



# A guide to writing for the ECTA Educating Young Children Journal



## What can I write about?

Choosing a topic is easy. You can write about what you know, what you do, what you are interested in, what you are passionate about...anything that you find interesting about working in the field of early childhood education and care for children aged 0-8 years.

The EYC journal has some general sections or headings under which your article may be published. The sections include: Stories, Profiles, Partnerships, Feature Articles and International Perspectives.

These headings are a reasonably useful indicator about the kind of topic or article that would be contained in them. For example, the Stories section would contain contributions by practitioners who would like to share stories of success about themselves, colleagues or the children in their care. Things often shared are interviews of early childhood educators about some worthwhile work that they have done, documentation of 'projects' carried out by children, examples of 'negotiated curriculum', or information about conferences attended or places visited. First year teachers and teachers in rural/remote areas often offer contributions here. For more information about the content of each section of the journal, check out the links to the EYC Journal on the ECTA website [www.ecta.org.au](http://www.ecta.org.au)

It should be noted that advertorials are not acceptable.

## What type or style of article can I write?

You can choose to present your article in a style that best suits you and the information you wish to share with other ECTA members. Consider the following examples:

**Interview style:** You can present your article in a question/answer style, similar to the way this guide is written. Imagine that the reader is an interviewer asking questions about your topic. You are the interviewee answering those questions. Set out your article with questions as headings and subheadings, followed by the information contained in answers to those questions. If you know someone who has some valuable strategies, skills or ideas that can be shared with other early childhood professionals, you might like to interview them, document their responses and submit that as your article.

**Photo diary style:** Sometimes pictures may be the best way to explain the experiences or ideas you want to share with others. A simple two or three page spread of photographs or work samples -in logical sequence - with relevant captions, can be the basis of your article. This style has been used in the past to document ECTA annual conferences. Photos and artwork can be arranged in attractive ways, and captions can explain the content of the photo, describe processes that were used, or provoke questions that the reader might think about in their own practice. If you choose to do a photo diary, be sure to have all the appropriate Photographic and art work release forms signed and accompanying the article. These can be downloaded from the ECTA website [www.ecta.org.au](http://www.ecta.org.au)

**Narrative style:** A narrative is simply a story, so if you want to tell a story about something you have done or seen done, a conference that you attended, a teaching and learning experience that you had...perhaps overseas, then you may choose to write in a narrative style. A story usually has a beginning, middle and an end, so try to tell your information in that way. The beginning should give readers some background into why you are telling the story and what the story is about. The middle should expand on the story and provide details about what you did, saw, learned etc. The end should sum up the main ideas that you wanted to get across to others about the experience you had, or the thing that you learned. It can also provide some hints or tips to readers about how they can also use or benefit from the information you have shared. Simple headings can help to break up the article into these three components, and photographs always help to make the story more interesting reading.

**Reflective style:** A reflection suggests that you are looking back or thinking back on an event or experience. A reflection tells a story in the same way that a narrative does. In a very informal way you, as the author, look back on something you did or experienced and share what you learned with the readers.

**Formal style:** If you wish to write an article that is more academic in style with information that is content, theory or research based, you will write in a more formal way. If your article is about a specific topic or theory, then this will usually be contained in the Title of your article. For example: *Early brain development: why education...* or *Engaging cultural and linguistic diversity through...* A formal journal article will often also contain a beginning, middle and end – similar to an essay. The beginning or introduction will introduce the topic, outline some of the theory or research base and lead into how the theory relates to early childhood education and care. The middle or body of the article will then elaborate on the implications of the theory, information or research for teaching and learning, how it can be implemented in a learning environment, or will outline the details of the research and the research findings. The end or conclusion of the article usually provides a summary of all the previous information, and again may offer practice-based suggestions for knowledge gained from the information shared. A more formal journal article will usually contain 'in text' references from other authors and these references will then be included in a 'reference list' at the end of the article. For information on how to acknowledge other authors in a reference list, refer to the ECTA EYC Style guide in the EYC Journal section of the ECTA website [www.ecta.org.au](http://www.ecta.org.au)

### **How should I set out my article?**

Again, this depends on your topic, and the style of your article. Of course, an article will always require a Title which describes the topic or content of the article. It will also contain the name/s of the person or persons who wrote the article. Often it is interesting to the reader if the author/s provide a photo and a short biographical description of who they are, their experience and any formal qualifications that they may have.

To make the article visually interesting to the reader, it is always useful to include headings and sometimes sub-headings to cluster ideas and information. Diagrams, graphs, photographs, work samples and other images that support the information or demonstrate the ideas contained in the article also help to engage the reader. Don't worry too much about the actual 'look' of the article as ECTA engages a graphic design/publishing service to assist with formatting and placing information on the page. If you do have specific suggestions for where photographs, images etc should sit within the article, then make sure that is clear in the information you send with your article.

### **Complete this checklist of things to remember before submitting your article:**

- Is your article accompanied by a signed ECTA Author release agreement form?**
- Have you obtained the appropriate permissions to use any photographs and artwork included in your article?**
- Are all photographs, work samples or art work also accompanied by a signed ECTA photo or artwork release form?**
- Did you consult the ECTA Style guide to ensure your article is written according to ECTA's editing style?**
- Is your article, photographs and artwork submitted in electronic form?**
- Are your photographs and artwork submitted as jpegs and appropriately labeled e.g. max outdoors.jpg. ?**
- Is your article saved and named according to the title and author e.g. L\_Smith\_Engaging\_Children's\_Learning.doc. ?**
- Are all photographs or graphic images accompanied by a relevant caption and/or instructions for placement in the article?**
- Are all photographs and art work saved at high resolution?**
- Have you checked your article or story for spelling, style and grammar? Sometimes it is best to ask someone else to do this for you.**