We typically read for the content, but noticing how articles are put together can help you learn strategies you might apply in your own writing and help you determine whether a particular journal is a good fit for your work. If you keep summary notes on your reading, consider adding separate comments about the writing. For example, you might note:

**Audience**: Who seems to be the intended audience? How is the writer helping the reader to understand and/or follow the argument and evidence?

**Organization**: How is the article organized? Is it logical and clear? How does the writer signal the organizational structure to the reader (headings, transitional phrasing, repetition, etc.)

**Introduction/Beginning**: What kind of introduction is used? (narrative, contextualizing the issue, history, etc.) How does the introduction set up or frame the rest of the article?

**Paragraph Length**: How many sentences are in the typical paragraph? What does this stylistic choice suggest about the audience? How do the paragraphs reflect expectations of genre and/or organizational structure?

**Word Choice**: Are technical or discipline-specific terms explained clearly or is the author able to assume these are known by the audience? What does the word choice suggest about the intended audience?

**Documentation**: Are statements sufficiently documented? Are references current and appropriate? Are arguments supported by appropriate evidence? Is the methodology appropriate for the claims being made? What do these documentation choices suggest about the audience and/or the genre?

**Graphics and Illustrations**: Where and how are graphics (like tables and charts) and/or illustrations inserted? Are the graphics clear, labeled well, and connected to the prose discussion? Do the illustrations contribute to the overall effectiveness and clarity of the writing?

**Conclusion/Ending**: What kind of ending does the writer use? (summary, projection of needed research or unanswered questions, return to opening frame, etc.) Is the ending appropriate and effective?

**Article Length**: How long is the article in pages? What does this suggest about the audience, genre and/or the argument/material being presented?

**Overall**: What did you learn about writing that gets published from reading this article? What did you learn about this journal or its intended audience from this piece?