

Writing for Statewide Education Journals—
Tips from the Editors

The Standard Deviation:
A WERA Publication



Andrea Meld, Ph.D.
Kent School District

26th Annual
Washington Assessment Conference
December 2011, Seattle, WA

Why write?

Writing plays an important part in professional and personal development. It also advances the purposes of the Washington Educational Research Association, to:

- A. Promote, maintain, and improve the quality and effectiveness of educational research, evaluation, assessment, and related services;
- B. Identify and define educational issues and provide a forum for their discussion;
- C. Assist in the dissemination of research and evaluation findings;
- D. Promote in-service experiences for personnel who are engaged in educational research, evaluation, assessment, instruction, and related activities.

(WERA Constitution, Article 1, Section 2)

A Very Brief History of WERA Publications

THE STANDARD DEVIATION
 Washington Educational Research Association
 University Place, WA
 Spring 2002

ESIA To Change Assessment in Washington
 The recent reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act will have a significant impact on the state assessment program requiring that "states must define adequate yearly progress so that all children are expected to improve and all students will achieve proficient standards in 12 subjects" -- Among the new testing requirements for 2002-2003: Annual assessment for all LEA students, mandatory participation in the National Assessment of Educational Progress in grades 4 and 8, 2009. Annual testing in grades 4 and 8 in math and reading, 2009. Annual testing in selected grade levels in science. ESIA requires that all assessment be tied to state standards, as are state assessments used to assess like the WAEL, but the 1790. "Section 10121 Publication: Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESIA), January 2002. (Also see www.esia.gov/press/020102.htm)

What's Inside?

- ESIA
- Conference highlights
- Frasier's Fallies 2002
- A letter from the President (of WERA)
- White Paper on Assessment Competencies
- WERA Needs

NOT BIRTHED!
<http://www.weraonline.org>
 A resource for assessment planning along with related articles by Eric Steiner and others can be downloaded from the Assessment Trends Institute website. Follow the link to "Download Learning-Meeting Impasse now."

Also check out the WERA website www.weraonline.org. The membership directory was recently updated. Also watch for job postings.

WERA Membership 1995-2001

Year	Membership
1995	100
1996	150
1997	200
1998	250
1999	300
2000	350
2001	400

The WERA Mission
 (Adopted 1/24/01)
 The mission of the Washington Educational Research Association is to improve the professional practice of educators engaged in instruction, assessment, evaluation, and research.

WERA Services

- WERA provides professional development through conferences, publications, and seminars.
- WERA provides services to explore thoughtful approaches and a variety of views and issues in education.
- WERA provides consultation and advice to influence educational policy regarding instruction, assessment, evaluation, and research.



THE STANDARD DEVIATION
 Washington Educational Research Association
 University Place, WA
 June 2003

President's Column

In May, 2003, the WERA Executive passed from my hand and colleague, Gene Dyer, to the Chairman of an ESIA Association, I mean Dyer for her leadership in guiding me through the process of ESIA. Our membership exceeded 200 individuals, our online site had 100 participants, and the June 2003 conference was a success. We also had a successful meeting in Seattle, WA, and a successful meeting in Olympia, WA. We also had a successful meeting in Seattle, WA, and a successful meeting in Olympia, WA.

Standards Change!!

The Board will be discussing these topics in June at its annual planning meeting. It is a very important topic for us to discuss and we will be working on it for some time. We will be working on it for some time. We will be working on it for some time.

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The WERA Educational Journal
 Volume 7 Number 1
 December 2011

STANDARDS CHANGE!!
 Typewriters once standard are no longer.

The OLIVER Typewriter
 The Standard Visible Writer

INVESTIGATE!!

THE OLIVER TYPEWRITER CO.
 60-71 FEDERAL STREET
 BOSTON, MASS.

The typewriter graphic is taken from an educational journal circa 1888 retrieved from Google's Public Domain Books. The Smartphones are now listed as the new standard for communication. We invite WERA members looking back in 2012 to comment on the "new" standard 188 years ago.

The Standard Deviation

Then and Now

Then:

Originally twice-yearly newsletter mailed to members.

Covered WERA events and other items of interest to members.

About 4-8 pages.

Format varied over the years --
Included book reviews and technical articles.

Now:

Published as electronic newsletter, three times a year.

Winter, Spring and Fall issues follow and cover WERA events and items of interest.

About 16-20 pages.

Format includes Presidents column, Data tips, member news, events calendar and more.

WERA Publication Milestones

Spring 2002: *The Standard Deviation*, Michael Power, editor, was mailed to WERA Members.

May 2006: After many years in hard copy, *The Standard Deviation* goes electronic, with Peter Hendrickson as editor.

February 2009: First issue of *The WERA Educational Journal*, with Peter Hendrickson, editor, included in *The Standard Deviation*.

December 2009: First issue of *The WERA Educational Journal* as a separate e-publication (Hendrickson, Ed.)

February 2010: *The Standard Deviation*, transition with Peter Hendrickson and Andrea Meld, as co-editors.

June 2010: Andrea Meld, as solo editor for *The Standard Deviation*.

The Standard Deviation

Vision

- Serves as the WERA Newsletter;
- Supports/promotes WERA conferences and other events;
- Reviews keynote presentations;
- Presents WERA business, for example, Board Meetings, Annual Business Meetings, Assessment Director's Network Meetings, and awards;
- President's Column focuses on WERA activities, goals and directions;
- Other features: Membership News, calendar of WERA and other events, assessment news, data display and analysis tips, travel and restaurant reviews, quotations and humor.

The Standard Deviation

Guidelines for Submission

- Submit your article in Microsoft Word, about one to two pages in length, (approx. 800 words, maximum).
- Appropriate length depends on content and editor's judgment.
- Types of articles considered: WERA member and community news, events for calendar posting, reviews of WERA events, technical tips and tricks, restaurant reviews.
- Reflections on experiences as an educator, researcher, or data professional are also welcome.
- Proofread your article, and if possible, ask someone who is new to the content to proofread your work before submission.
- Follow APA guidelines for citations and references.
- Keep in mind that conversion to the published format may alter the appearance of your article.

Please submit all articles to the editor, Andrea Meld
andrea_meld@hotmail.com.

General Tips on Writing for Publication

1. Good writing tells a story and captures the reader's attention.
2. Point out what is new in your research, and give credit to those who have made important contributions in your area of research.
3. Explore the data and find out what the data have to say. This may not always be what you would like for the data to say.
4. Don't rely on direct quotations, and use quoted material only when necessary. Avoid secondary sources.
5. Include current theories and research, don't rely on outdated sources.
6. State your research question and point of view clearly, and why your topic should matter to readers.
7. Be respectful of other opinions and points of view about your topic.
8. Avoid ending your article with something like, "Further research is needed." Instead, point out the contributions and limitations of your work.

(Sternberg & Sternberg, 2010)

General Tips for Data Display

1. Decide on whether a table or a graph will be the most effective way to display your data.
2. Tables are usually best for smaller data sets and to show precise values. Graphs are better for showing trends, patterns and more complex relationships among data elements.
3. Numbers or columns that you want the reader to compare should be placed right next to each other.
4. All text in the data display should be large enough to be legible.
5. Avoid vertical text and vertical rule lines.
6. Include all the information that is needed for the reader to understand the table or graph. You may need to include notes and explain abbreviations.
7. The data display should present only the facts, and avoid unnecessary decorations and “doo-dads.”

(Sternberg & Sternberg, 2010)

From PowerPoint to Written Article

- PowerPoint is perishable, does not fully capture the presentation, and is often difficult to locate online.
- Keep in mind that PowerPoint is primarily a visual medium, written articles are primarily verbal.
- Bullets and attention-grabbing one-liners in PowerPoint need to be transformed into well-organized sentences and paragraphs.
- APA style guidelines can be very helpful. (APA, 2009)
- Decide which sections of the PowerPoint you wish to expand upon, and which can be deleted. You may have content for more than one article.
- Consider the best way to display your results and data.
- Be sure to include all citations and references.

References

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Sternberg, R. J., and Sternberg (2010). *The psychologist's companion: A guide to writing scientific papers for students and researchers* (5th ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Washington Educational Research Association (WERA) Constitution, <http://www.wera-web.org/pages/constitution.php>.