

Your Story Matters: A Guide to Moving from Practice to Publication

Teachers have incredible stories to tell—stories of creativity, challenge, and change that deserve to be heard. Yet finding the time, courage, and know-how to share them can feel daunting. *Your Story Matters* is here to help.

This friendly, step-by-step guide was created by teachers, for teachers. It walks you through how to:

- **Discover your story** — Identify the experiences, questions, and moments that matter most to you and your students.
- **Find the right home for your writing** — Explore publication options, from **Kaleidoscope: Educator Voices & Perspectives** to national teacher journals and blogs.
- **Understand your audience** — Learn what makes each publication unique and how to shape your story so it resonates.
- **Write with support** — Work alongside colleagues or peer advisors who can offer feedback and encouragement as you write. If you'd like additional help, **Knowles offers peer advisors** who can guide you from idea to finished piece through the *Kaleidoscope* storytelling support program.

This support guide was designed to make publishing your story feel not just possible—but joyful.

Step 1: Decide what you want to share

Many teachers feel they don't have anything important or novel to share. This couldn't be more untrue! Teachers learn best from other teachers and the more perspectives we have, the better! (Listen to [Chimamanda Adichie's Ted Talk](#) about the danger of a single story.)

When deciding what to write about, you might consider:

- What's a piece of writing about teaching that you enjoyed reading or found important? What do you like or find important about this piece of writing?
- What story/research/experience feels most exciting, important, or urgent to you?
- What kinds of things do you find yourself sharing in your local setting already? Could you take these ideas more public?
- What is something you have recently had success with either in your classroom or in your school context? What is something you've struggled with in your classroom or in your school context and how are you navigating that?

Step 2: Decide on a Venue

Educators have many options for publishing, ranging from academic journals to practitioner journals to informal blogs. These may reach different audiences or have different expectations, but rest assured that the perfect fit for your story is out there!

When researching venues, you might consider:

- Who is your intended audience? (math teachers, administration, all high school teachers, your colleagues, the general public, etc.)
- What type of piece do you want to write (long form article, blog, description of practice, reflection,

poetry, artwork, research paper, etc.)? Which publications include writing like this?

- What specific criteria do different publications have for writing? Does what you plan to write fit these criteria?
- Are there any specific calls for papers that your topic might fit into?

Potential venues:

- *Kaleidoscope*: [Educator Voices and Perspectives](#), published twice a year by the Knowles Teacher Initiative
- [Mathematics Teacher: Learning and Teaching](#), published monthly by NCTM
- [The Science Teacher](#), published six times a year by NSTA
- [Edutopia](#), online blog published by the George Lucas Foundation

Step 3: Conduct a Forum Analysis & Review Guidelines

Knowing your audience and what conventions are accepted for publication will guide how you write your piece. Doing some research ahead of time will help prevent the need for lengthy revisions later.

Read/skim some of that venue's recent publications and consider the following questions:

- In this forum, who is granted status as a writer? Who is regarded as an insider, a welcome newcomer, or an outsider? What credentials or experience does one need that this audience might value?
- What values, beliefs, attitudes, or assumptions might a writer appeal to in order to be of interest to this audience?
- What types of evidence and sources does this audience value?
- What genre conventions will be important to attend to if an author wants their writing to "fit in" in this forum? What would be viewed as creative or fresh, and what might be seen as a poor fit, redundant, oblivious, or disrespectful?
 - Examples: [Kaleidoscope Genre Descriptions](#), [Edutopia's Impactful Articles](#), [The Science Teacher](#), [Mathematics Teacher: Learning and Teaching](#)
- Does this publication accept rolling submissions or submissions during specific time windows only?
- What are the author/submission guidelines for that particular outlet? (Clarifying these can help you avoid rewriting later.)

Step 4: Collaborate and Write!

Determine what supports you need and what is available. Writing does not have to be a lonely endeavor!

- Which colleague(s) might you partner with to brainstorm, get feedback, or even co-author?
- [Kaleidoscope](#) offers a relatively unique support of peer advising for authors hoping to publish with us. A Kaleidoscope peer advisor can help you at every step of the process of publishing with us, all the way from idea generation to revising a submitted manuscript.
- To request a peer advisor to work with you to publish in *Kaleidoscope*, fill out the [Storytelling Support Form](#).