

Title: Your title should be catchy but accurate—something you could imagine appearing in a newspaper headline. For example, “Molecules in the Dark: Tracing Chemistry in the Coldest Parts of Space.”

Author(s): Write your name with your title, for example, “Dr. Jane Doe.”

Bio(s): Include information such as your position title and place of appointment. Optional additions may include awards or honors, research interests, or fun facts. The bio should be between one and five sentences.

Text: The following guidance for this template draws upon Dr. Ryan Fortenberry’s *Complete Science Communication: A Guide to Connecting with Scientists, Journalists, and the Public*, which provides an excellent framework for transforming technical writing into engaging science journalism.

The first sentence is a “punchline” - immediately telling why the story is important. One should leave holes in the first sentence to urge the reader onward. Never ask a question as a punchline if the answer could be a simple “no.” For example, never start a sentence with “have you ever wondered...?” After the first sentence, describe researchers and where they work, where is the work published, and information about the experiment. In the first paragraph you want to answer the five W’s: who, what, where, when, how. Leave the how out in the lead, it makes readers want to continue reading. The “how” and “what” answer the question of “who cares,” and the combination of “when” and “who cares” establishes newsworthiness.

Do not save the most important information for the end. Journalistic writing follows an inverted triangle structure, as shown in Figure 1. In academia, scientists often build toward a conclusion, but journalism reverses that pattern: begin with the key result and its significance, then follow with background, concept explanations, and any quotes. The essence of your story should be conveyed within the first 100 words.

Insert Figure(s)

Figure 1. *Write your caption here in italics. Please paste figures directly into the document so that the Website Manager can identify their intended placement when formatting for the website.*

As you write, make sure to check your article for the “Three C’s”: clear, concise, and correct. To be clear, you’ll want to avoid jargon and use analogies. You are “code-switching” out of a niche technical region into the broader public. To be concise, use shorter sentences. To be concise, use shorter sentences and simple constructions. Scientists often favor long, compound sentences, but journalistic writing benefits from brevity. Lastly, ensure your article is correct—accuracy is essential. We recommend having a peer review your article before submission.

The article should be written at an undergraduate reading level, avoiding jargon and defining any specialized astrochemistry or chemistry terms. Use third-person, present tense, and active voice throughout. Accompanying graphics are required and should be submitted separately in .png or .jpeg format. Standard articles should not exceed 500 words, while feature pieces may be up to 2000 words.

For an article review, you need at least one primary source—the research article itself. For feature articles between 1000 and 2000 words, include at least two primary sources, which may be the author, another scientist in the field, or a published journal article. When mentioning a person for the first time, include their full name and title (for example, “Dr. Jane Doe”), and then refer to them by last name for all subsequent mentions. If interviewing a scientist, prepare thoughtful questions in advance, read their article, and schedule the interview at a time and place convenient for them.

Submit your article as a Google Doc URL. Articles will be received first by the Managing Editor, then reviewed by the assigned Science Editor, followed by the Senior Editor, and finally by the Editor-in-Chief. At each stage, editors will suggest revisions to align your article with The Astrochemistry Report’s style and intended audience.

This article made use of the following sources:

Fortenberry, Ryan C. (2018). Complete Science Communication: A Guide to Connecting with Scientists, Journalists, and the Public. The Royal Society of Chemistry.

Author’s Last Name, First Initial. (Year of publication). Title of Book. Publisher.

OR

This article made use of the following publications:

Last, First. et al., Year, Journal Name, Volume, Issue.