

Guidelines for Article Abstracts and Titles

Writing an effective abstract is crucial for the submission process, peer review, indexing, and attracting future readers. The abstract and title form an article's first impression on readers. Beyond influencing whether the journal accepts a submission, the abstract impacts whether peer reviewers will choose to review an article. An effective abstract gives a clear sense of what the article is about and most importantly, summarizes the intervention it makes in existing scholarship.

Moreover, the abstract determines how an article is indexed and is discovered by readers. It is helpful for the author to consider how key words, categories, or phrases present in the abstract ensures the article will be properly indexed. Consider how readers search and find the article, and what key terms they are likely to use. The same is true for titles. Titles that are descriptive of what the article discusses will have a better chance of being properly indexed and discovered by readers.

The following guidelines offer suggestions for writing an effective abstract and title.

1. Be specific about time periods and locations/sites/geographies
2. Be specific about problematics/issues/themes covered
3. Be specific about methods used
4. Be specific about addressed theoretical approaches
5. Be specific about the article's argument and contribution to scholarship
6. Write in accessible language that can be easily understood by indexers regardless of their training

Select examples of published articles with effective abstracts:

Bush, Peter. "Protestant Christians of the Arabic-Speaking Diaspora and the Presbyterian Church in Canada." *Mashriq & Mahjar* 4, no. 1 (2017): 90-123.

<https://doi.org/10.24847/44i2017.110>.

Mahdi, Waleed F. "Post-Oriental Otherness: Hollywood's Moral Geography of Arab Americans." *Mashriq & Mahjar* 3, no. 2 (2016): 36-63. <https://doi.org/10.24847/33i2016.82>.

Torosian, Bedros. "Ottoman Armenian Racialization in an American Space (1908-1914)." *Mashriq & Mahjar* 8, no. 2 (2021): 31-58. <https://doi.org/10.24847/v8i22021.278>.