

AUTHOR GUIDELINES

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

FALL 2009

PURPOSE OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Exceptional Children, an official journal of The Council for Exceptional Children, publishes original research and analyses that focus on the education and development of exceptional infants, toddlers, children, youth, and adults. This includes descriptions of research, research reviews, methodological reviews of the literature, data-based position papers, and policy analyses. *Exceptional Children* publishes quantitative, qualitative, and single-subject design studies.

Articles published in *Exceptional Children* must have implications for research, practice, or policy in special or gifted education. Although *Exceptional Children* publishes research studies that examine the effectiveness of specific interventions, it does not publish descriptions of instructional procedures except as a part of an intervention study or classroom materials, accounts of personal experiences, letters to the editor, book or test reviews, and anecdotal single case studies. Non-database reports on innovative techniques, programs, policies, or models as well as studies involving a pretest-posttest only design with no comparison condition are also not published in *Exceptional Children*. Investigations involving questionnaires and survey are generally not published unless the sample is reasonably representative of the population being studied.

TYPES OF ARTICLES THAT EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN PUBLISHES

The Journal primarily publishes five types of articles:

Research Studies including qualitative, large-group quantitative, or single-subject design studies. Appropriate effect sizes must be reported for quantitative studies.

Research Reviews including the analysis and integration of research in one or more areas. Reviews must be comprehensive and critical. Whenever possible, effect sizes for individual studies should be reported.

Methodological Reviews including systematic examinations of the methodological strengths and weaknesses of a specific body of literature (e.g., a methodological review of the soundness of research on teaching phonological awareness). This can include a methodological analysis of qualitative, quantitative, and single-subject design studies.

Data-Based Position Papers including papers addressing an important (practical or theoretical) issue(s) in special or gifted education. This involves analyzing and integrating the existing research literature to provide a balanced and scholarly examination of the issue.

Policy Analyses including critical analyses and research related to public policy issues that impact the education of exceptional infants, toddlers, children, youth, and adults.

WRITING FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Articles published in *Exceptional Children* are typically 25 to 35 pages in length (double-spaced pages with 1 inch margins and 12 font type). Occasionally, an accepted manuscript may exceed 35 pages.

While *Exceptional Children* is a scholarly, research journal, its articles are read by a broad audience. This includes national, state, and local administrators, school practitioners, and parents. Therefore, articles written for *Exceptional Children* must be developed with this broad audience in mind. Each article must be clear and concise, providing enough general information so that readers can understand the issues or questions addressed, what was done, and the basic findings and recommendations. Consistent with APA guidance (APA manual 6th edition), authors should avoid educational jargon whenever possible, and each article must address implications for practice.

Authors must also provide enough specific information about their methodology so that their work can be replicated by other researchers. The participants in research studies must be appropriately described, as such description is critical to the science and practice of special education. In research articles, adequate evidence on the reliability and validity of tests, measures, or instruments must be provided. For intervention studies, evidence that treatments were implemented as intended should be provided as well. Authors must further address implications for research, indicating what needs to be done next (see *Exceptional Children*, 2005, volume 71, issue 2, for guidelines on standards for describing research participants and other research quality indicators).

MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS

Manuscripts submitted to *Exceptional Children* are reviewed only if they meet the following criteria:

- Content of the article is original, and it has not previously been published (in whole or in part). When submitting a manuscript for review, authors must indicate in their cover letter, if any part of the data on which the article depends has been published elsewhere or is part of another manuscript submitted for publication. Authors must also indicate if the data for their study is part of a larger data set, describing how this study differs from other investigations drawn from the same data set.
- All of the authors agree to submit the article to *Exceptional Children*. This must be indicated in the cover letter.
- Manuscripts are accepted for review with the understanding that the same work is not presently under review elsewhere. This must be acknowledged in the cover letter.
- While under review (until authors receive word of a decision from *Exceptional Children*), the journal has exclusive options on possible publication. The manuscript should not be submitted elsewhere during this time.
- Manuscripts must conform to the format standards in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition, 2010), with two exceptions:
 - (1) no acknowledgements or notes that identify authorship should be used
 - (2) reproductions of figures (rather than professionally prepared figures) may be submitted for the review process.
- Language in the article making reference to disabilities and other characteristics of individuals must conform to the “person first” recommendations outlined in General Guidelines for Reducing Bias (APA manual 6th edition, pp. 71-77).
- Manuscripts should be submitted using the *Exceptional Children* portal site: <http://journals.cec.sped.org/ec/> which contains detailed submission procedures.
- All pages are numbered in sequence, starting with the title page.
- Effect size information is provided for quantitative studies.
- All references in text are listed and in complete agreement with text citations.
- Abstract is not more than 120 words long.
- All word processing codes (including those that may identify authors) are removed from the electronic version of the manuscript for apostrophes, quotation marks, hyphens, and so forth.
- Cover letter states that manuscript is original and not previously published, all authors have given consent to submit the manuscript to *Exceptional Children*, and the manuscript is not under consideration elsewhere.
- The cover letter indicates if the data from this manuscript are part of a larger study or if any part of the data has been included in another manuscript. The cover letter must provide a full explanation if either of these situations exist.

REVIEW PROCESS

Selection of manuscripts for publication is based on a blind peer review process; however, all manuscripts are screened first by the Editors. Those manuscripts that do not meet all the manuscript requirements, or that are not consistent with the purpose of the journal, are not forwarded for peer review. In such cases, the submitting author is notified that the manuscript is not acceptable for *Exceptional Children*, or is requested to make changes in the manuscript so that it meets requirements.

Manuscripts that are consistent with the purpose of the journal and meet all requirements are assigned two or more reviewers to evaluate the manuscript. Reviewers are asked to evaluate the manuscript on its overall importance, quality of the work, and clarity of writing. Reviewers will not know the identity of the authors.

After reading and evaluating the manuscript and the reviews, the editors email the submitting author a written decision and the reviews. The decision will be one of the following:

- Acceptable, with routine editing
- Acceptable, with revisions indicated
- Revise and resubmit
- Unacceptable

Decisions on manuscripts submitted to *Exceptional Children* will be made within 3 months from the time that they are received by the Editors. Once a manuscript is received, the date is recorded and the submitting

AUTHOR CHECKLIST BEFORE SUBMITTING A MANUSCRIPT

Before submitting a manuscript to *Exceptional Children*, please review the Author Checklist below. This will help ensure that your manuscript is not screened out or returned before review.

- Manuscript is consistent with the purpose of the journal.
- Manuscript conforms to APA format (see APA *Publication Manual*, 6th edition, 2010) particularly:
 - Manuscript is double spaced, with 1” margins (12 font type preferred).

author is notified by email. If the authors fail to submit following the portal directions, the manuscript is not listed as received until the manuscript is uploaded meeting all requirements.

AUTHOR RESPONSIBILITIES FOLLOWING PUBLICATION ACCEPTANCE

After a manuscript is accepted for publication in *Exceptional Children*, the authors are responsible for completing the following:

- Acknowledging the funding agency for supported research.
- Verifying the authenticity of all quoted material and citations and for obtaining permission from the original source for quotes in excess of 150 words or for tables or figures reproduced from published works.
- Preparing camera-ready black and white copies of all figures included in the article.
- Obtaining permission to reprint previously published figures, tables, and other materials.
- Assigning literary rights to CEC by signing a Copyright Transfer Agreement.

WHERE TO SUBMIT MANUSCRIPTS

<http://journals.cec.sped.org/ec/>

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