

The *Library Bright Ideas* Style Guide

WRITING FOR OUR AUDIENCE

Our readers are serving in the role of elementary school librarian, although they may or may not have a Master's Degree in Library Science. They may be paraprofessionals or classroom teachers who have been assigned to the library.

Thoroughly explain your idea and how a reader can implement it. Include helpful links, signs, flyers, slides, and any other materials that would make it easier for a reader to understand your idea and put it into action quickly.

Your idea can be a library lesson, a project, an activity, or a strategy for managing an elementary school library.

FORMATTING YOUR COPY

We prefer Arial, 12-point font, double-space, in a Word document or Google Doc. Use short paragraphs, and break up articles with at least 3 subheadings.

Proofreading tip: After you finish your draft, set your article aside for a few hours before proofreading. Read slowly, and if possible, read aloud—you'll catch more mistakes that way. If you've got a second set of eyes available, have a colleague proofread your copy, too.

As you proofread, be sure your story passes the following test: Ask yourself, "Would I read this? Is it interesting?"

FINAL THOUGHTS ON STYLE

On simplicity: Write to express, not to impress. Simple language, brief sentences, and a straightforward structure that wastes no time getting to the point will capture a reader better than complexity. Your tone should be that of a helpful colleague, not a condescending expert.

On images: We require 6-8 images for every article, and 1 image for every tip. Student faces should be blurred in a photo editing tool like Canva. Images should be sent as separate files from the article.

Thank you for contributing to Library Bright Ideas!