



The BELS Letter

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

Maintaining and promoting editorial proficiency in the life sciences



INSIDE:

- From the President
- BELS Member Profile
- Monthly Poll Results
- New Certified Editors

From the President

For many, August is Back to School. For those of us who are years past earning our degree(s) or whose school-aged children have flown the nest, it can still mark a time of renewed commitment to a new season of learning. What are you doing to continue to advance your skills, or to try something new in your professional or personal life?

Trying your hand at new challenges or seeking to absorb new information not only helps to keep you competitive and abreast of the latest trends, it also can open the door to new opportunities and is sure to be personally satisfying.

Continued on page 2

The BELS Letter

Bryan Tutt, ELS(D)
Managing Editor



Alex Rudie
Publications Coordinator

From the President

Continued from page 1

Thank you for your commitment, as a BELS member, to an organization whose focus is on lifelong learning even after you've earned your editing credential. We are continuing to seek ways to offer meaningful programming and resources to help you in your quest to grow throughout your career.

Speaking of new things, be sure to check out our BELS logo items. Treat yourself to something from our online shop, at www.bels.org/store, or select something as a gift for your favorite friend, family member, or colleague!

As always, feel free to drop us a note if you have suggestions or ideas for how we can continue to support our members. We love hearing from you!

*Melanie Fridl Ross, MSJ, ELS
BELS President*

Be There With BELS On!

BELS branded merchandise is now available! Now you can proudly display the BELS logo on your tote bag, mug, travel tumbler, sweatshirt, laptop case, or mouse pad. They make great gifts for colleagues, employees, friends, family, and yourself! Please visit www.bels.org/store to order.



BELS Member Profile

Stacey C. Tobin, PhD, ELS
Biomedical Writer and Editor
The Tobin Touch, Inc.
BELS member since 2010



How did you first hear about BELS?

When I made the decision to leave academia and become a professional biomedical writer and editor, I knew I had a lot to learn about the field. I started by taking some courses at the American Medical Writers Association's annual meeting and learned about BELS from my fellow attendees.

How has BELS certification or membership benefited you personally and/or professionally?

Studying for the exam and passing it certainly made me more confident that I was making the right decision to become a professional editor. At the time, writing and editing was considered an “alternative” career for PhDs, and I wasn't getting much guidance on how to make the switch. Knowing that there was an entire group of professionals out there doing what I wanted to do was incredibly encouraging.

What gives you job satisfaction?

Helping others share their ideas and research. When a client comes back to me with the news that their grant was accepted or their manuscript has been published, and then thanks me for helping them put their thoughts into words—it's the best feeling. I'm putting my particular training and skills to good use and hopefully helping to advance science and medicine, even though I'm no longer at the lab bench.

What is your grammar pet peeve?

It's tough to narrow down, but I think mixing up “ensure,” “insure,” and “assure” wins that prize.

Continued on page 4

BELS Member Profile

Continued from page 3

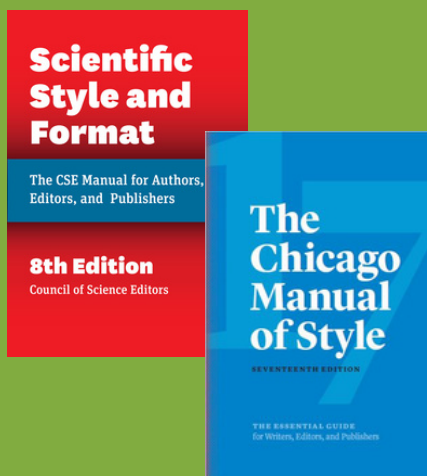
Which style guide or reference book do you use most in your work?

I use AMA style most frequently, with small variations based on whatever journal my client has chosen or if they have a particular style preference.

BELS Member Discounts

BELS has partnered with resource providers to offer valuable members-only discounts on products and services that help make your job easier. These offers are exclusive to BELS members and should not be shared with any other non-member.

BELS member discounts include a **30% discount** on a single license of PerfectIt software. PerfectIt improves consistency, ensures quality, and saves time. BELS members also receive a **20% discount** on reference books such as *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers* and *The Chicago Manual of Style*. The discount can be applied to both online and print versions of these books. Visit bels.org and click on Member Resources to claim your discounts today!

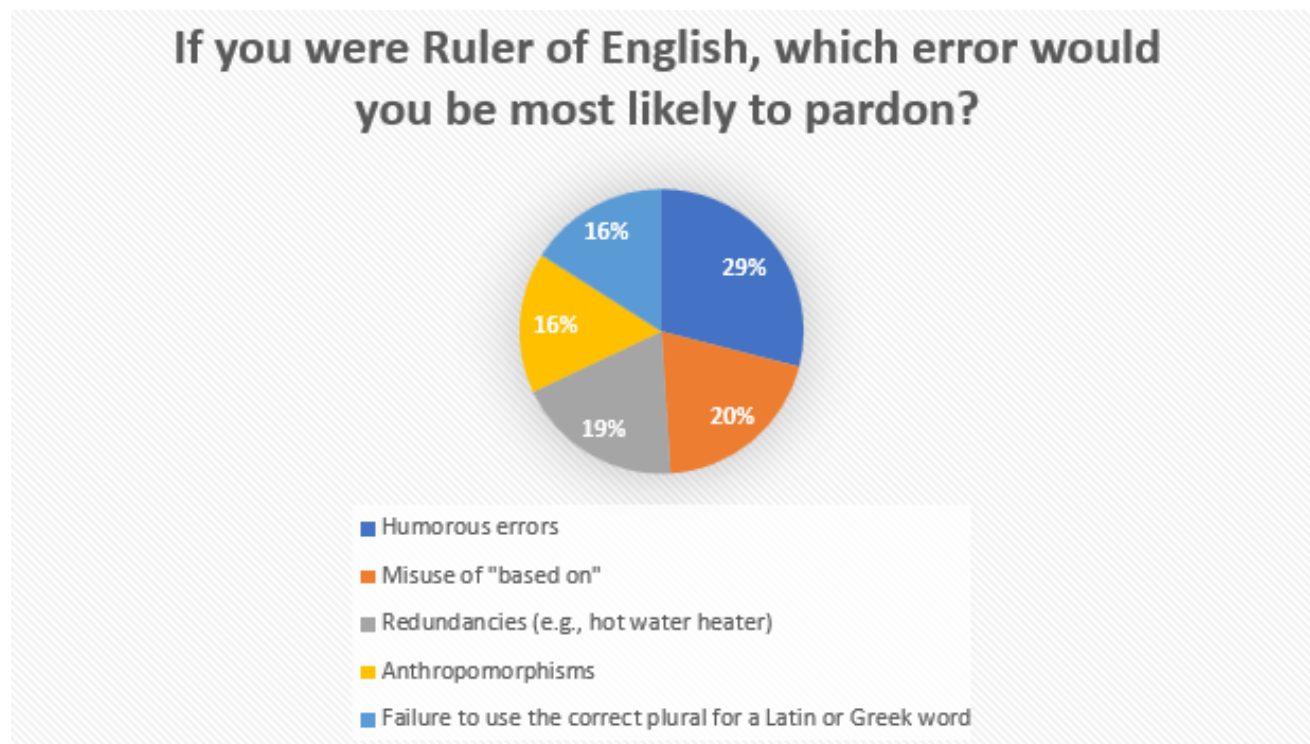


Monthly Poll Results

In July, the BELS website featured a poll asking members which type of error they are most likely to forgive.

Humorous errors, at 29%, were the most forgivable (I guess if it's going to be wrong, it might as well be fun).

Please visit bels.org to participate in our next poll: Which advice do you think is most important to follow for abbreviations in scientific writing?



BELS Member Event Recordings

Did you miss any of our recent member-exclusive events? Visit the “Member Resources” section on our website to watch recordings on-demand at your convenience! Topics include consulting, editing tools, setting freelance rates, and much more. Be sure to stay tuned for announcements about upcoming events, and contact us with topic suggestions.

New Certified Editors

Darisa Clarke, MA, ELS
Hermann Fernandes, ELS
Colin Gittens, BA, ELS
Kelly Gottula, ELS
Amruta Gupta, MS, ELS
Connor Lemp, MS, ELS
Harsha Mahajan, ELS
Kiranmayi Malapaka, PhD, ELS
Margaret Mathes, ELS
Keerthi Nair, ELS
Celia Nelson, ELS
Rhonda Oman, ELS
Nicole Scopelliti, ELS
Jennifer Varghese, ELS



Congratulations

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Sheryle Hazard, CAE
Executive Director

The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) was founded in 1991 to evaluate the proficiency of manuscript editors in the life sciences and to award credentials similar to those obtainable in other professions.

Potential employers and clients of manuscript editors usually have no objective way to assess the proficiency of editors. For their part, editors are frustrated by the difficulty of demonstrating their ability. That is why both employers and editors so often resort to personal references or ad hoc tests, not always with satisfactory results. The need for an objective test of editorial skill has long been recognized.

To meet that need, BELS developed a process for testing and evaluating proficiency in editing in the life sciences. The Board administers two examinations—one for certification and one for diplomate status. The examinations, written by senior life-science editors assisted by testing experts, focus on the principles and practices of scientific editing in English.