



Editorial

Fiona Williams

Welcome to the March issue of *SSR*! You will notice that there has been a refresh of the journal design. If you are reading a printed copy of the journal, be sure to head over to our online articles; you will find details of these, and QR codes to take you to them, on page 32.

With the curriculum and assessment review underway in the UK, in this issue Jeremy Thomas evaluates whether the current science curriculum adequately accommodates space-related topics. This article provides a concise overview of the issue, references previous research, aims to inform educators on the subject, and discusses strategies for integrating space themes into existing learning frameworks. Additionally, in their article, Jon Hale, Katie Nash and Kaela Jones reflect on how they reorganised the GCSE Biology for Combined Science curriculum, positioning ecology at the beginning. In an accompanying online article, they elaborate on the teaching sequence and activities implemented in their introductory unit on ecology.

In her ASE Presidential Address, Professor Louise Archer discusses factors influencing students' desire to study STEM subjects post-16, including science identity, capital and field, and how these affect their perception and engagement with science.

There are two articles on the evolving use of technology in teaching. Hélène Doerflinger and Natalie Walls discuss CRISPR and their online game, *Unlock CRISPR*, which introduces post-16 biology students to genetic editing techniques linked to modern

research. In his article, Ben Scott explores free digital platforms for creating digital lab reports, highlighting tools beneficial for both educators and students. Additionally, Jon Tarrant's *Science websearch* has some interesting websites that are well worth exploring.

The important role of *SSR* in sharing practical ideas continues in this issue. Maureen Wade presents a microscale experiment designed to enhance understanding of bonding and conductivity. Naomi Hennah examines how incorporating oracy into practical science can facilitate both hands-on and minds-on activities. Further, Lisa Niven demonstrates how a straightforward experiment combined with thoughtful questioning can foster synoptic links across different areas of the curriculum. Chris Graham contributes another beautifully illustrated microscopy article, offering insights on specimen preparation.

Finally, as *SSR* moves into a new phase we would like to take this opportunity to thank Jane Hanrott who has worked diligently and supportively behind the scenes of the journal for over 40 years. Jane has been, to use an analogy by former editor Geoff Auty, '*the oil that keeps the engine running smoothly*'. A fuller thank you to Jane for her contribution to *SSR* can be accessed via the QR code or the link below. The current editors, and all those who are and have been involved with *SSR*, wish Jane the very best for her retirement.

www.ase.org.uk/SSR/393/hanrott



A thank you to Jane Hanrott

Without Jane's diligent, kind and professional support of the SSR team, the journal would quite simply not be in the position it is today as we launch the latest format. For much of her long career at ASE, SSR was just one part of Jane's varied role on the journals and other publications. However, her dedication to SSR was such that even when she stepped back from many of her other roles, Jane continued with her support of the journal. Right up until the November 2024 issue, Jane was organising the peer-review process, critical to maintaining the standards of the journal.

A current member of our editorial board, as part of the numerous thank you messages to Jane upon her retirement, commented that even though Jane does not get the frontline glory and her name is hidden in the small print, her contribution to science education has been noted and greatly valued.

Former editor Geoff Auty recalls below his first contact with Jane when, as a teacher in the 1960s, he published his first-ever article in SSR. Geoff expresses thanks to Jane for her support during his long period of service as editor of the journal, support that she has continued to give to the current editorial team.

Thank you, Jane.

Helen Harden, Commissioning Editor

Reflections and an expression of thanks from Geoff Auty

My first article for SSR resulted from an unintended incident. As part of a teacher demonstration, the entire contents of a jar of iron filings were pulled out by magnetic attraction onto a sheet of glass. Instead of the usual two-dimensional pattern as seen in textbooks, I had an illustration of a magnetic field in three dimensions. Students called it 'Auty's hedgehog': even when met in the street years later they would comment on it.

At that time the Nuffield science projects were being developed, and experienced teachers around the country were designing new apparatus. When I showed the unexpected observation to my head of department, his immediate reaction was 'You should send it to School Science Review'. It was eventually published in SSR in November 1968, by which time Jane had joined the staff. I have been contacting Jane ever since.

During my time as editor of SSR (2006–2022), Jane acted as intermediary between me and the people offering articles. This involved interacting with contributors and helping to manage the movement of articles from submission to contact with members of the editorial board and editorial associates, who acted as referees to consider the accuracy, readability and suitability of articles. Thankfully, the creation of the Internet (as well as the telephone) enabled easy contact despite us living about 300 miles apart.

From my viewpoint as editor of SSR, Jane has always been there! An analogy could be that she has been like the oil that keeps the engine running smoothly. With the scattered nature of this operation, it felt safer to have two people keeping watch. It was like having a remote yet very reliable secretary. Jane will be a hard act to follow.