Marshall Memo 283

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
April 27, 2009

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Quotes of the Week

"The best team leaders are like jazz players, improvising constantly as they go along."
Richard Hackman (see item #2)

"Exploit the daylights out of the stuff you're great at, and get help in the areas where you're not so good."
Richard Hackman (*ibid.*)

"Understanding the evolving nature of literacy is important, because it enables us to understand the emerging nature of illiteracy as well. After all, regardless of the literacy under consideration, the illiterate get left out."
Jason Ohler (see item #5)

"Value reading and writing now more than ever… Effective writing has a new kind of importance for students in what can often be a digitally distracted world."
Jason Ohler (*ibid.*)

"Often free of the careful ministrations of editors, online content can be fictitious, lack appropriate citations, be poorly written, and be authored by anyone ranging from Emile Zola to Anonymous."
Margaret Weigel and Howard Gardner in "The Best of Both Literacies" in *Educational Leadership*, March 2009 (Vol. 66, #6, p. 38-41); the article can be purchased at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/mar09/vol66/num06/toc.aspx

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1. What's Involved in Addressing an Ethical Dilemma?

In this thoughtful *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Tufts psychology professor and dean Robert Sternberg describes a ploy he used with his undergraduate leadership seminar. "I'm very proud of myself," he told his 17 students, and described how he planned to get reimbursed twice for the travel expenses for a consulting job he'd just completed, once by the organization and once by his own university. He mentioned that the honorarium he'd received was a pittance, and double-billing for travel would make up for that.

"I waited for the firestorm," says Sternberg. "... I waited, and waited, and waited. Nothing happened." So he proceeded with the class. A few minutes later he stopped and asked his students why they hadn't challenged his blatantly unethical behavior. Some students were embarrassed for not speaking up. Some thought he must have been kidding. Some thought that as a professor and dean, surely he had a good reason for doing what he did. And some, to his horror, commended him for a clever scheme and said that if he could get away with it, more power to him.

Sternberg says the experience taught him once again how hard it is to translate morality-in-theory into morality-in-practice. "The students had read about ethics in leadership," he says, "heard about ethics in leadership from a variety of real-world leaders, discussed ethics in leadership, and then apparently totally failed to recognize or at least speak out against unethical behavior when it stared them in the face." Why?

Part of the problem, Sternberg says, is the "bystander effect." According to research published in 1970 by Bibb Latané and John Darley, if a group of people sees someone in obvious distress, individuals, thinking that someone else will help out, are less likely to intervene than if they are the only person around. The bigger the crowd, the less likely people were to intervene. Even divinity students who were about to give a lecture on the Good Samaritan were unlikely to act. If your car breaks down, you actually have a much better chance of getting help on a lonely country road than a busy city highway because a driver on the country road may believe he's your only hope.

The message from this study, says Sternberg, is that "ethical behavior is far harder to display than one would expect simply on the basis of what we learn from parents, school, and religious training. To intervene, to do good, individuals must go through a series of steps, and unless all the steps are completed, people are not likely to behave ethically, regardless of the ethics training or moral education they have received and the other types of relevant skills they might possess, such as critical or creative thinking." Here are Sternberg's steps:

• *Recognize that there is an event to react to*. In Sternberg's classroom ploy, students were expecting a lecture on leadership, not a real-life ethical dilemma. In addition, their

professor was an authority figure. "When people hear their political, educational, or especially religious leaders talk," he says, "they may not believe there is any reason to question what they hear."

• *Define the event as having an ethical dimension*. Some of Sternberg's students saw his actions in utilitarian terms – he'd been underpaid and he needed to make up for that. Some political leaders are able to get away with unethical behavior in a similar fashion – by framing it to their advantage.

• *Decide that the ethical dimension is significant*. Some of Stenberg's students realized that his behavior was wrong but apparently didn't think it rose to the level of making a fuss.

• *Take responsibility for generating an ethical solution*. Sternberg's students held back because they apparently believed that as a professor and dean, he was in a better position than mere students to decide what was ethical and what wasn't. This happens in the wider world, says Sternberg: "If a religious leader encourages someone to become a suicide bomber, for example, that person might conclude that being a bomber must be ethical; why else would a religious leader suggest it?"

• *Figure out what abstract ethical rule or rules might apply to the problem*. Sternberg's students may not have been familiar enough with reimbursement policies to see clearly what rule he was about to break.

• *Decide how abstract ethical rules actually apply so as to suggest a concrete solution*. Some of Sternberg's students knew that ethics were involved, but didn't speak up because their thinking was muddled by the details: people shouldn't expect to get something for nothing, but Sternberg had done work, so did this principle apply?

• *Formulate an ethical solution, at the same time possibly preparing to counteract contextual forces*. Some of Sternberg's students thought he was about to do something wrong, but they looked around and no one else was saying anything. If they spoke up and were wrong, they would look like idiots. In the Latané and Darley bystander research, people thought that if something was *really* wrong, someone else would take responsibility, and if nobody was stepping forward, maybe it wasn't wrong.

• *Act*. People can have all the right thoughts and not put them into action, says Sternberg. "For example, most people know they should have only safe sex, but not all of them do, even if they know they have an illness that they could spread through sexual contact." Ideally, our better angels and social forces help us resist temptations and behave ethically, but the opposite often applies. Whistle-blowers, for example, are sometimes punished and made to feel like outcasts within their own organizations. It takes courage – and a thoughtful application of these eight steps – to step up to the plate and act in an ethical fashion.

[Just to be clear, Sternberg didn't actually double-dip; this was a deliberate provocation for his students.]

"A New Model for Teaching Ethical Behavior" by Robert Sternberg in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Apr. 24, 2009 (Vol. LV, #33, p. B14-15), no e-link available

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2. Making Teams Effective

In this *Harvard Business Review* interview with Diane Coutu, business professor Richard Hackman talks about his research on teamwork. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, he says, teams are most often dysfunctional, and it takes skillful leadership to get them to be productive. Here are Hackman's pointers on building a successful team:

• *The composition of the team should be clear*. It's the leader's job to make sure members of the team know who's on it and who isn't, which involves "some ruthless decisions about membership; not everyone who wants to be on the team should be included, and some individuals should be forced off." A common myth about teams, says Hackman, is that they get stale and unproductive if the membership stays the same for too long. The opposite is true. Teams that are stable over time get more done and have fewer problems because people work out the interpersonal dynamics. He cites research on airline pilots and NASA crews showing that crews working together for the first time make far more mistakes.

But to perform optimally, teams need a member who has the courage to challenge group-think, saying things like, "Wait a minute, why are we doing this?" and "What if we looked at the thing backwards or turned it inside out?" This often causes tension and may even make the person unpopular, but it sparks useful discussion and makes a team more innovative and effective. Hackman studied one management team where being a "team player" was so strongly prized that members self-censored their creative ideas for fear of disrupting team harmony. The team ended up embarking on a losing strategy that people knew wasn't going to work – but they didn't speak up.

• *Teams need a clear purpose*. Members should know and agree on what they're supposed to be doing together, says Hackman. "Unless a leader articulates a clear direction, there is a real risk that different members will pursue different agendas." But giving teams clear marching orders isn't easy "because it always involves the exercise of authority, and that inevitably arouses angst and ambivalence – for both the person exercising it and the people on the receiving end."

Hackman says there's no one right way to lead a team, and leaders should "embrace their own quirkiness… Each leader brings to the task his or her own strengths and weaknesses. Exploit the daylights out of the stuff you're great at, and get help in the areas where you're not so good… The best team leaders are like jazz players, improvising constantly as they go along."

• *Teams need enabling structures*. These include well-designed tasks, clear norms, and not having too many people on the team (Hackman says teams should have no more than nine members, and he prefers six). Without structures and a reasonable group size, says Hackman, teams "invariably get into trouble." And on size, he says, "Big teams usually wind up just wasting everybody's time." Having a leadership team with more than nine members is worse than having no team at all.

Hackman's research has shown that how things are handled the first time a team meets strongly affects how it operates for its entire life. "Indeed," he says, "the first few minutes of the start of any social system are the most important because they establish not only where the

group is going but also what the relationship will be between the team leader and the group, and what basic norms of conduct will be expected and enforced." Team members make a quick assessment of all this and are influenced by that assessment for the duration.

• *Teams need expert coaching*. Hackman says that coaching individual team members doesn't help team success very much. Coaches should work with the whole team on group processes, and the most critical points of intervention are the beginning, middle, and end of a team's cycle. "The team leader needs to know how to run a launch meeting, so that members become oriented to and engaged with their tasks; how to help the team review at the midpoint what's functioning well – and what isn't – which can correct the team's performance strategy; and how to take a few minutes when the work is finished to reflect on what went well or poorly, which can help members make better use of their knowledge and experience the next time around."

One misconception about groups, says Hackman, is that working together harmoniously makes a team more productive. In fact, it's the other way around: being successful makes a team happy, but getting to that point requires a lot of hard work and friction. Research he's conducted on symphony orchestras shows that grumpy orchestras played together slightly better than happy orchestras. "Team coaching is about fostering better teamwork on the task, not about enhancing members' social interactions or interpersonal relationships," he says.

• *Teams need a supportive organization*. The reward system, the human resources system, and the information system must facilitate teamwork.

"Why Teams Don't Work" by Diane Coutu in *Harvard Business Review*, May 2009 (Vol. 87, #5, p. 98-105), no e-link available

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3. The Abuses – and Uses – of Multitasking

(Originally titled "Mastering Multitasking")

In this helpful *Educational Leadership* article, law professors Urs Gasser and John Palfrey examine the practice of multitasking, so common among "digital natives" (young people born after 1980) – for example, simultaneously instant messaging, checking MySpace, talking on a cellphone, listening to music, playing a PlayStation game, and doing homework. Adults fret and kids keep doing what they're doing, sometimes in dangerous ways: one study found that 46 percent of teens said they sometimes send text messages while driving. Are there good uses of multitasking, and how can teachers and other adults help young people be more thoughtful about it?

Gasser and Palfrey draw a distinction between *parallel processing* – doing two or more things at the same time – and *task-switching* – rapidly moving back and forth between different activities. Within reason, parallel processing can increase efficiency, especially if one activity is routine, like walking (examples include reading while listening to music, listening to a book on tape while driving, or a pilot talking on the radio while operating the plane's controls).

Task-switching, on the other hand, can decrease mental efficiency, especially if the tasks are cognitively demanding. Shifting attention requires activating different neural circuits, and those switches cost time and efficiency, especially if a task is new or unfamiliar.

There is some research on this phenomenon, and preliminary findings are that it's possible to learn while task-switching, but it decreases speed and efficiency and can result in superficial, unfocused attention to each task and a different kind of memory storage. "The loss of attention and the time spent switching from task to task is likely to have an adverse effect on digital natives' ability to learn complex new facts and concepts," say Gasser and Palfrey.

So what should educators do? The authors suggest a four-lesson curriculum to help students understand multitasking, avoid the least efficient and dangerous varieties, and make the best of its advantages:

• *Lesson 1* – Guiding question: What are the brain's limits when it comes to multitasking? Students discuss their experiences with multitasking and information overload and do a few experiments that demonstrate the limits of working memory (for example, trying to remember a grocery list of more than seven items and trying to remember three random letters while continuously subtracting 4 from the number 91). It becomes clear that working memory is a bottleneck and that splitting attention impairs mental performance.

• *Lesson 2* – Guiding question: In what types of situations does multi-tasking work – and not work? Students learn about current research on multitasking, discuss task-switching versus parallel processing, and through discussion and more experiments, look at the impact of multitasking in various areas (including learning and driving).

• *Lesson 3* – Guiding question: How can I make best use of multi-tasking? Students experiment with media multitasking and share practical advice for focusing attention and improving efficiency and productivity, including power naps, alternate tasks, and taking a break before moving on, all of which have been shown to counteract "techno-brain burnout."

• *Lesson 4* – Guiding question: What will I do differently? Students share more strategies for coping with information overload, including chunking (grouping bits of information to reduce the number of chunks to remember), helpful technologies, and no-distractions times to experience a contemplative environment.

"Mastering Multitasking" by Urs Gasser and John Palfrey in *Educational Leadership*, March 2009 (Vol. 66, #6, p. 14-19); this article can be purchased at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/mar09/vol66/num06/toc.aspx. The authors can be reached at ugasser@gmail.com and jpalfrey@law.harvard.edu.

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4. Teaching Students How to Do Internet Research

(Originally titled "Stepping Beyond Wikipedia")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Trinity Western University (Canada) librarian and author William Badke says we must do more to help students navigate the mind-boggling and unfiltered sea of information on the Internet. One major problem, he says, is the "common teenage perception that all information is equally useful and usable… The typical high-school

student appropriates information (inefficiently) from any number of venues, including YouTube, podcasts, and so on; mashes it up; and creates projects with little regard for quality, accuracy, or the niceties of rules about plagiarism." He cites a 2003 Canadian study that found entering college students included inessential words in their Web searches; couldn't identify the characteristics of scholarly journals; didn't know the difference between library catalogs and bibliographic databases; and didn't know how to identify journal article citations, when to cite sources, and how to evaluate a website. "Clearly the time to educate students about the new information reality is in elementary, middle, and high school," says Badke.

He believes students must learn how to answer these questions: What information do I need to address this question? What's the best way to find that information? How will I evaluate what I've found? How can I harness that information to provide the best answer to my question? Here are Badke's suggestions in each of these areas:

• *Defining the problem* – Students should do preliminary research and then identify one essential question – for example, *Of all the possible causes of World War I, which was the most significant?* This can't be done summarizing a couple of encyclopedia articles; it requires sifting through events and probable causes and *analyzing*.

• *Finding the best information sources* – Students need to be steered toward the library catalog (hopefully digital), journal databases (see the Director of Open Access Journals at http://www.doaj.org), and academically credible websites. But Wikipedia is not without merit: at the bottom of many entries are references to academically sound resources.

• *Making the best use of resources* – "Most students lack expertise even with Google, let alone with more sophisticated databases," says Badke. Teach them about Google's advanced features like phrase searching, searching with synonyms, or searching only with website titles to get more precise results. Have them get library cards, teach them how to use the library catalog, and instruct them in Boolean logic with keyword searching.

• *Evaluating resources* – Student must be critical consumers of Internet information; the CARS checklist helps:

- Credibility – Is the source credible and trustworthy in terms of the author's credentials, evidence of quality control, coming from a known or respected authority?
- Accuracy – Is the source correct today (not yesterday) and does it provide factual, detailed, exact, and comprehensive information?
- Reasonableness – Is the source objective, concerned with the truth, proceeding in a fair and balanced way, with no axe to grind?
- Support – Does the source provide convincing evidence for the claims made, and can you find at least two other sources that back it up?

Badke analyzes a website – http://www.firstworldwar.com - and finds that although it's not peer reviewed, it's solid.

• *Using information effectively* – Students need to learn how to stick to their goal, take good notes, and separate the wheat from the chaff. Preliminary research should produce an outline like this:

- Question: Was the murder of the archduke really as important a cause of World War I as many people believe?
- Introduction: Brief explanation of pre-WWI events
- The argument that the archduke's murder was the main cause
- Evaluation of that argument
- Conclusion

This outline then guides further research and analysis for the final report.

• *Not plagiarizing* – Lifting information from the Internet is a huge problem in high schools and colleges. "Websites are free, so they're available for my use, right?" is the rationalization used by many young people. Students need a stern education in the moral dimension of fair use – and how easy it is to get caught.

"Stepping Beyond Wikipedia" by William Badke in *Educational Leadership*, March 2009 (Vol. 66, #6, p. 54-58); this article can be purchased at: http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/mar09/vol66/num06/toc.aspx. Badke can be reached at badke@twu.edu.

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5. How to Develop Digital Literacy – In Students and Ourselves

(Originally titled "Orchestrating the Media Collage")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, writer/speaker and University of Alaska professor Jason Ohler explores the meaning of *digital literacy*. In the new era, he says:

- Being literate means the ability to use a number of new media forms, including sound, graphics, and moving images as well as text.
- It means being able to integrate material into a single narrative or "media collage" such as a Web page, blog, or digital story.
- The new literacy of Web 2.0 is largely participatory and social – MySpace, Google Docs, and YouTube.

Actively creating media (rather than passively consuming) teaches valuable literacy and job skills, says Ohler, and it develops *media literacy*. This, he says, is "the ability to recognize, evaluate, and apply the techniques of media persuasion. The act of creating original media forces students to lift the hood, so to speak, and see media's intricate workings that conspire to do one thing above all others: make the final media product appear smooth, effortless, and natural."

Ohler proposes eight guidelines for teachers as they navigate this new world:

• *Shift from text centrism to media collage*. This means fearlessly experimenting to help students develop the bundle of skills involved in creating Web pages, digital stories, mashups, stand-and-deliver PowerPoint presentations, and games and virtual environments.

• *Value writing and reading now more than ever*. "When we write, we think," says Ohler. "We slow down and reflect as we struggle to synthesize, clarify, and communicate. This struggle has always been a part of writing, but it is amplified within the context of the social Web, in which we must also become active readers and editors of one another's materials and

mindful contributors to group expression." The pressure is on for students to think and write clearly and succinctly.

• *Adopt art as the next R*. As we shift away from text centrism, says Ohler, color, form, and collage become part of everyday narrative.

• *Blend traditional and emerging literacies*. The hallmark of a truly literate 21st-century person, Ohler believes, will be blending DAOW: Digital, Art, Oral, and Written. He believes speaking and listening deserves much more focus than they currently get; they are needed for storytelling, narrated documentaries, movies, PowerPoint presentations, and games.

• *Master reports and stories*. Reports are linear, informational, based on objective research and critical thinking. Stories non-linear, creative, with elements of tension, transformation, and resolution. Both forms are important to digital literacy, says Ohler.

• *Jump into the pool*. Ohler says Web 2.0 has brought humans full circle to a kind of literacy that can include pretty much everyone, regardless of technical skill, as a producer as well as a consumer of information. "It requires all of us to express ourselves clearly as individuals, while merging our expression into the domain of public narrative," he says.

• *Teach responsibility*. Young people should learn to use the new media wisely as well as creatively, addressing issues such as security, environmental degradation, digital equity, and living in a networked, multicultural world.

• *Pursue fluency*. Ohler believes that the world of Web 2.0 demands fluency – being able to practice literacy at the advanced levels needed for sophisticated communication within society and the workplace. In the new era, he says, "The fluent will lead, the literate will follow, and the rest will get left behind." For teachers, this means using the new tools for lesson plans, assignments, and projects that immerse students in the new world. Students are "fearless adopters" of the new technology.

Teachers don't need to be technicians, concludes Ohler. What they need to do is "become advanced managers of their students' talents, time, and productivity. Teachers need to be able to articulate standards of quality and provide feedback that students can use to meet those standards… Now more than ever, students living in the overwhelming and often distracting world of technical possibility need the clear voice of a teacher who can help them develop literacies that will be important to them for a lifetime."

"Orchestrating the Media Collage" by Jason Ohler in *Educational Leadership*, March 2009 (Vol. 66, #6, p. 8-13); Ohler can be reached at Jason.ohler@uas.alaska.edu; article available at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/mar09/vol66/num06/toc.aspx

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6. Getting the Most from Elementary Math Coaches

In this article in *Principal*, Massachusetts researcher Catherine Miles Grant and Boston Public Schools math director Linda Ruiz Davenport caution principals not to assume that their mathematics coaches (a.k.a. math lead teachers, resource teachers, specialists, and facilitators) will "take care of" math teaching and learning. Students will make more progress, say Grant and Davenport, if principals work closely with their math coaches in the following ways:

• *Meet regularly with the coach to set priorities*. Discuss curriculum pacing, assessments, teacher leadership, approaches with new and struggling teachers, and using classroom and team visits and data from assessments to zero in on curriculum areas that need improvement.

• *Build support structures*. This includes orchestrating teacher training in the specific math content they teach, individual coaching on integrating new practices into classrooms, team coaching for high-priority teams, organizing peer observations with pre- and post-visit discussions facilitated by the math coach (including getting substitute coverage), and identifying exemplary teacher teams that can serve as models for colleagues.

• *Encourage engagement in math professional development and collaboration*. This includes the principal showing interest in math teaching and learning, setting high expectations for teachers to participate fully in math PD, and following up individually with teachers who are not taking advantage of training opportunities.

• *Participate as a fellow learner*. Take part in PD sessions, learn more about elementary math and student learning, and become well acquainted with the math faculty.

• *Attend grade-level meetings*. The principal's presence at coach-facilitated team meetings has symbolic importance and increases the leader's knowledge of teacher collaboration and the quality of discussions around curriculum, student work, and assessment data.

• *Visit classrooms with colleagues*. Grant and Davenport recommend collaborative classroom visits focused on the math content being taught, student work and engagement, lesson coherence, and cross-grade connections.

• *Learn from other principals and district experts*. Boston has organized breakfast meetings for principals (8:00 – 9:30 a.m.) to discuss curriculum and assessments and Learning Walks of selected schools to see best practices in action.

"Principals in Partnership with Math Coaches" by Catherine Miles Grant and Linda Ruiz Davenport in *Principal*, May/June 2009 (Vol. 88, #5, p. 36-41) http://www.naesp.org/resources/2/Principal/2009/M-J_p36.pdf. The authors can be reached at cmgrant@edc.org and ldavenport@boston.k12.ma.us.

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7. Ways to Identify Gifted and Talented Students

In this *Principal* article on identifying "gifted" children, Baylor University professor Susan Johnsen says, "Gifted students are as distinct from one another as they are from other children. They need to be identified and supported so that their gifts in specific domains will be developed into talents." She distinguishes between *gifts* – natural abilities are sometimes developed and sometimes not – and *talents* – which blossom "through the systematic learning, training, and practicing of those skills that are characteristics to a particular field." Johnsen says current definitions of a child being gifted and talented are broad, including:

- Performing well above grade level in specific areas;
- Demonstrating talents in the arts, playing a musical instrument, or using various media;

- Showing leadership abilities by working with peers to achieve specific goals.

To identify gifted and talented youngsters, Johnsen says educators need to consider the following:

• Students may exhibit their talents in a domain or within a specific area of interest, for example, a fourth grader developing a deep understanding of black holes and the shape of the universe.

• A single test score may not capture how a child's gifts might be developed into talents, especially for students who don't have wide out-of-school enrichment opportunities. Identification should include looking at a student's work over time and opportunities to exhibit his or her gifts.

• African-American, Hispanic, and Native American children may be underrepresented by about 50 percent in gifted education programs, says Johnsen, and children with disabilities may be similarly underrepresented. To include all students, educators need to broaden their definition of gifted and talented and make sure teachers are trained in observing characteristics that may be manifested in different ways.

• Early identification is important, says Johnsen, especially for disadvantaged children. The additional support and attention that children receive in a gifted and talented program can help them reach their full potential.

These factors suggest the following strategies for identification of gifted and talented children, says Johnsen:

- Using multiple assessments, including qualitative assessments (such as portfolios and checklists), quantitative assessments, and information gathered from different sources (teachers, parents, students, peers) and in different settings (school, home, extracurricular activities);
- Involving parents so they understand the nature of the program and observe and develop their children's gifts.
- Organizing a nomination phase, considering all students to ensure equal access; this can include teacher and parent checklists, portfolio products and performances, peer and self-nominations, student background information, teacher observations, and group intelligence and achievement tests;
- Screening and identification – Using individual and small-group assessments designed to identify gifted and talented students; these can include individually administered tests, professional observations, portfolio products and performances, auditions, and interviews;
- Selection or placement – A trained team looks at all the data and decides which students need services or activities not provided in general-education classrooms. Teams need to be sure that assessments are equally weighted, best performance is used as an indicator of potential, quantitative measures are comparable, errors in assessments are considered, and performance over time is considered.

"Best Practices for Identifying Gifted Students" by Susan Johnsen in *Principal*, May/June 2009 (Vol. 88, #5, p. 8-14) http://www.naesp.org/resources/2/Principal/2009/M-J_p08.pdf; the author can be reached at susan_johnsen@baylor.edu.

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8. Short Items:

a. Causes of World War I – This website has a fascinating simulation game on the origins of the Great War: http://www.activehistory.co.uk/WW1_CAUSES/index.htm.

Spotted in "Stepping Beyond Wikipedia" by William Badke in *Educational Leadership* (see item #4)

b. Flat Classroom Project – This award-winning wiki enables students from around the world to study and discuss topics related to Thomas Friedman's book, *The World Is Flat* (Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2005): http://flatclassroomproject.wikispaces.com.

Spotted in "The Best of Both Literacies" by Margaret Weigel and Howard Gardner in *Educational Leadership*, March 2009 (Vol. 66, #6, p. 38-41); the article can be purchased at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/mar09/vol66/num06/toc.aspx.

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c. The Great Plant Escape – This University of Illinois website gets 4th and 5th graders working with Detective Leplant and his partners, Bud and Sprout, to unlock the mysteries of plant life: http://www.urbanext.illinois.edu/gpe/index.html. The site is in English and Spanish.

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, April 2009 (Vol. 4, #3, p. 58)

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d. Flashcard exchange – This website claims to hold more than 16 million flashcards on subjects ranging from science to foreign languages. They are organized by tags and are searchable. Check it out at http://www.flashcardexchange.com.

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, April 2009 (Vol. 4, #3, p. 58)

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e. Language Island – On this website (which has Spanish, Chinese, and Korean material), young students can play games in a language arcade, create their own avatars, talk to animal characters, chat with real kids around the world, and practice their language skills with Word Whiz. Teachers and parents can track children's progress: http://www.languageisland.com.

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, April 2009 (Vol. 4, #3, p. 58)

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f. French Linguistics – This website has a French dictionary, crosswords, word search games, vocabulary flash cards, and interactive grammar guides: http://www.french-linguistics.co.uk.

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, April 2009 (Vol. 4, #3, p. 58)

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Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

If you have comments or suggestions, if you saw an article or web item in the last week that you think should have been summarized, or if you would like to suggest additional publications that should be covered by the Marshall Memo, please e-mail: kim.marshall8@verizon.net

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 37 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and writer, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 44 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are about 50 issues a year).

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- Article selection criteria
- Topics (with a count of articles from each)
- Headlines for all issues
- What readers say
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

Marshall Memo subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

- The current issue (in PDF or Word format)
- All back issues (also in PDF or Word)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- How to change access e-mail or password

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
<u>ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews</u>
Catalyst Chicago
Changing Schools (McREL)
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
<u>Education Gadfly</u>
Education Next
<u>Education Week</u>
<u>Educational Leadership</u>
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
<u>Harvard Business Review</u>
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
<u>New York Times</u>
<u>Newsweek</u>
<u>PEN Weekly NewsBlast</u>
Phi Delta Kappan
<u>Principal</u>
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
Teacher Magazine (online)
Teachers College Record
The Atlantic Monthly
The Language Educator
<u>The New Yorker</u>
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools/The Learning Principal