

# Perspectives

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## The New *ABT*: Focus on How-To-Do-It and Bioscience Updates

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*ABT Editor*

No doubt you have noticed that *ABT* has been undergoing gradual but considerable transformation. Feedback gathered from readers in Fall 1981 indicated NABT members wanted their journal to be more practice-oriented, more readable, and to provide easy access to cutting-edge developments in biology. Early in 1982, action was taken to reframe the journal. *ABT* was departmentalized. Projector Center, Computer Center, Biology Olympics, and Biology Today were added to the existing How-To-Do-It, Audiovisual/Book Review, and Perspectives departments. Charles Barman, Ted Crovello, and Maura Flannery agreed to become department editors for newly created departments, and they have done exceptional work in expanding the horizons of our publication. Emmett Wright and Faith Hickman continued providing the book and AV reviews we all need in order to stay current. And, in September 1982, managing editor Diana Baber revitalized *ABT* with new typeface, masthead, and layout—in short, a whole new “look.” With talented people such as these working for our journal, the future looks bright indeed.

The decision was made early in my term as editor to develop issues around themes as often as possible. We especially wanted to focus on bioscience frontiers and on practical

classroom ideas, and have so as best we could. (Our most recent theme issues—“Focus on Acid Rain” and “Focus on Archaeobacteria”—have blended current scientific information with practical how-to-do-it suggestions).

Where is *ABT* headed now? This year, you will see the journal move even more dramatically along the two-pronged path initiated during my editorial biennium. The first prong—to give major emphasis to practical, exciting classroom activities—will be continued with gusto. I plan to do the following:

- *Emphasize and enlarge our How-To-Do-It department.* Note that this entire September issue is focused on a How-To-Do-It theme. I have developed our first issue of this school year to highlight *ABT*'s mission to provide useable, motivating teaching techniques to make the classroom lives of our members more enjoyable and more successful. Unfortunately, one big problem I have with this effort is that the number of unsolicited How-To-Do-It manuscripts received by my office has been meager. We need good ideas for demonstrations, field studies, laboratory investigations, biological models, and simulation games.

To help obtain more practical biology teaching ideas, David

Fagle of Iowa has suggested that NABT initiate a major thrust encouraging members to submit their best teaching ideas. We will do so. Working through our state and district representatives, NABT will seek a minimum of three good biology teaching ideas from each state. I will personally take responsibility for filing, organizing, and casting your good ideas into readable, concise “Biology Teaching Tips” as an addition to our How-To-Do-It department. Credit bylines will always acknowledge creators of ideas, of course.

- *Continue and improve the Computer Center and Projector Center departments.* Ted Crovello and other NABT “computer hackers” are considering ways to provide reviews of software and a mechanism for swapping teacher-developed programs through Computer Center.

Charlie Barman wants your best teaching activities using overhead projectors, tape recorders, slide projectors, super-eight movie animation, or videotaping equipment. Do you have a way of demonstrating respiration, diffusion, or genetic engineering with an overhead projector? Do you have a super drawing or diagram for a transparency? Send your good ideas

to Dr. Barman or me for consideration for publication in Projector Center.

- *Develop practical, classroom-oriented theme issues.* The *ABT* issue you are reading has a How-To-Do-It theme. During the upcoming school year, we plan a special, classroom practice-oriented "Computers in Bioeducation" issue to be guest edited by Ted Crovello.

We also plan a special issue, "Creative Teaching/Creative Learning in Biology," which will emphasize specific classroom activities encouraging idea production, hypothesis and model-building, imagination, and invention on the part of

both students and teachers. We need your creative ideas for both issues as soon as possible, so get to your desk and start writing!

The second major emphasis for *ABT* will be to provide updates of the latest discoveries along frontiers of biological research. Maura Flannery, in her Biology Today department, will continue her summaries and incisive perspectives regarding recent biological research happenings. We also plan a series of special articles authored by active researchers and innovators focused on bioengineering. And, we will continue development of bioscience theme issues. The very next *ABT* issue will be a superb example of this effort. Zoologist/*ABT* Advisory

Panel member Dave DuVall has arm-twisted some of the most prominent animal behaviorists in the nation to produce our special October issue: "Focus on Animal Behavior and Evolution." Watch for it—I think you will be impressed.

In case you are thinking of writing for *ABT*, other possible future themes are "Focus on Toxic Wastes," "Biology in Two-Year Colleges," "New Brain Research and Educational Implications," and "Frontiers of Cell Biology." If you have ideas for articles related to these, or any other topics, send me a note describing your thoughts. It's *your* journal, and it will only be good as the ideas *you* send in.

Have a great school year!

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