

### 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	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
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	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.