

Marshall Memo 224

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education

March 3, 2008

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Quotes of the Week

“It’s free like a puppy, not like a beer.”

Trish Hart, Alaska educator, on open-source course-management software (see item #8)

“[M]any American parents are unfussy customers when it comes to academic performance. They care about a safe, nurturing environment and a caring teacher – and about convenience and sports and such. These are significant considerations, yes, but not enough to boost achievement.”

Chester Finn, Jr. in “Lessons Learned”, *Education Week*, Feb. 27, 2008 (p. 36, 28)

“14 million students in America already have a head start in achieving global citizen status. They have already lived in a foreign country, immersed themselves in what we would call a foreign language, experienced culture shock in all its stages, and have had a social studies curriculum that is not fixated on U.S. history.”

Gilda Del Risco, Mildred Fernandez, and Vivian Rodriguez in *NABE News*, Nov./Dec. 2007 (p. 18)

“The most common vocabulary instruction technique in the classroom is still, ‘Look it up in the dictionary.’ And we *know* that doesn’t work.”

Catherine Snow (see item #3)

“I am good at this *and* I can work through the tough spots.”

A student who has mastered reading skills and strategies (see item #4)

1. Are All-Boy and All-Girl Classrooms Better?

In this trenchant *New York Times Magazine* article, writer Elizabeth Weil explores the question of whether boys and girls benefit from being educated separately. She identifies two quite distinct rationales for single-sex classrooms: (a) American boys and girls have different social experiences and needs and therefore benefit from separate classrooms; and (b) Boys and girls have major brain differences that make separate teaching more efficient and effective.

Weil visited the Young Women's Leadership School in Harlem, which is very much in the first camp and is disdainful of the neurological rationale for single-gender education. "Nobody is planning the days of our girls around a photograph of a brain," said one staff member. Rather, the school uses its single-gender structure to protect girls from invidious social pressures and help them grow up with their zeal and confidence intact. "We need to get these kids on a completely different path," says founder Ann Rubenstein Tisch, "a path that wealthy girls and parochial-school girls and yeshiva girls are offered."

One student at this school appreciates the fact that when she raises her hand in class, people don't snicker, "Oh, she thinks she's *so* smart." This girl recently encountered a former schoolmate on the street, pregnant and pushing a stroller. "I know that girl is smart, very smart, but now she just hangs around the block," said the Young Women's student. "I want to be bigger in life. Maybe that girl had dreams, too, but you can just see: the lights have gone out in her face." A teacher at the school says that having no boys in classrooms helps her give girls a better education, and parents appreciate the way the school isolates their girls from the sexualized outside world six hours a day.

Leading the brain-based education camp are Leonard Sax and Michael Gurian, who say that neurological research proves that boys need teachers to talk louder because they don't hear as well as girls, thrive on competition, and need more physical movement and action to learn; they should be asked to stand up to speak in class, for example, and have a ball tossed to them when they are asked a question. Girls, on the other hand, learn best through connections with content, with each other, and with their teachers, and benefit from sitting in circles where every girl can share something from her own life.

Weil visited a school in Foley, Alabama, whose principal is a disciple of Leonard Sax and claimed that her single-sex classes had fewer discipline problems, more parental support, and better scores in writing, reading, and math. But the principal admitted that her highest-performing teachers and most-motivated students had volunteered for the all-boy/all-girl classrooms. Here and elsewhere, self-selection clouds the successes of single-sex schools,

including Catholic schools, and there is no authoritative research proving that this approach works.

Weil also visited Excellence Charter School, an all-male elementary school in Brooklyn, NY, that is trying to implement the best practices of single-gender schooling. Weil saw well-behaved boys doing exceptionally well. Asked by his principal what he liked about the school, a kindergartener said, “I like that I get to wear a sweater with buttons. And I like that I’m going to college.” But this school is not abiding by all the brain-based tenets – it teaches kindergarten boys to read, for example, which they’re not supposed to be developmentally ready for. It’s impossible to tell what’s responsible for Excellence’s outstanding results – its single-gender composition or its superb teaching and leadership, high expectations, and tight structure – or a combination of all of these factors.

Weil reports that the neurological argument has come under withering attack. “Every time I hear of school officials selling single-sex programs to parents based on brain research, my heart sinks,” says Rosemary Salomone of St. John’s University School of Law, who helped open the legal door to single-sex schools. “As one of the people who let the horse out of the barn, I’m now feeling like I really need to watch that horse.” A number of prominent researchers totally disagree that boy/girl brain differences point to the need for single-sex classrooms, including Michael Younger of Cambridge University (UK), Martha Denckla of the Developmental Cognitive Neurology Clinic at Kennedy Krieger Institute in Maryland, Mark Liberman, a linguistics professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and Jay Giedd, chief of brain imaging at the Child Psychiatry Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health.

Giedd argues that gender is a crude tool for sorting diverse minds. He asks us to imagine assigning a group of students to boys’ and girls’ locker rooms based solely on height. On average, boys are taller than girls, so if we did this, the tallest 50 percent would go to the boys’ locker room and the shortest 50 percent to the girls’ locker room. Who would wind up in which room? Although we’d end up with a better-than-random sort, a lot of boys would wind up in the girls’ locker room and a lot of girls in the boys’ locker room. Giedd says mismatches will be even more common if students are assigned to classrooms based on gender, since cognitive differences between boys and girls vary by only one standard deviation, versus two standard deviations for height. Sure, there would be somewhat more students who enjoy competition in the all-male classrooms and more who thrive on cooperation in the girls’ rooms, he says, but because of individual variations, there will be lots of students getting the wrong kind of instruction. “There are just too many exceptions to the rule,” he says. Better to improve differentiation in coeducational classes.

Liberman has looked carefully at Sax’s claims on hearing differences between boys and girls and found that the original study was on adults and showed that, if you choose a man and a woman at random, the chances are 6 in 10 that the woman’s hearing will be more sensitive and 4 in 10 that the man’s hearing will be more sensitive. Boys’ and girls’ hearing, says Liberman, is much more similar than different, and “the disproportion between the reported facts and Sax’s interpretation is spectacular. Dr. Sax isn’t summarizing scientific research; he’s

making a political argument. The political conclusion comes first, and the scientific evidence – often unrepresentative or misrepresented – is selected to support it.”

What has the research shown about single-sex classrooms and schools? Researchers point out that there are so many variables in schools that it’s difficult to isolate gender, and there are also a lot of flawed studies. A 2005 meta-analysis by the U.S. Department of Education and the American Institute of Research looked at 2,221 studies and whittled those down to 40 that were usable. Of those, 41 percent favored single-sex schools, 45 percent found no positive or negative effects either way, 6 percent had mixed results, and 8 percent favored coeducational schools. This may explain why many single-sex experiments have closed up shop – they were simply not producing the kind of dramatic achievement gains that their supporters had expected.

While she is clearly in sympathy with the social-needs rationale for single-sex schooling represented by Young Women’s Leadership School, Weil closes her article by raising the pluralist mission of American schools. We are trying to teach students not just reading and math, but also commonality, tolerance, and what it means to be American. “When you segregate, by any means, you lose some of that,” says Richard Kahlenberg, a senior fellow at the Century Foundation. “Even if one could prove that sending a kid off to his or her own school based on religion or race or ethnicity or gender did a little bit better job of raising the academic skills for workers in the economy, there’s also the issue of trying to create tolerant citizens in a democracy.”

“Teaching to the Testosterone” by Elizabeth Weil in the *New York Times Magazine*, March 2, 2008 (p. 38-45, 84-87)

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/02/magazine/02sex3-t.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=Elizabeth+Weil&st=nyt&oref=slogin

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2. Addressing the “Quiet” Problems of At-Risk Youth

In this thoughtful *Harvard Education Letter* article, researcher/writer Richard Weissbourd says it took him a while to realize that many high-risk children are not disruptive and aggressive, but have “quiet” problems that often fly under their schools’ radar. “The range of these problems is vast,” he writes. “Hunger, dehydration, asthma, obesity, and hearing problems can all insidiously trip children up in school... We need to make these problems visible and make them a priority in our school policies.” They include:

- *Caretaking responsibilities* – One study found that 20 percent of children who miss school are caring for of a depressed or sick parent or looking after younger siblings. Another study found that 12 percent of high-school dropouts resulted from needing to take care of a family member.

- *Frequent mobility* – A General Accounting Office study found that one-sixth of the nation’s third graders – half a million children – had attended at least three different schools since starting first grade. Moving from school to school, often encountering different curricula and teaching approaches, is highly discombobulating.

- *Undetected or untreated vision problems* – According to one estimate, at least 25 percent of urban students have uncorrected vision. Some students who have glasses don't wear them for fear of being teased, or if they lose them, have to wait six months for Medicaid to replace them.

- *Sleep deprivation* – Many elementary students don't get enough sleep, and the problem is even worse at the secondary level.

- *Depressed parents* – Somewhere between 10 and 20 percent of low-income parents suffer from acute, severe depression, with symptoms like withdrawal, hopeless moods, and suicidal thoughts, and 30-60 percent suffer from moderate depression. The latter are not suffering from mental illness, says Weissbourd, but “the steady drizzle of helplessness and hopelessness that can afflict those trapped in poverty for many years, especially when these adults are isolated and in constant stress.” Children who grow up with depressed parents are more likely to suffer from developmental delays, juvenile delinquency, and be depressed themselves – and they are unlikely to have a language-rich environment in which they are read to, questioned frequently, and intellectually stimulated.

What can schools do about these quiet problems? Weissbourd notes that some are working with public health departments, community health centers, and other community agencies, reaching out to families, providing vision screening and glasses, marshaling these resources to treat depressed parents, help with children's sleep deprivation, arrange babysitting, and alleviate housing problems. He believes that schools will be most effective when they identify a problem (e.g., sleep deprivation), gather data, try an intervention, measure how well it worked, and follow up with modifications.

“The ‘Quiet’ Troubles of Low-Income Children” by Richard Weissbourd in the *Harvard Education Letter*, March/April 2008 (Vol. 24, #2, p. 8, 6-7); this article is available for purchase at <http://www.edletter.org>.

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3. Systematically Teaching Academic Vocabulary in Middle Schools

In this *Harvard Education Letter* interview, School of Education professor Catherine Snow describes Word Generation, a vocabulary-building program that she and her colleagues are piloting in several Boston middle schools. Here's how it works:

- Every Monday, one subject-area teacher (usually the language-arts teacher) takes 15 minutes to introduce students to a paragraph that addresses a high-interest topic (for example, *Should hip-hop music be censored or not? Should passing a standardized test be a high-school graduation requirement? Should colleges use affirmative action? Should the government fund stem-cell research? Should English be the official language of the United States?*).

- Embedded in each paragraph are five academic vocabulary words – words like *negotiate*, *deny*, *factor*, or *element*. These words are not subject-specific terminology (like *photosynthesis*, for example), but words that come up frequently in school but are not in most students' vocabularies. “These academic words are used in all the subject areas,” says Snow, “but no one is in charge of teaching them... These words are kind of under the radar. Nobody

knows students don't know them, including the kids themselves." The researchers did an experiment in which 80 percent of students said they knew the word *interpret*, but less than half were able to match the word with a synonym. "They think they know what 'interpret' means," says Snow, "but when they get an MCAS question that says, 'Interpret the data in this graph,' they don't know how to respond." Snow says this means that asking students to underline words they don't know in a text is an ineffective strategy.

- Each teacher on the team finds a way to work the five words into his or her subject area that week. Thus, as students move through the schedule, they get 15 minutes on the words each day from five different perspectives. Snow says a big benefit of the program is overcoming "the subject-area segmentation in middle school, where academic vocabulary is in no-man's-land. This program requires all the different subject teachers to talk together... So it creates a context for lateral accountability that middle schools don't often have."

- The cycle is repeated for 24 weeks.

Snow reports that the results from the two pilot sites are encouraging: students scored higher on reading tests after only 12 weeks of instruction, their writing improved, and they learned valuable information about topics about which they knew very little.

But Snow believes the most important benefits of the program are: (a) getting students interested in words and focused on expanding their academic vocabularies, and (b) helping teachers expand their repertoire of effective vocabulary-teaching methods that can be applied to all the words their students don't know. "The most common vocabulary instruction technique in the classroom," she says, "is still, 'Look it up in the dictionary.' And we *know* that doesn't work. Looking it up in the dictionary is fine if you need to figure out the difference between *affect* and *effect*. But if you don't know anything about a word, it's rarely an efficient thing to do. And it doesn't mean you'll remember the meaning."

"Hot Topics and Key Words: A Conversation with Catherine Snow" in the *Harvard Education Letter*, March/April 2008 (Vol. 24, #2, p. 4-6); this article is available for purchase at <http://www.edletter.org>.

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4. What's the Difference Between Reading Skills and Reading Strategies?

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, professors Peter Afflerbach, David Pearson, and Scott Paris note that many educators are unclear about the distinction between reading skills and reading strategies. To clear up the widespread confusion, the authors offer the following definitions:

- *Skills* are automatic processes that we use without conscious thought as we read, allowing us to decode words and sentences and understand the author's message. A key goal of reading instruction is to teach students the skills that will allow them to read most passages fluently without having to consciously struggle to decode, recognize words, and comprehend – which frees up working memory to focus on meaning. Skilled readers, say the authors, "recognize that they can orchestrate a wide array of processes to make reading work effortlessly."

- *Strategies* are deliberate, intentional, step-by-step processes that students use when they get stuck. “There is always a text or a task lurking just beyond the horizon, waiting to humble any reader – even the most talented reader,” say the authors. “Strategic readers are problem solvers because they detect problems, are aware when their goals are not accomplished, and generate alternative means to reach their goals... [R]eaders never outgrow the need to consult their strategy repertoire.” Strategies are best conveyed by teachers explaining, modeling, and getting students to practice them as they read. How can teachers get a sense of the strategies that students are (or are not) using? By asking children to explain their thinking during reading or after they are finished.

A goal of much strategy instruction, say the authors, is to make strategies so automatic that they morph into fluent reading skills. Here’s an example: a student is having difficulty understanding a paragraph and rolls out the following strategy: asking himself, “Does that make sense?” after each sentence. This helps with comprehension, so the student begins to ask the question with everything he reads, and eventually it becomes an unconscious process – an automatic reading skill.

Effective readers, say Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris, have multiple skills that allow them to read most material easily and focus on the meaning, but are able to shift seamlessly to a set of strategies when the situation calls for it. Getting good strategy instruction (versus a constant diet of skills worksheets) gives them a metacognitive sense of reading. “When skill and strategy complement each other,” the authors conclude, “they can provide student readers with motivation and self-efficacy from both sources (I am good at this *and* I can work through the tough spots) and encourage an appreciation of the value of reading.”

“Clarifying Differences Between Reading Skills and Reading Strategies” by Peter Afflerbach, David Pearson, and Scott Paris in *The Reading Teacher*, February 2008 (Vol. 61, #3, p. 364-373), no e-link available. The authors can be reached at afflo@umd.edu, ppearson@berkeley.edu, and paris@umich.edu.

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5. Phonemic Awareness in Spanish Helps Improve Reading in English

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, professors Hallie Kay Yopp and Lilia Stapleton say that teaching phonemic awareness to Spanish-speaking ELLs in their native language strengthens their phonemic awareness in English. They provide a model letter to be sent home (in both languages) to get parents involved in Spanish-language activities at home:

Dear Parents,

One of the many important ways that you can support your child’s reading development is to play with the sounds of language. Research shows that children’s awareness that speech is made up on individual sounds is related to their progress in learning to read. You can help heighten your child’s awareness of sounds! Here are some suggestions:

- Read aloud books that draw attention to sounds. Talk about the author’s play with sounds. For example, does the book have rhyming words? Does it repeat some sounds a lot?

Does it deliberately mix up sounds? Enjoy the language of the book with your child! I have attached a list of books that you may find in the library. You are also welcome to borrow any of these books from our classroom library. I will send one home occasionally with your child. Be sure to enjoy these books many times.

- Sing songs and share poems with your child. Many traditional Spanish songs and poems play with sounds. Talk about the rhymes that are used. Laugh about the silly play with sounds. Create your own versions of the songs and poems. Attached to this note is a handout of songs and poems. You will likely recognize many of them. If you do not know the melody of the songs, chant them! It's just as fun!

- Share tongue twisters with your child. Tongue twisters help to draw our attention to sounds because we have trouble saying them quickly. We have to slow down and concentrate on what we are saying in order to recite them. Laugh about them with your child as you work to say them. Some popular tongue twisters are attached to this note. You probably know more that you can share with your child. Invent some together!

Children who notice the sounds in speech and who can play with those sounds are making progress toward reading. You can help by having fun with language at home!

Thank you!

“Conciencia Fonémica en Español (Phonemic Awareness in Spanish) by Hallie Kay Yopp and Lilia Stapleton in *The Reading Teacher*, February 2008 (Vol. 61, #3, p. 374-382), no e-link available. The authors can be reached at hyopp@fullerton.edu and lstapleton@ocde.us.
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6. Using Readalouds to Build Content Knowledge and Vocabulary

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, literacy experts Lana Edwards Santoro, David Chard, Lisa Howard, and Scott Baker bemoan the cutbacks in science and social studies instruction that are occurring in many schools. But they suggest that classroom readalouds of well-chosen informational texts, accompanied by explicit vocabulary instruction and good discussions, can provide students with a great deal of content knowledge and stimulate them to think and read more about what they hear. The authors suggest the following books, with vocabulary words from each pair:

Mammals:

- *A True Book: Mammals* (Stewart, 2000)
- *Bear Snores On* (Wilson, 2003)
- Vocabulary: snores, nibble, slumbering, mammal

Bats:

- *Bats* (Gibbons, 2000)
- *Stellaluna* (Cannon, 1999)
- Vocabulary: nocturnal, migrate, hibernate, clutch, dodging

Elephants:

- *What Is an Elephant?* (Crossingham & Kalman, 1997)

- *How the Elephant Got Its Trunk: A Retelling of the Rudyard Kipling Tale* (Richards, 2003)
- Vocabulary: species, habitat, herbivore, curious, continued, trickle

Reptiles:

- *What Is a Reptile?* (Kalman, 1998)
- *Lizard's Home* (Shannon, 1999)
- Vocabulary: fairness, grinning, predator, molt, scaly

Crocodiles:

- *The Crocodile: Ruler of the River* (Tracqui, 1997)
- *Bill and Pete* (dePaola, 1996)
- Vocabulary: competition, independent, territory, nickname, famous, adventure

Sea Turtles:

- *A True Book: Sea Turtles* (Lepthien, 1997)
- *Albert's Impossible Toothache* (Williams, 2004)
- Vocabulary: protection, extinct, impossible, worry, announced, moaned

Insects:

- *A True Book: Insects* (Stewart, 2000)
- *The Bugliest Bug* (Shields, 2005)
- Vocabulary: antennae, arachnid, pair, bugliest, applauded, clever

Butterflies:

- *Monarch Butterflies* (Waxman, 2003)
- *Butterfly Boy* (Kroll, 2002)
- Vocabulary: nectar, chrysalis, crimson, sweltering

Ladybugs:

- *Ladybugs* (Llewellyn & Watts, 2003)
- *The Grouchy Ladybug* (Carle, 1996)
- Vocabulary: oozes, grouchy, encountered

Thanksgiving:

- *The Pilgrims' First Thanksgiving* (McGovern, 1993)
- *Gracias, the Thanksgiving Turkey* (Cowley, 2005)
- Vocabulary: gracias, amigos, fragrant, Pilgrims, voyage

Native Americans:

- *Pocahontas* (Hudson, 2001)
- *The Rough-Face Girl* (Martin, 1998)
- Vocabulary: biography, settlers, portrait, invisible, cruel, swift

Martin Luther King, Jr.:

- *Martin's Big Words* (Rappaport, 2007)
- *Night Golf* (Miller, 2002)
- Vocabulary: protest, segregation, golf, caddy

Rosa Parks:

- *I Am Rosa Parks* (Parks & Haskins)

- *Daisy and the Doll* (Medearis & Medearis, 2005)
- Vocabulary: autobiography, contest, ashamed, recite, variety

George Washington:

- *A Picture Book of George Washington* (Adler 1990)
- *Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire* (deGroat, 2003)
- Vocabulary: survey, play, notice, reply

Abraham Lincoln:

- *Honest Abe* (Kunhardt, 1998)
- *A. Lincoln and Me* (Borden, 2001)
- Vocabulary: slavery, lanky, clumsy

“Making the Very Most of Classroom Readalouds to Promote Comprehension and Vocabulary” by Lana Edwards Santoro, David Chard, Lisa Howard, and Scott Baker in *The Reading Teacher*, February 2008 (Vol. 61, #3, p. 396-408), no e-link available. The authors can be reached at lsantoro@pacificir.org, dchard@smu.edu, lhoward@pacificir.org, and sbaker@uoregon.edu.

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7. Supporting Students Who Have Epilepsy

In this article from *epilepsy/USA*, health writer Eileen Frueh summarizes helpful guidelines for schools that enroll one or more children with epilepsy.

Accommodations and action plan:

- Children with epilepsy should be able to sit at the front of the classroom so seizures can be more easily spotted.
- Children with epilepsy should be allowed to wear a hat indoors to dim classroom lights.
- They should be escorted on trips to the bathroom and the cafeteria.
- When participating in chorus and other activities that involve standing on risers, they should stand on the lowest level.
- They should be given extra time on timed and untimed tests.
- They should be closely monitored during physical education and recess.
- They should not have outdoor recess on hot days.

When seizures occur, advice for staff members:

- Keep calm.
- Remain with the student until he or she is fully alert.
- Do not offer food or drink.
- Reassure the student after the seizure is over.

For simple partial seizures:

- Ensure that the student is fully oriented to person, place, and time before resuming activities.
- Comfort and reassure the student if he or she seems confused or frightened.

For complex partial seizures:

- Speak to the student softly and calmly.

- Reassure the student that he/she is safe.
- Move harmful obstacles to ensure safety.
- Allow a wandering student to walk in a contained area.
- Stay with the student until complete awareness of environment is regained.
- Help reorient the student if he/she seems confused afterward.

For generalized tonic-clonic seizures:

- Stay calm and reassure the student that he/she is safe.
- Reassure the other children that the student will be fine shortly.
- Ease the student gently to the floor and clear the area around him/her.
- Cushion the student's head.
- Do NOT put anything in the student's mouth.
- Turn the student gently on one side.
- Do NOT hold the student down.
- Let the student rest until full consciousness returns.

“Seizure Management for School-Age Children” by Eileen Frueh in *epilepsy/USA*, July/August 2007 (Vol. 7, #11), spotted in *Education Digest*, February 2008 (Vol. 73, #6, p. 38-40). For more information, see <http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org>.

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8. Course-Management Systems

In this *Education Week* article, reporter Andrew Trotter describes the growing market in “course-management” systems that allow teachers to post material online for their students and get them interacting with each other in a safe, content-focused environment. Moodle, a free, open-source product developed in Australia (<http://www.moodle.com>), gives students access to announcements, calendars, grade books, asynchronous discussion boards, synchronous chat rooms, e-mailing using internal or external accounts, online journals, whiteboards, dropboxes, document sharing (including digital pictures, audio, and streaming video), team areas that allow collaboration managed by the teacher, quizzes, tests, and surveys, and gives the teacher access to user-activity reports.

Although Moodle is free (like some of the other course-management products), it does require some teacher training. “It’s free like a puppy, not like a beer,” says Trish Hart, an instructor at the Alaska Vocational Technical Center, which uses Moodle extensively.

“Market for K-12 Course-Management Systems Expands” by Andrew Trotter in *Education Week*, Feb. 27, 2008 (Vol. 27, #25, p. 10), available online for subscribers only.

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9. Short Items:

a. The serious business of play – Here’s the central point of this thoughtful *New York Times Magazine* article by Robin Marantz Henig about children’s play: “Scientists who study play, in animals and humans alike, are developing a consensus view that play is something

more than a way for restless kids to work off steam; more than a way for chubby kids to burn off calories; more than a frivolous luxury. Play, in their view, is a central part of neurological growth and development – one important way that children build complex, skilled, responsive, socially adept and cognitively flexible brains.” The article, by the way, is accompanied by a series of delightful photographs of children kicking up their heels.

“Taking Play Seriously” by Robin Marantz Henig in the *New York Times Magazine*, Feb. 17, 2008 (p. 38-45, 60, 75) available at:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/17/magazine/17play.html?st=cse&sq=taking+play+seriously+February+2008&scp=1>

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b. A startling statistic – In this *Education Week* article, New Jersey-based after-school program expert Claudia Weisburd says that ELL students average less than 90 seconds per day in classroom talk time. She makes the case for high-quality after-school programs as an opportunity for these students to get more air time.

“Gaining a Voice After School” by Claudia Weisburd in *Education Week*, Feb. 27, 2008 (Vol. 27, #25, p. 28-29) available online for subscribers only.

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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).

Subscriptions:

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