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Medium-Level Review Articles in Chemistry. Are There Obstacles to This Type of Publication?

Review articles summarize and assess the state of chemical research on a selected topic. Such reviews for **the readership of research workers** serve to promote chemistry as a science. For newcomers to the field, teachers, students, and interested lay people, however, these reviews are often hard to understand as they assume acquaintance with the state of investigations.

A less established type of reviews addresses **the readership of non-specialists**. The corresponding audience must be familiar with some basic chemistry. This minimum of a particular field of knowledge should be stated by the author, a task that is sometimes difficult to perform. Within a certain field, the material presented in such an article will have to be selected with a view to the background of the readers; suitable literature references should be given. Only few journals publish peer-reviewed articles of this kind. Some journals, dedicated to science in a comprehensive manner, print such contributions on aspects of physics, astronomy, biology etc. but less frequently on aspects of chemistry. One reason for this may be the language of chemistry, using structural formulae that are felt by a number of readers to be difficult to understand.

Writing any kind of review requires a considerable expenditure of time and commitment, a fact that is known to everybody who authored articles of both types. While medium-level publications may not be widely acknowledged, they can help to promote understanding of chemistry. Therefore, it is suggested to try to solve the indicated problems.

Comments are welcome.