ETHICS AND GOOD PRACTICES FOR WRITERS

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The ethics and practices suggested are appropriate for all writers, including those who write on agricultural education topics. The selected suggestions apply to anyone who submits articles to local, county, state, regional or national publications.

Ethics

1. The writer should be honest
   a. He should check his work for truthfulness
      (1) Personal prejudices, uncritical examination of the evidence, lack of insight, vanity and too great a dependence on memory are some of the reasons the writer needs to check his work carefully
   b. He should give proper credit whenever he uses ideas or writings of another
      (1) Plagiarism is the stealing or passing off of another's ideas, writings or similar creative efforts as one's own
      (2) It makes little difference that the material may not have been copyrighted
      (3) The original author is entitled to credit, whether the material has been copyrighted or not. A thief is no less a thief because he cannot be prosecuted legally
         (a) In certain instances, it is more appropriate to list the publication from which the material is borrowed
         (b) Although there seems to be little legal machinery available for punishing the one who appropriates uncopyrighted material without credit to its originator, he should be "called to account" by other members of his profession whenever such an act has been discovered
         (c) Too many instances of improper borrowing by agricultural education writers have been noted in recent years
Good Practices

1. The writer should be accurate
   a. The reporting of a "significant difference" by a researcher who does not mention using a "test of significance" may be an indication of a careless or inaccurate statement
   b. The following additional terms are among those which tend to be used in rather inaccurate fashion by agricultural education personnel and others: "random selection," "no difference" and "validated"

2. The writer should avoid expressions which have little meaning
   a. The following are among the clichés used by agricultural education writers during the past 12 months:
      
      agricultural education
      is at the crossroads
      a lot of water has passed
      over the dam
      all too often
      all work and no play
      makes Jack a dull boy
      as time goes on
      best defense is a strong offense
      broaden our concepts
      cure all
      don't sell the farmer short
      dumping ground
      duty bound
      easier said than done
      era of a changing agriculture
      ever grateful
      ever important
      ever increasing
      exposed to high level instruction
      facts of life
      hope for the best
      in complete accord
      jump to the conclusion
      keep pace with
      keep their heads above water
      leaders are made and not born
      lose sight of
      make ends meet
      meet the challenge of the future
      my fair share
      needless to say
      no mean task
      no small measure
      nothing succeeds like success
      on our toes
      part to play
      put on the spot
      rapidly changing world
      ready, willing and able
      run-of-the-mill
      selling job for agriculture
      silence is golden
      sink or swim
      strong guiding hand
      tasted success
      watering down the instruction
      way, shape or form

3. The writer should avoid stilted language
   a. The following are examples of stilted (or pompous) expressions: "must be cognizant" and "exigencies of adolescent experience"
Others may have their own lists of "ethics and good practices for agricultural education writers." Publication of such lists might assist in establishing more desirable writing standards.