Author Guidelines

LabQ is a continuing education program for medical laboratory professionals and phlebotomists. Manuscripts are typically solicited by section editors. If you are interested in being an author, e-mail a brief paragraph describing a case with a laboratory challenge to labq@ascp.org for consideration.

The author’s objective is to describe a case history with laboratory challenge that has teaching value, in one of the following areas: phlebotomy, clinical chemistry, hematology, immunology, microbiology, molecular diagnostics, or transfusion medicine. Manuscripts are accepted for consideration with the understanding that they have not been published, simultaneously submitted, or accepted for publication elsewhere.

An honorarium of $250 per manuscript will be paid when the exercise is published, as detailed in the author Letter of Agreement. If the manuscript is received on or before the deadline specified by the author Letter of Agreement, an additional $250 will be paid upon publication. Authors will also receive a PDF of their published work.

MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS (Use Manuscript Template & Checklist)

Refer to current editions of Dorland's Medical Dictionary, Merriam Webster's Dictionary, and the AMA Manual of Style as references.

Manuscripts must be 1500 to 2500 words, not including figures, tables, and references; prepared in Microsoft Word; double-spaced; and must contain the following subsections in order:

- **Title Page.** Include the title; word count; full name(s) of author(s); degree(s); title(s); institution(s); and the contributions of each author to the manuscript. For ASCP use only, daytime phone number and e-mail address.

- **History (2-5 paragraphs).** Describe a laboratory challenge that a medical laboratory professional encounters in his or her scope of practice that requires at least one action on the part of the medical laboratory professional to resolve. The challenge may be related to the testing phase (pre, analytical, post) and/or decision making. It may also describe a problem situation, identification of sources of error, troubleshooting discrepant results, correlation of laboratory findings with disease state, and/or selection of course of action. (Use the third person point of view.)

- **Learning Objectives (4-5).** Learning Objectives should state in observable and measurable terms what the participant will be able to do after completing the exercise. Each Learning Objective must correlate to at least 1 CMLE Question. Refer to “How to Write Learning Objectives and CMLE Questions” on page 3.

- **Discussion (3-10 pages).** The discussion should provide a basic overview of the topic presented in the case history as well as give information to help solve the problem. Even if the clinical scenario is uncommon, the focus of the discussion should include information that is practical and applicable to routine clinical use. All Learning Objectives must be covered. Illustrative material is strongly encouraged and may include tables, figures or images.
• **Case Conclusion (1-3 paragraphs).** Describe the resolution(s) to the laboratory challenge addressed in the case history.

• **Summary (1-2 paragraphs).** Present a summary of the major points in the discussion and closing remarks on the topic.

• **Figure and Image Legends (if applicable).** Describe the figure or image, stain, and magnification used (if applicable). Spell out any acronyms.

• **References (minimum 3).** Most references should be less than 5 years old. All references must be cited and numbered consecutively. References must be in the style specified in the *American Medical Association Manual of Style*. Refer to “Reference Formatting” on page 4.

• **CMLE Questions (5 questions).** Provide 5 multiple-choice questions, and indicate the correct answer for each. CMLE Questions must relate to at least 1 Learning Objective. Indicate at the end of each CMLE Question which Learning Objective has been tested. The correct answer must be found in the discussion. For editorial purposes, document in the text the location of the information providing the answer to the CMLE Question via [CMLE Q#1, CMLE Q#2, etc]. Refer to “How to Write Learning Objectives and CMLE Questions” on page 3.

• **Quick Stop (1-3 statements).** A Quick Stop is a side note that provides tidbits of interesting information related to the topic. They can relate to a little known fact about the subject or provide additional statistics about the topic. Do not repeat information already in the discussion. Additional references for a Quick Stop should be listed at the end of your reference list.
  - Quick Stop example (Topic: Wound Botulism Caused by *Clostridium botulinum*): The term *botulism* derives from the Latin word *botulus*, or sausage.

✓ **Abbreviations:** Expand all abbreviations at first mention in the text.

✓ **Trade Names:** Use nonproprietary names of drugs and other products, unless the trade name of a drug is essential to the discussion, in which case provide the manufacturer.

**ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIALS**

**Tables:** Submit each table as a separate electronic MS Word document; tables should be numbered in the order they appear in the text. Laboratory results must be provided in conventional units with reference ranges, followed by the SI conversion factor in parentheses (eg, to convert to mmol/L, multiply by 0.35).
Do not list the same laboratory results in both a table and the text.

**Figures:** Submit each figure as a separate electronic file (jpg, tif, PowerPoint, or MS Word); figures should be numbered in the order they appear in the text.

**Images:** Submit images in high-quality digital format (jpg or tif); minimum image requirements are 550 pixels wide by 400 pixels high @ 72 dpi. Images should be numbered in the order they appear in the text.
PERMISSION AND COPYRIGHT

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ASCP will copyright all materials accepted for publication.

SUBMISSION & WORKFLOW

E-mail your manuscript and any tables, figures, or images to labq@ascp.org by the deadline indicated in your Letter of Agreement. Manuscripts are peer reviewed and are also subject to editorial revision using the AMA Manual of Style and the Chicago Manual of Style. A copyedited author galley will be sent to you as well as a final proof prior to publication.

HOW TO WRITE LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND CMLE QUESTIONS

The desired result of any CMLE activity is ultimately a change in competence or performance. Learning Objectives and CMLE Questions must be correlated with each other.

Learning Objectives: The stem statement "On completion of this exercise, the participant should be able to” should be completed with a verb:

To show knowledge: know, list, state
  • Example: know the testing required for a diagnosis of chronic lymphocytic leukemia.
To show application of knowledge: calculate, compute, solve, apply, correlate, predict
  • Example: calculate the accurate white blood cell count using the proper dilution factor.
To show problem-solving skills: analyze, examine, compare, differentiate
  • Example: analyze the results of a hybrid Rhesus box polymerase chain reaction.

Other helpful verbs: advise, assess, choose, communicate, consult, contrast, coordinate, create, decide, demonstrate, design, detect, determine, develop, devise, diagnose, discriminate, distinguish, establish, evaluate, formulate, identify, implement, interpret, justify, manage, modify, operate, organize, perform, plan, practice, propose, recognize, recommend, select, transform, utilize

CMLE Questions: Provide 5 multiple-choice questions and indicate the correct response for each, and where it appears in the text.
  • The stem of the question should either ask a straightforward question, give an incomplete statement, present a scenario, or describe a set of clinical findings that require an interpretation.
• Each stem should be followed by 4 or 5 responses. Only 1 can be correct. Please avoid any incorrect distracters (see example 4) that could be confusing as well as any obviously incorrect distracters (see example 3).
• At least 1 question must be scenario-based (see CMLE Question Example #2 below).
• Equalize the length of each response.
• Indicate the correct answer via the notation (Correct).
• Indicate which Learning Objective is being measured via the notation (LO #).
• Do NOT use negative question stems or related forms such as "Which of the following cannot" or "All of the following are true except".
• Do NOT use true/false questions, always/sometimes/never responses, or responses that contain "All of the above," "None of the above," or "A and B."

CMLE Question Examples

1. (LO 1) When the WBC count from an automated analyzer does not match the estimated count on the smear, and smudge cells are present, the technologist should
   A. discount the manual estimate and report the analyzer count.
   B. calculate a corrected WBC count using the percentage of smudge cells from the smear.
   C. make a new smear from a mixture of albumin and the patient’s specimen. (Correct)
   D. repeat the analyzer count with a higher dilution.

2. (LO 2) A physician calls about a patient who presents with jaundice and elevated liver function tests. He wants “all of the hepatitis tests”. You ask the physician for additional patient history. The patient works in a daycare center, is married, and denies illicit drug use. She has received the hepatitis B vaccine. Which of the following do you recommend as the most useful screening test?
   A. Hepatitis C antibody
   B. Hepatitis A IgM antibody (Correct)
   C. Hepatitis B surface antibody
   D. Hepatitis B core IgM antibody

Bad Example (it is obvious which is the correct answer)
3. (LO 3) What constitutes proper PPE?
   A. Cryogenic gloves, face shield, closed –toed shoes
   B. Reading glasses, latex gloves, open-toed shoes
   C. T-shirts, shorts, oven mitt
   D. Tight-fitting clothing/gloves, sunglasses, sandals

Bad Example (confusing, as each choice could be considered correct)
4. (LO 1) Which of the following is the correct definition of a specified labeling error?
   A. Incomplete requisition
   B. Unlabeled specimen
   C. Incomplete specimen label
   D. Illegible specimen label
   E. Mislabeled specimen (Correct)
Cite all references in text using superscript as shown, \textsuperscript{5,6} and in numerical order. If there are 5 or more authors, list the first 3 authors followed by "et al."

**JOURNAL**

**BOOK**

**CHAPTER IN BOOK**

**ELECTRONIC CITATION**