SPR Pro-Tips for Preparing Constructive, High Quality, and Timely Peer Reviews

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• 25 years = more than 400 publications
• 20+ years of experience as Editor and Associate Editor of Journals, and also Edited 12 books.
• 22 years of extensive service - advocated for advancing the science, practice, and policy relevant to school psychology.
School Psychology Review

2020:
Leadership Team
Perspective ...

Process of Peer Review ...

Preparation ...

Key Review Questions ...

Preparing the Report...

Q & A ...

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Benefits of Peer Review:

Contributions to advancing science

Access to scholarship prior to publication

Refine your own scholarship

Enhance your writing skills

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Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as ‘quite an improvement.’
T&F Details the Peer Review Process  https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/peer-review/
TIMELY  *SPR expedited peer review*  ... 1 month timeline...

Submission to Decision <30 days

- **Staff**: 2-3 days
  - a. Reviews all files to ensure contents are included.
  - b. Ensures files are ready for blind review.

- **Editor**: 2-3 days
  - a. Reviews paper to examine goodness-of-fit with journal. (rejects or proceeds)
  - b. Invites Action Editor and provides access to the paper.

- **Action Editor**: 3-5 days
  - a. Reviews paper to examine goodness-of-fit with journal. (rejects or proceeds)
  - b. Identifies and invites Reviewers – including general, statistical/methodological, and students

- **Peer Review**: 10-15 days
  - a. If available and interested, then completes accepts the invitation to review
  - b. If accepts, then submits comments and also completes online ratings and recommendation

- **Action Editor**: 4-7 days
  - a. Receives reviewer comments and ratings
  - b. Develops decision correspondence highlighting key elements to address (if revision is requested)

- **Editor**: 2-3 days
  - a. Receives Action Editor decision letter
  - b. Promptly reviews, consults if necessary
  - c. Forwards the letter to the author(s) on behalf of the journal

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**Notes**

- Timely SPR expedited peer review...

- Submission to Decision <30 days

- Process

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**School Psychology Review**

*Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*
Peer Reviews – Guidelines

Preparing Constructive, High Quality, and Timely Reviews for School Psychology Review

Nature Masterclass  https://masterclasses.nature.com/online-course-on-peer-review/16507836
When you receive the invitation to review a manuscript, immediately determine whether or not you can complete the review within the next 14 day period.

- Yes, then accept invitation
- No, then decline the invitation
A competing interest is anything that interferes with, or could reasonably be perceived as interfering with, the full and objective peer review ... Competing interests can be financial or non-financial, professional, or personal.

- Yes, then inform Editor

COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers  [https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.9](https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.9)
Pro-Tips once you accept the invitation to review …
Questions to consider as you read through the paper for the first time:

- Is the relevant literature reviewed?
- Are the conceptual foundations delineated?
- Are the research questions clearly articulated?
- Is the design of the study appropriate to address the questions?
- Are there any fundamental flaws in the study design?
- Are all the conclusions supported by data?
- Are the unique contributions of this study clear?
- Is the content of the study appropriate for the journal?
- Who would be interested in reading this study?
Reviewing the Abstract
3 key questions – must be answered:

- 1. What question(s) does this paper address?
- 2. What methods were used and who participated?
- 3. So what? (e.g., Advancing science?, practice?, policy?)
Reviewing the Introduction

3 key questions – must be answered:

1. Does it accurately describe relevant contemporary research with properly-referenced statements?

2. Does it clearly setup why this study was necessary?

3. Do the citations included adequately reflect the current state of science in the field?
Reviewing the Methods
3 key questions – must be answered:

- 1. Is the methodology described in sufficient detail?
  (e.g., sampling, participants, controls, measures, outcomes)

- 2. Are the instruments and/or techniques sound?

- 3. Are the analytical procedures sound?
Reviewing the Results and Discussion
3 key questions – must be answered:

- 1. Are the results well organized and presented clearly?
- 2. Do the authors discuss their results in the context of published studies?
- 3. Is the discussion reasonable considering the study design? (e.g., correlation does not equal causation)
Reviewing the Conclusions
3 key questions – must be answered:

1. Do the conclusions answer the research question(s)?

2. Is the conclusion supported by the results or are there alternative explanations for the results?

3. Do the authors clearly explain the implications of the study for the field? (e.g., Advancing science?, practice?, policy?)
Reviewing the Tables
3 key questions – must be answered:

1. Are they clearly delineated? (e.g., Can stand on their own)

2. Are they helpful?

3. Are they necessary? (or Supplementary?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>mean (%)</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaver Creek</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>0±3.16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey Creek</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>7.82</td>
<td>0±2.547</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Bridge Garry Creek</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>0±3.16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Creek</td>
<td>6.56</td>
<td>9.86</td>
<td>0±4.52</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grindstone Creek</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>14.77</td>
<td>0±7.32</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacker Fish River</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>8.28</td>
<td>0±0.96</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moraine River</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>10.25</td>
<td>0±4.76</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Dixie Lake</td>
<td>7.96</td>
<td>14.54</td>
<td>0±7.66</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Prairie Lake</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>7.84</td>
<td>0±2.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosel Lake</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0±1.14</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winagur Lake</td>
<td>10.73</td>
<td>17.58</td>
<td>0±4.64</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whidstone Lake</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>12.93</td>
<td>0±3.38</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 = temporary stream, 2 = permanent streams, 3 = lakes
Reviewing the Figures:
3 key questions – must be answered:

- 1. Are they clearly delineated? (e.g., Can stand on their own)
- 2. Are they helpful?
- 3. Are they necessary? (or Supplementary?)
Preparing the Report
(3 key considerations):

1. Tone

2. Structure

3. Content
Be kind whenever possible
It is always possible.
- Dalai Lama
General guidelines in preparing the report

- constructive
- objective
- clear
- transparent
- respectful
- organized
- succinct
Structure of the Report

Summary of the research and your overall impression

Most important information

Evidence and examples

Separate into major & minor issues

Other points

Miscellaneous remarks

PLOS Peer Review Template https://plos.org/resource/peer-review-template/
Content of the Report

Brief Summary (1 paragraph):
Identify the study's key objectives.
Describe the sample and technical rigor of the study.
Identify the key findings and their contributions.

Major Comments:
Include significant concerns (e.g., problem with study design, insufficient data, improper referencing, unaddressed limitations)

Minor Comments:
Include smaller points (e.g., improvements to clarify, minor errors)

NOTE: DO NOT state your recommendation regarding publication within your review – save that for the confidential comments to the editors
These comments are NOT viewed by the authors.

Great place to share any comments regarding your recommendation for the manuscript (e.g., the 3 key reasons I recommended “accept” are 1. 2. 3., the 3 key reasons I recommended “reject” were my concerns about 1. 2. 3.)

NOTE: DO NOT state your recommendation regarding publication within your review – save that for the confidential comments to the editors.
Peer Review Resources

**MasterClass in Peer Review** *(Nature)*

- [How to Write a Thorough Peer Review](#)

**PLOS Reviewer Center Resources (Public Library of Science) (PLOS)*

- [How to Review a Manuscript – VIDEO](#)
- [10 Tips for Getting Started as a Peer Reviewer](#)
- [You’ve Been Invited to Review, Now What?](#)
- [How to Read a Manuscript as a Peer Reviewer](#)
- [PLOS How to write a peer review](#)
- [Competing Interests for Reviewers](#)
Peer Review Resources

Publons Academy (free course in peer review)

Peer Reviewer Resources
How to Write a Peer Review: Resources and Templates

COPE’s Ethical guidelines for reviewers (COPE)
What to Consider When Asked to Peer Review a Manuscript (COPE)
What to do if a Reviewer Suspects an Undisclosed COI (COPE)

Guidelines on roles and responsibilities in peer review (The Council of Science Editors - CSE)
Questions ...
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