeted to consumers as a source of revenue. Examples of magazines include *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Car and Driver*, *Interview*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Elle*, *GQ*, and *Sports Illustrated*.

Newsletter -- A regularly published collection of brief news articles of interest to members of a particular community. Professional associations might issue newsletters to keep their membership up to date. Businesses and schools might issue newsletters to keep their constituents up to date. Nearly any type of organization or society might have its own newsletter. Articles in newsletters are typically very brief and the entire newsletter itself might be only a couple or half a dozen pages in length. These are usually internal publications that have interest mainly to people who participate in the activities of the issuing body. They are frequently used to inform members of an organization of upcoming events. Examples of newsletters include *401(k) Advisor*, *Adult Day Services Letter*, *Black History News & Notes*, *Credit Card Weekly*, *Education Business Weekly*, *Music Critics Association Newsletter*, and *Student Aid News*.

Newspaper -- A regularly published collection of fairly brief articles that provide updates on current events and interests. Newspapers are generally published daily, weekly, and bi-weekly, although they may have less regular publication schedules. Most major newspapers publish daily, with expanded coverage on the weekends. Newspapers can be national or international in focus or might be targeted strictly to a particular community or locality. Newspaper articles are written largely by newspaper staff and editors and often do not provide authors' names. Many of the articles appearing in national, international, and regional papers are written by various wire service writers and are nationally or internationally syndicated. Examples of wire services are Reuters and the Associated Press. Newspapers rely on advertising for a part of their income and might also include photographs and even full color illustrations or photos. A common feature of most newspapers is its editorial page, where the editors express opinions on timely topics and invite their readers to submit their opinions. Examples of newspapers include *New York Times*, *Times of London*, *Florida Times-Union*, *Tampa Tribune*, *Denver Post*, *Guardian*, and *USA Today*.

Peer Reviewed/Refereed Journal -- Most academic/scholarly journals use subject experts or "peers" to review articles being considered for publication. Reviewers will carefully examine articles to ensure that they meet journal criteria for subject matter and style. The process ensures that articles are appropriate to a particular journal and that they are of the highest quality.

Trade Journal -- A regularly published collection of articles that address topics of interest to members of a particular profession, such as law enforcement or advertising or banking. Articles tend to be brief and often report on developments and news within a field and might summarize current research being done in a particular area. Trade journals might also include

editorials, letters to the editor, photo essays, and advertisements that target members of the profession. While trade journal articles might include references, the reference lists tend to be brief and don't reflect thorough reviews of the literature. Articles are usually written with the particular profession in mind, but are generally pretty accessible so that a person wishing to learn more about the profession would still be able to understand the articles. Examples of trade journals include *Police Chief*, *Education Digest*, *Energy Weekly News*, *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, *Engineering News Record*, *Design News*, and *Traffic World*.

Volume -- Most journals and many magazines, newsletters, newspapers, and trade publications assign volume numbers to a year's worth or half a year's worth of issues. For example, a journal that publishes four times a year (quarterly) might assign each yearly collection of four issues a volume number to help identify which issues of the journal were published during a particular year. Publications that publish more frequently than monthly might also assign volume numbers, but they might change volume numbers mid-year, so that there might be two volumes in any one publishing year.

Choosing What Is Best

Topic choice and focus are going to drive the selection of materials used to support a research project. Articles published in any of the above referenced publications could be useful in helping a researcher determine angles to follow in the development of a research topic, but, of all the types of publications listed above, journals are usually the best choices for use in developing college-level, academic research projects. The reasons are really rather simple: Academics and professional researchers tend to publish the results of their research in journals. Every academic discipline has its own core collection of journals that specialize in publishing current research in the discipline. Journal articles are at least in part based on previously published research, thus providing other researchers with a research trail that will help in tracking down related articles. Journal articles focus on specific aspects of a topic rather than on generalities and direct their readers' attention to controversies or new discoveries within a discipline. Journal articles help keep intellectual discussion alive and lively. Researchers may not always agree with each other and the discipline benefits from the careful examination of specific topics within the discipline.

This is not to discount the value of other types of articles by any means. For example, a researcher examining ideological changes in editorials published in the *New York Times* and *Times of London* newspapers over the past 50 years would obviously base a part of the research on the editorials from those two newspapers. The same researcher would also likely examine political science and sociology journals to try to discover if other researchers had previously noted shifts in ideology in national newspapers and to help determine what social or political trends might be driving those changes. A researcher examining the use of sex to advertise American automobiles in consumer magazines over the past two decades would necessarily have to examine advertisements in selected consumer magazines over the past two decades in order to establish a research base for his or her assumptions. For this project, the researcher might look at *Newsweek* and *Time* and *Car and Driver* and *Rolling Stone*, to name a few magazines, to get representative examples of car ads over the years. But to understand the psychological dynamic at play behind using sex as an advertising ploy, the same researcher would rely heavily on psychology journals that would publish previous research into this and similar topics.

As a researcher begins delving into a topic, he or she should first carefully consider the types of information that will be necessary for covering the topic and then determine which types of publications are most likely to contain that information. As the previous two examples illustrate, even though journal articles offer the best information for academic research projects, some topics will by necessity require the use of other, more popular publications as sources of data that feed into the research. The key thing for an academic researcher to remember is that the in-depth analyses, the detailed examinations, the exhaustive studies of specific aspects within a discipline are most likely to be published as articles in

journals, so, regardless of the particular topic, journal articles will play a role in a successful research project.

Recognizing Different Types of Articles

The examples below provide general characteristics for each of the types of publications referenced in this reading. For any of the following examples, there will be exceptions. For example, while advertisements are usually included in magazines, trade journals, and newspapers, and not in journals, some journals might include advertisements. A prime example is *JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association*, which includes research articles but also includes advertisements that are more typical of trade journals. Just remember that for every rule there is an exception.

Journal Article Characteristics

Authors: Authors of journal articles are usually affiliated with universities, research institutions, or professional associations. Author degrees are usually specified with the author names as are the affiliations.

Abstract: The article text is usually preceded with an abstract. The abstract will provide an overview of what the article discusses or reveals and frequently is useful in identifying articles that report the results of scientific studies.

Use of Professional Terminology and Language: The language used in journal articles is specific to the subject matter being covered by the journal. For example, an article written for a psychological journal is written in an academic rather than popular style and will make heavy use of psychological terms.

In Text References: Journal articles normally will be profusely documented with sources that have provided information to the article authors and/or that provide further related information. Documentation of sources can be handled by in-text parenthetical references (MLA, APA, Chicago sciences styles), by the use of footnotes (Chicago humanities style), or by the use of endnotes (Turabian style). Individual journals will specify their own requirements for documentation.

Bibliography: Because journal articles use numerous sources as documentation, these sources are often referenced in an alphabetically or numerically arranged bibliography located at the end of the article. Format of the bibliography will vary depending on the documentation style used in the article.

Charts, Graphs, Tables, Statistical Data: Articles that result from research studies will often include statistical data gathered during the course of the studies. These data are often presented in charts and tables.

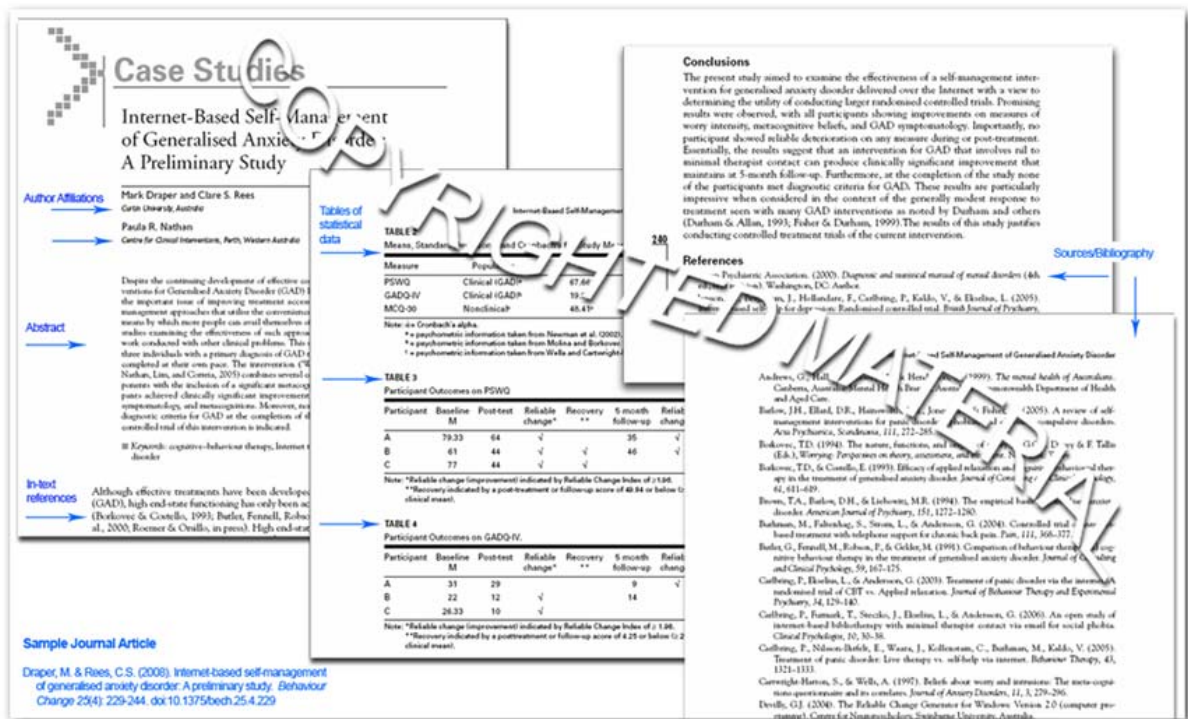
Length of Article: Journal articles, in general, tend to be fairly lengthy, often consisting of a dozen or more pages. Some journals also publish book reviews. These are typically brief and should not be confused with the full-length research articles that the journal focuses on.

Use of volume and issue numbering: Journals normally make use of volume and issue numbering to help identify individual issues in their series. Normally a volume will encompass an entire year's worth of a journal's issues. For example, a journal that is published four times yearly (quarterly) will have four issues in its yearly volume. Issues may be identified solely with numbers or with both numbers and date designations. For example, a quarterly journal will typically number its issues 1 through 4, but it might also assign season designations to the

individual numbers, such as Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. A monthly journal will have twelve issues in a yearly volume and might use the month names along with the issue numbers (issue 1, January; issue 2, February; and so on). Some magazines, trade publications, and newspapers might also make use of volume and issue numbering, so this isn't always the best indicator.

Subject Focus: Journals typically gather and publish research that focuses on a very specific field of inquiry, like criminology, or southern history, or statistics.

Overall Appearance: Journals are typically heavy on text and light on illustration. Journal covers tend toward the plain with an emphasis on highlighting key research articles that appear within a particular issue.



Magazine Article Characteristics

Authors: Author names may or may not be listed. Many magazine articles are written by the magazine editors or staff writers and may not attribute responsibility to individual authors. Those articles that do list authors typically do not give the author qualifications.

Frequency of Publication: Magazines typically publish monthly or more frequently (there are exceptions). Magazines routinely will use specific dates on their issues, such as December 14, 2008, or July 2008.

Use of Everyday Language: Magazine articles are typically written with the average reader in mind, so the language used is easily read and simple to understand.

Use of Illustrations and Photographs: Articles published in magazines frequently are illustrated with drawings or photographs, often in full color. Other publications might also include illustrative materials, but magazines are the most likely types of publications to include them.

Bibliography: Bibliographies are typically not included in magazine articles or, if they are included, are usually fairly brief.

Brevity: Magazine articles tend to be much shorter than articles from journals. An article might be half a page or even a dozen pages, but typically not much longer than a dozen. Pictures are often interspersed throughout the text so the actual text, even for a 12 page article, would amount to far less than a dozen pages.

Subject Focus: Magazines might cover a wide variety of interests or might focus on a particular interest. For example, magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek* will cover current events, politics, entertainment, art, music, a wide variety of interests. Articles might take note of research being done in medicine, for example, but they stop short of actually providing the full details of the research being done. Magazines like *Car and Driver* and *Popular Science* will focus on specific areas of interest, but the articles that they publish are geared toward the casual reader or to readers with more than a passing interest in a subject, rather than to academics and scholars.

Advertisements: Magazines usually include numerous product advertisements. Advertisements might be for beauty aids, or automobiles, or computers, or just about anything. Some ads might be full page or even could consist of several pages included as an advertising insert or supplement.

Overall Appearance: Magazines are typically published in full color on glossy or semi-glossy paper. Magazine covers are slick and appealing and often provide highlights of big stories that will draw a reader's attention.

FIREARMS & FREEDOM

Making Our Neighborhoods Safe

Lott has found that cities, counties, and states become safer when they make it easier for citizens to have concealed-carry permits for handguns. His landmark research has been validated by some four dozen individual researchers or groups of

abiding people, hence giving potential killers more wherewithal to commit their crimes. When the Virginia Tech murderer calmly mowed down his victims last July, the response was to cheerfully talk about gun control. After all, the campus investigation of earlier murders. Yet, 30 more victims died.

Similarly, at the New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado, 911 calls were made last December when a killer shot two sisters in the parking lot and then entered the church's large building. As at Virginia Tech, the police arrived in about six minutes. Unlike the tragedy at Virginia Tech, the folks at the church were not legally disarmed. In fact, 20 of the members had volunteered for the armed security team. That is why when the police arrived at the church, the murderer had been dead for about five and a half minutes.

In the United States during the last decade or so, there have been three murderers who began killing people at

twisted tale about guns: With 12 states considering bills to allow guns on college campuses, anti-gunners are vociferously defending the status quo by predicting mass carnage. The fault in the anti-gunners' logic is that the students and teachers who would be carrying guns on campus are already carrying them off campus.

A fearful policy of zero tolerance for fire safety or security; only an emphasis on government dependence can do that.

by Larry Pratt

Facts are troublesome things. We are told by the enemies of private gun

tal city. And guns can be it is rather e gun permit f

Let me put this in bloody plain terms. Lots of dead kids (and adults, too) are believed to be an acceptable price for training Americans to be dependent on government.

If we agree to depend on the government for our very lives, knowing that they cannot protect us, then it is quite likely that we will be willing to depend on government for all of our less urgent needs.

Parents should adopt their own Zero Tolerance policy. Namely, they should have zero tolerance for any school that teaches Zero Tolerance.

They should ask themselves, "We will punish a child who has a picture of a gun or a gun in his or her possession?" If so, then we put a kid in that school. He will depend on it.

And ultimately, a school's ability to function as a responsible individual in a constitutional republic requires parents to apply a proper version of Zero Tolerance — one which refuses indoctrination by the socialistic school system. ■

Criminals Avoid Armed Citizens In 48 States - BUT NOT ILLINOIS!

We Protect

Noticing nonsense: Protests by Illinois gun owners have failed to bring relief from many stringent gun laws in that state because of a belief promoted by media that gun-control laws mean universal disarmament. Yet even the anti-gun Illinois Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence admits that over a 30-day period in 2005, five percent of Chicago high-school students committed felonies by carrying guns.

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Sample Magazine Article

Pratt, L. (2008, April 14). Making our neighborhoods safe. *New American*, 17-18. Retrieved from the General OneFile database.

Trade Journal Article Characteristics

Authors: Authors of trade journal or trade magazine articles are usually members of a particular field or profession. Usually their rank or position within a profession will be indicated next to their names.

Newspaper Article Characteristics

Authors: Newspaper articles frequently do not list authors. Articles may be obtained from the various national and international wire services such as Associated Press and Reuters and may only reference the wire service providing the news article. Feature stories will normally attribute authorship. Editorials might attribute authorship or will imply that the newspaper editors are the authors. Letters to the editors will routinely provide the names of the readers submitting the letters.

Frequency: Newspapers can be published daily, weekly, bi-weekly, or even just on weekends. Major national and regional newspapers typically publish daily, with increased coverage on weekends.

Subject Focus: Newspaper articles typically report news on a wide variety of topics. Anything is fair game for a newspaper, from politics to science to art and music. Newspapers published in localities will typically have a section that provides national and international news coverage and additional sections that focus on local news and interests. Local papers also typically publish obituaries.

Illustrations/Photographs: Newspapers make extensive use of photographs. Photographs might come from syndicated sources or from the paper's own staff photographers. Photos are typically in black and white, however some sections of the paper, such as the weekend comics, might make use of color.

Advertisements: Newspapers will include advertisements throughout the paper and might even have full page and special insert advertisements. Advertisements imbedded within the paper itself are typically black and white. Those that are included as special inserts or supplements may be in color and even on glossy paper.

Layout and Arrangement: Newspapers arrange articles on the page in columns. Lead articles will begin on the front pages of the various newspaper sections and will be continued deeper in the paper. The most important news events typically appear on the front page of the first section of the paper. Most newspapers are divided into sections.

Typical sections include: national/international news; local news; sports; entertainment/amusements; classified advertisements; and neighborhood news. Editorials usually appear in the first section of the paper, although some newspapers have a separate section devoted just to insights and opinion.

Overall Appearance: Newspapers are normally printed on large sheets of newsprint and folded. Different newspapers might opt for varying size formats. Normally printed with black ink, some newspapers might use color to highlight specific sections of the paper or to publish important photographs.



Newsletter Characteristics

Authors: Authors may not be listed at all. Articles are typically brief and frequently consist of announcements of upcoming events or brief news items of interest to members of an association or society or club.

Frequency: Frequency of publication might be regular or might be sporadic. Some newsletters might be issued only as needed, that is when news affecting or of interest to members becomes available.

Brevity: Articles are typically very brief, usually consisting of a few paragraphs each.

Subject Focus: Newsletters typically focus on topics that are very specific to a particular organization or club. News items might include announcements of training opportunities or upcoming conferences, updates on legislative initiatives, and even personal notices about members of the organization that publishes the newsletter.

Overall Appearance: Newsletters might be simply word-processed documents or they might be glossy, professionally published materials. Generally speaking, they are fairly plain looking publications.

many colleagues already receiving essential information.

Pension & Benefits Update is a bimonthly electronic newsletter that offers essential information in the areas of public pensions and health-care. The newsletter includes federal legislative and regulatory updates, summaries of current research, state and local government financial and legal analyses, and guidance from experts in the pension and health-care fields.

Be on the lookout for a trial issue of the *Pension & Benefits Update*, which all GFOA members who are nonsubscribers will receive via e-mail the week of October 13.

To order your subscription of the *Pension & Benefits Update*, go to the GFOA's e-store at www.gfoa.org (active GFOA member \$40 /associate member \$50 /nonmember \$60). □

Attend Training in Your Area

Stay current on the latest happenings in accounting and financial reporting by registering to participate in the 13th Annual Governmental GAAP Update satellite teleconference, taking place on November 6, 2008, from 1 - 5 p.m. (EST). Check www.gfoa.org to attend the site location nearest you.

We currently have 129 registered

ment, reserve that space for the day, and tune into the GFOA broadcast.

For more details on hosting a site, including information on GFOA's revenue sharing program and frequently asked questions, visit www.gfoa.org or contact the GFOA at satellite@gfoa.org. □

Distinguished Budget Awards

Congratulations to the following recipients of the GFOA's 2008 Budget Presentation Awards: City of New York, GA; and Commonwealth of Massachusetts. □

Mental Health Parity Legislation Approved in Financial Rescue Measure

When President Bush signed the financial rescue measure on October 3, 2008, he also approved long fought-for legislation assuring parity for mental health coverage that is on par with other health conditions.

A mental health parity measure that had been approved in both the House and the Senate was included in the rescue bill as the popular measure's last chance for enactment this year, as well as a sweetener for some members of Congress who had voted against the previous rescue bill.

The measure enacted would require private health insurers to offer men-

Commission (FTC) has issued new "red flag" rules that apply to all municipalities that have utility

Sample Newsletter

GFOA Newsletter
(Government Finance Officers Association)

their. Legal counsel should be consulted immediately regarding compliance with the FTC rules, including what types of operations and transactions are covered, as there may be significant consequences for non-compliance. The rules can be found at www.ftc.gov/os/fedreg/2007/11/09redflags.pdf.

In particular, the new rules apply to municipalities and other operations that provide service for which payments are deferred to a future date. For example, when water, sewer, or electricity is provided by a city and then billed to the consumer at the end of the month, the city has extended credit for the purpose of the FTC rules. The definition of a "creditor" in the rules includes "utility companies" and "covered account" (those accounts to which the rules apply) is defined as including an account that a creditor "offers or maintains, primarily for personal, family or household purposes, that involves or is designed to permit multiple payments or transac-