

## Anatomy of an LTS article: a basic guide

Mariam Melkumyan, PhD – a former Editor in Chief of LTS – wrote a great LTS article on this very subject! What makes for an awesome LTS article, you ask? Well, step #1 for all LTS writers is to go read her piece from May 2023, “[Get on the write track for an LTS blog post.](#)”

...Back from reading that? Ready for some more specifics? All right, here you go:

### 1. The “so what”

- a. **Readers of your article should be able to answer:**
  - i. Why do I care about your article topic?
  - ii. Why is it relevant *now*?
  - iii. ***Every article should be timely and/or relevant***
- b. **What makes an article “timely”?** → it deals with the *new*, the *recent*, or the *upcoming*
  - i. Does it discuss a new discovery? A science event that just happen or will happen soon? A paper that just upended a research field?
- c. **What makes an article “relevant”?** → its subject matter *connects to the reader’s lives in some way*, and this relevancy is highlighted in the article
  - i. ***Hint: almost anything can be connected to almost anyone – you just need to be creative about the angle!***
  - ii. **Ask yourself:** how does the information in the article affect the reader / tie into their lives? Has a treatment been discovered for a chronic illness? Does a little-known animal have properties being researched for biomedical purposes? Does the article explain how a common phenomenon works?

### 2. Word count: between 1000-1500 words

- a. This is negotiable on the longer side on a case-by-case basis, but firm on the shorter side

### 3. Citations:

- a. Is it a scientific paper? → cite with superscripts linked to a “Sources” list at the end of the article
- b. Is it anything else (example: article in National Geographic; documentary; interview; dictionary) → cite in-text by hyperlinking the source to the appropriate phrase in the article

### 4. Figures:

- a. Every article should have at least 2 figures
- b. Figures can be images adapted from scientific papers; diagrams created by the writer on BioRender or another program; or relevant images from the internet
- c. All figures’ sources must be cited
- d. Figures must be referenced in the article. Example: (Figure 1)

### 5. Writing style:

- a. We encourage you to use your voice and creativity when writing your article! Whether you’re going for something straightforward and even-toned, or a humorous, sarcasm-laden deep-dive, we want *you* to shine through in your work
- b. This leaves a lot of room for variation, but avoid extra-long paragraphs, which can be disengaging for readers

### 6. Document titles:

- a. Please title each draft “[Your last name]\_[1-3 descriptive words]\_[date]”
- b. Ex: Simpson\_FTD Fly Models\_01-17-24; Odom\_Treefrogs + Climate\_01-10-24

## **The Editing Process**

1. You write your first draft and send it to us by the first-draft submission date you signed up for in our semesterly sign-up sheet
2. Your article is edited by an Initial Editor
  - a. This person is the first one on our team to lay eyes on your draft, and will only review it once
  - b. They will offer edits aimed at big stuff, like does your article have all necessary components? And is there a good narrative here, or is more information needed? And do the sentences make sense?
3. You perform initial revisions – make changes and adjustments based on recommendations of the Initial Editor
4. Your article is edited by a Finalizing Editor
  - a. As the name implies, this person will work with you to finalize your piece
  - b. There is more back-and-forth with the Finalizing Editor – they will usually review your work, make edits, then you’ll look at their edits and make revisions, and this will happen 2-3 times, until you both agree it’s ready for publication
5. Your article is posted on our website and social media by our awesome socials team 😊 and you get to have a cool new accomplishment to list on your resume!

## **Additional info**

### **Timeline:**

- From the date you turn in your first draft, which you sign up for by putting your name into the semesterly sign-up sheet, the editing process takes between 1-3 weeks
- Once the first draft is in and the editing process begins, we expect editors and writers to return each round of edits and revisions within 24-72 hours of receipt

### **Editing etiquette:**

- When you receive an edited draft, it will have comments on the side of the document, as well as visible in-text changes, like additions, deletions, and alternative suggestions
- When you return a revised draft, we ask that you:
  - Make all your revisions in that same document we returned to you with edits, so we can easily see the version history (helpful to track how the draft evolves over time)
  - Go through the comments and other suggestions left by your editor and “accept” them if you make the change, to clear the notification on the side. This creates a “clean” copy, which is much easier for our editors to work with
  - If you do not agree with an editor’s comment/suggestion, feel free to leave their comment on the side and reply with a quick explanation of why you disagree or want to write something another way – this is a dialogue, and our goal is always to try and help you tell the story you want to tell as effectively as possible!

**Have more questions not answered in this document? Have an idea for an article, but you’re not sure where to go from there? Feel free to reach out to us at [lionstalkscience@gmail.com](mailto:lionstalkscience@gmail.com), and we’d be happy to talk with you further!**

***Happy writing! We look forward to working with you!***