Marshall Memo 569

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
January 12, 2015

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Education helps you learn how to make yourself clear to people who are outside your point of view."

Anne Fernald (see item #2)

"A resolution is a well-intended action plan, but because a person hasn't really connected to the 'why' behind it, the old way of life, the chaos, comes back into play and they can't really sustain it."

Jack Groppel (see item #4)

"The more you look at the English language arts gap, the more you come back to background knowledge and vocabulary… It's the only thing that moves the needle, and it moves really slowly."

Dacia Toll, a leader in the Achievement First schools, regretting that until recently they cut back on science and history in favor of reading, quoted in "2015: The Year of Curriculum-Based Reform?" by Robert Pondiscio in *The Education Gadfly*, January 7, 2015 (Vol. 15, #1), http://bit.ly/1BamscU

"As we now race to the top after having left quite a number of children behind, we have to wonder why so many grand educational initiatives yield such limited benefits."

Hunter Gehlbach in "The Power of Small Interventions" in *Education Week*, January 7, 2015 (Vol. 34, #15, p. 26-27), www.edweek.org

"I guess I was just too afraid to fail."

An eighth grader on why he cheated on a history test (see item #1)

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1. Helping Students Identify a Moral Fork in the Road

In this article in *Education Week*, veteran educator Thomas Bonnell describes a conversation he had when he was a middle-school principal with a student who was caught cheating on a history test. Asked to walk through the sequence of events leading up to this choice, the boy said he'd been busy studying for other tests, had an English paper due the day before, and was so exhausted from a basketball game that evening that he fell asleep rather than studying for the history test. "So why not just tell your history teacher at the beginning of class that you weren't prepared for the test and why?" asked Bonnell. "Maybe he would have allowed you to postpone it and maybe he wouldn't, but at least he would have known why you didn't do well."

The boy replied, "I guess I was just too afraid to fail." Bonnell: "Did you realize that, when you decided to cheat, you took a problem which was fairly limited – an F on one test, in one subject – and raised it to a much more serious problem, one which has to do with your character and integrity?" The boy said he was so concerned about failing the test that he didn't think about crossing this moral threshold.

During this conversation, Bonnell made a mental note to check with the eighth-grade coordinator, who was supposed to keep students from being overwhelmed with academic and other demands. "Surely part of our professional obligation as a school is to be mindful of the total workload we place upon our students' shoulders," he says. "When we are mindless about this, we set students up for failure and for making mistakes of moral judgment." Yet, inevitably, students will confront moral forks in the road. How can we best prepare them to take the right path?

"The Importance of Grasping the Moral Threshold" by Thomas Bonnell in *Education Week*, January 7, 2015 (Vol. 34, #15, p. 26-27), www.edweek.org

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2. Changing the Way Lower-Income Parents Talk to Their Children

In this article in *The New Yorker*, Margaret Talbot summarizes research showing that the poorer parents are, the less they talk to their children – with serious consequences once children begin school. The original studies on this were done in the 1980s, when Betty Hart and Todd Risley of the University of Kansas analyzed verbal interactions in professional, middle-class, and low-income families with children who were just learning language. There were many similarities among the families – parents all showed affection, disciplined their

children, and tried to teach them good manners – but the social-class differences in the number of words children heard each hour were dramatic: 2,150 in professional families, 1,250 in middle-class families, and 620 in poor families. "With few exceptions," Hart and Risley concluded, "the more parents talked to their children, the faster the children's vocabularies were growing and the higher the children's I.Q. test scores at age 3 and later."

But it's not just the quantity of words, Hart and Risley noticed. More-affluent parents used a wider range of nouns, modifiers, and past-tense verbs, and more of the conversations were initiated by children. Catherine Snow, a Harvard literacy expert, has followed up on this finding (both Hart and Risley have since died). "Families that talk a lot also talk about more different things," says Snow. "They use more grammatical variety in their sentences and more sophisticated vocabulary and produce more utterances in connected chains." They don't just say, "That's a teapot." They say, "Oh, *look*, a teapot! Let's have a tea party! There's Raggedy Ann – do you think she wants to come to our tea party? Does she like sugar in her tea?" These parents ask their children a lot of questions ("Is that a ducky on your shirt?") and have fun answering children's "Why?" questions. There's also a difference in the ratio of statements from parents that are affirming and positive ("Yes, it is a bunny!") versus corrective and critical ("Stop that!") – 32 to 5 per hour in professional homes, 12 to 7 in working-class homes, and 5 to 11 in low-income homes.

The city of Providence, Rhode Island is one of several around the country trying to do something about this vocabulary gap-widener with a program called Providence Talks. "Head Start is awesome," says Angel Taveras, until recently the mayor of Providence, who himself attended Head Start and launched Providence Talks. "But we've gotta do something even *before* Head Start." Caseworkers are making frequent visits to young mothers of limited means and coaching them on the power of simply talking more. "Changing how low-income parents interact with their children is a delicate matter," says Talbot, "and not especially easy… The way you converse with your child is one of the most intimate aspects of parenting, shaped both by your personality and by cultural habits so deep that they can feel automatic."

Talbot observed one caseworker on a home visit, noticing how she sat cross-legged on the floor with Mom and her two-year-old daughter, praised the mother's efforts, and interacted warmly with the child. "Whenever she's saying a few new words, it's important to tell her yes, and add to it," said the caseworker. "So if she sees a car you can say, 'Yes, that's a car. It's a big car. It's a blue car.'" The child said, "Boo ca!" and the caseworker said, "Right! Blue car! Good job!" The mother said her daughter was stuck on the word "Guppy" from a TV show – "Everything's 'guppy, guppy, guppy'" – and she's been correcting her – "No, that's not a guppy. That's a doll." The caseworker gently redirected Mom: "Well, I think now the important thing won't be so much telling her no but just adding words and repeating them, so she'll start repeating them on her own."

As part of the Providence Talks program, toddlers wear a small iPod-size device one day a month and it records and analyzes verbal interactions – the words spoken by adults in the child's vicinity, all the child's vocalizations, a TV in the background, and all the exchanges in which the child says something and an adult replies, or vice versa. (The device was developed

by a research foundation named LENA – Language Environment Analysis.) Caseworkers are able to show parents a graph of how many words the child is hearing and speaking, the up and down trends during the day, and details like more words being spoken when the TV is off. "The fact that we have this report, in a graph form, makes it nonjudgmental," says Andrea Riquetti, the director of Providence Talks. "We can say, look, here's the data. Look how much you were talking at eleven o'clock! How can we do this for another half hour? As opposed to a home visitor telling a parent, 'You're not talking to your child enough.'"

Providence Talks has its critics. The ACLU was concerned about recording devices being introduced to lower-income homes (Mayor Taveras responded by ordering the data erased after the initial analysis). Others have accused the program of cultural imperialism – imposing middle-class values on poor parents – and not respecting their child-rearing practices. (Riquetti responds, "It really is our responsibility to let families know what it takes to succeed in the culture they live in… It's not a case of our saying, 'You *have* to do this.'") Another line of attack is that the program purports to solve literacy problems before children enter school, letting primary-school teachers off the hook.

There are other reasons for poor students' literacy deficits, say skeptics: poor nutrition, chaotic living conditions, no preschool. In a strongly worded essay, Susan Blum of Notre Dame and Kathleen Riley of Fordham said Providence Talks was an example of "silver-bullet thinking" and "blame-the-victim approaches to language and poverty." There's also been recent research showing there is variation within each social-class group. "Some of the wealthiest families in our research had low word counts," says Anne Fernald of Stanford University, "possibly because they were on their gadgets all day. So you can see an intermingling at the extremes of rich and poor. Socioeconomic status is *not* destiny."

Other commentators focus on fine-tuning the Hart/Ridley research. The quality of spoken words is as important as quantity, they say. It's important that parent and child are both paying attention to and talking about the same thing – a cement mixer on the street, a picture in a book – and the ensuing conversation and gestures are fluid and continue over time. "It's not just serve and return," says Kathy Hirsh-Pasek of Temple University. "It's serve and return – and return and return."

"Though cultural factors may well explain why some low-income parents talk relatively little with their toddlers, the most obvious explanation is poverty itself," says Talbot. "When daily life is stressful and uncertain and dispiriting, it can be difficult to summon up the patience and the playfulness for an open-ended conversation with a small, persistent, possibly whiny child." Richard Weissbourd of Harvard, who helped launch a campaign to get Boston parents talking more to their children, says, "Maybe we have the model wrong. Maybe what we need to do is come in and bring dinner and help with laundry and free up a parent to engage in more play with their child."

In addition, poorer families may be unconsciously preparing their children for jobs and lives in which they won't have much power and autonomy – hence the high value on discipline and respect for parental authority. *Unequal Childhoods*, a classic 2003 study by sociologist Annette Lareau, found that middle-class families mostly practiced what she called "concerted

cultivation" – adults engaged children in lots of back-and-forth conversation, with the verbal jousting giving kids intellectual confidence. Working-class and poor families, on the other hand, tended to take an "accomplishment of natural growth" approach – children's lives were less customized, discipline consisted of directives and sometimes threats of physical punishment, and there was less talk and less drawing out of children's opinions. Lareau doesn't think one approach is better than the other. The middle-class approach takes a lot of parents' time, and some sibling interactions are mean-spirited. She found that poor and working-class children were more polite to adults, less whiny, more competent, and more independent. Still, middle-class families' approach prepared their children better for success in school and professional careers. "It taught children to debate, extemporize, and advocate for themselves," says Talbot, "and it helped them develop the vocabulary that tends to reap academic rewards."

Another variable, of course, is parents' educational background. Asking dinner-table questions like, "Hey, did you hear the blue whales are making a comeback off California?" or "Oh, they just discovered a new dinosaur" spring from more years in school and college, but also from a different mode of inquiry that's more in synch with the way teachers talk – more abstract, better informed, more inquisitive. "Education helps you learn how to make yourself clear to people who are outside your point of view," says Anne Fernald.

"The biggest question was whether Providence Talks could really change something as personal, casual, and fundamental as how people talk to their babies," says Talbot. Given the gradual, slow-emerging positive effects researchers have found with good preschool programs, it will be decades before the true impact of Providence Talks can be assessed. "The caseworkers at Providence Talks had impressed me with their sunny, gentle directives," she concludes, "but I wasn't sure if they could effect sweeping changes in the children's lives. Many of the core aspects of a parent's conversational style would be hard to alter, from grammar to vocabulary. And it didn't seem easy to revise, say, a parent's relationship to books… Providence Talks had more obvious value if you saw it as the beginning of a series of sustained interventions. Some of the children will likely attend preschool programs that will help them build on any language gains. Providence Talks will also help identify kids who could benefit from speech therapy and other support.

"The word 'empowering' is overused, but a clear strength of Providence Talks is that it seemed to instill confidence in parents. Those rising graphs promised that parents could make a demonstrable difference in their children's lives. The parents I met did not seem to feel chided by the data, and they liked the idea of competing with their partners or themselves to log higher word counts." Caseworker Riquetti has the last word: "It's a chance to talk with parents about how they can positively interact with their kids. Sometimes in their busy lives, their stressful lives, they miss out on that."

"The Talking Cure" by Margaret Talbot in *The New Yorker*, January 12, 2015, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/01/12/talking-cure

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3. Improving Student Engagement in a Middle School

In this article in *American Educational Research Journal*, Julianne Turner, Andrea Christensen, and Meg Trucano (University of Notre Dame), Hayal Kackar-Cam (Northern Illinois University), and Sara Fulmer (SUNY Oneonta) report on their three-year intervention aimed at getting students more engaged in a middle school. At the request of the school's principal, the authors led several PD sessions explaining the theory behind student engagement, gave teachers specific techniques for improving it, and closely observed classrooms to see if there was any change. Some teachers brought about marked improvements, while others saw no difference. The teachers who were successful in boosting engagement used specific techniques, "pulled" their students into greater engagement, and noticed a synergy among the key elements.

What did the researchers teach these educators? At a theoretical level, engagement is "the student's psychological investment in, and effort directed toward, learning, understanding, or mastering the knowledge, skills, and crafts that academic work is intended to promote." Here are four crucial variables, with classroom techniques for each:

• *Belongingness* – Students have frequent, pleasant interactions with others in an culture of concern for one another's welfare. Teachers can foster belongingness by modeling and encouraging mutual respect and teaching students to work together productively.

• *Competence* – Students have a feeling of self-efficacy as they successfully interact with the classroom environment and meet their goals. Teachers can enhance competence by giving appropriately challenging tasks, continuously assessing learning, providing scaffolding and feedback, and letting students know that mistakes provide helpful feedback.

• *Autonomy* – Students have the space to satisfy their curiosity, choose to engage in schoolwork, and take the initiative to participate in class activities in accordance with their interests and values. Teachers can boost autonomy by nurturing students' interests, competence, and relatedness; explaining classrooms tasks well; allowing multiple viewpoints; using non-controlling language; getting students to self-evaluate, ask questions, debate freely, and justify their thinking; and allowing students enough time to do high-quality work.

• *Meaningfulness* – Students see how classroom learning relates to their interests, values, and futures. Teachers can increase meaningfulness by building on students' prior knowledge; addressing the central ideas of the subject; invoking universal human experiences and themes; giving opportunities for complex thinking; using concrete objects; sharing their own experiences and thoughts; inviting students to put themselves into the context of the topic; and getting students involved in extended conversations that build shared understanding.

"Enhancing Students' Engagement: Report of a 3-Year Intervention With Middle-School Teachers" by Julianne Turner, Andrea Christensen, Meg Trucano, Hayal Kackar-Cam, and Sara Fulmer in *American Educational Research Journal*, December 2014 (Vol. 51, #6, p. 1195-1226), http://aer.sagepub.com/content/51/6/1195.abstract; Turner can be reached at jturner3@nd.edu.

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4. From Unkept Resolutions to a Personal Mission Statement

"Forget the New Year's resolution," says Tara Parker-Pope in this *New York Times* column. "This year, try creating a personal mission statement instead." Why? Because resolutions are one-shot, low-accountability acts of self-improvement (exercise more, eat better, spend more time with family) versus looking more deeply at life purpose. "A resolution is a well-intended action plan," says Jack Groppel of the Human Performance Institute, "but because a person hasn't really connected to the 'why' behind it, the old way of life, the chaos, comes back into play and they can't really sustain it. A mission statement becomes the North Star for people. It becomes how you make decisions, how you lead, and how you create boundaries."

The key to a good mission statement is articulating underlying values versus specific behaviors. "Exercising and eating better is an action plan," says Groppel. "You have to start with why." A mission statement for those activities might be, *I want to be a role model for my children, an extraordinary parent who has the energy, health, and stamina to support them in their dreams*. Articulating a personal mission statement should start with these questions:

- How do I want to be remembered?
- How do I want people to describe me?
- What do I want to be?
- Who or what matters most to me?
- What are my deepest values?
- How would I define success in my life?
- What makes my life really worth living?

Based on the answers, it's possible to write a mission that defines one's ultimate purpose. Here are some samples:

- *I want to become more physically active and try new hobbies.*
- *My mission is to incorporate a healthy balance of work and personal time.*
- *I aspire to transform negative work-related situations and put energy into relationships with family and friends.*

Far from being a "soft" activity, delving into basic beliefs and motivations is hard work. Once accomplished, the next step is looking at the obstacles that have prevented you from achieving your mission and developing an action plan to get there.

"In With the New Mission Statement" by Tara Parker-Pope in *The New York Times*, January 6, 2015, http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/05/personal-coaches-and-mission-statements/

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5. Knowing Text Complexity Is Not Enough

In this *Elementary School Journal* article, Sheila Valencia (University of Washington/Seattle), Karen Wixson (University of North Carolina/Greensboro), and David Pearson (University of California/Berkeley) say that Common Core ELA Standard 10 and Appendix A and B have prompted a "barrage of attention" to the issue of text complexity – too much attention, they believe, especially in states that have interpreted the standards too literally.

"[T]ext complexity is not an end unto itself," say Valencia, Wixson, and Pearson. "The purpose is not simply to have complex text in schools, it is to develop readers who can comprehend complex text… and, through that, build knowledge." *Comprehension* should be the focus, and comprehension goals must be taken into account when choosing texts.

The authors endorse the 2002 RAND Reading Study Group's definition of reading comprehension as a complex interaction of four elements:

- Reader
- Text
- Activity
- Sociocultural context

Each element influences and is influenced by the others, they say. For example, Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* appears to be at a second or third-grade readability level, but the content means the book is for students in middle or high school.

"Tasks matter," say Valencia, Wixson, and Pearson, "– both what we ask students to do and the texts to which they apply the tasks. Scaffolding matters – how teachers support and guide students throughout the task and how peers collaborate in all aspects of the activity. Teachers' goals matter – sometimes teachers support students to understand the text material at hand and sometimes they want to help students become active, self-regulated readers who have a range of strategies that support deep comprehension and learning from text… Readability formulas or other indicators of text complexity… can only ever tell part of the story."

The authors fear teachers will interpret the Common Core as requiring students to wrestle with more-complex texts and will exhort them to *try harder* and *read more closely* without considering these other dimensions. "If all this attention to text complexity is to have the desired effect on students' comprehension and knowledge building from complex text," they say, "then task and reader factors need to play a more prominent role in considerations of text complexity than is currently the case… Texts must be accompanied by appropriate tasks and instructional strategies to support specific reading purposes and readers who vary widely in the skills, backgrounds, and dispositions they bring to the classroom… [E]nactment of the CCSS-ELA will fall short and, ultimately, not serve all students well unless reading curriculum, instruction, and assessment reflect the full complex, dynamic nature of comprehension outlined by the RAND report."

To think through and execute these connections, Valencia, Wixson, and Pearson suggest that teachers use Text-Task Scenarios – carefully considering text and task in relation to each other in the context of specific reading goals. For example, a second grader might read *Cinderella* and retell the plot, a fifth grader might compare culturally distinct *Cinderella* narratives, and an eleventh grader might unearth the dominant gendered ideologies in the text (reading the same text or different versions). "[T]he tasks associated with any given reading activity are no small matter," say the authors, "for they can interact with a specific text to make the comprehension of a relatively simple text (as judged by quantitative and qualitative factors) quite difficult, or the comprehension of a very complex text quite easy. A student who can identify the main ideas of a science article organized by topic headers or the plot of a short

narrative story might or might not be able, even for the same text, to describe the scientific concept being exemplified by the examples in the science article or to analyze the subtlety of the author's craft in the story."

Isn't this a fairly obvious part of lesson planning? Perhaps, say Valencia, Wixson, and Pearson, but they're continually surprised "at how difficult it is for many prospective and practicing teachers to fully grasp the importance of taking time, before initiating instruction, to examine the text they are asking students to read and consider the most appropriate instructional goals for a particular text or set of texts and the best means of accomplishing those goals. This is more important now than ever as Lexiles and other quantitative measures of text complexity are influencing curriculum materials and the selection of texts for instruction."

Here's another example: A 16-page informational text, "The Wonders of Nature," has short passages about animals with special or unusual abilities that are important to their survival. The readability of the text is pegged at 4th- to 5th-grade level, but because of its straightforward structure and high interest, a qualitative analysis puts it at 2nd- to 3rd-grade level. Comprehension of this text will vary depending on the instructional focus. If the goal is to learn the "special" characteristics of the different animals, students might be asked to construct a chart with text information about each animal's appearance, habitat, diet, and/or reproduction – which seems like a grade 2-3 task. But if the goal is understanding how each animal's characteristics help it survive, students might be asked to:

- Explore the concept of survival in the context of the animals in the text;
- Describe how each animal's characteristics help it survive and/or make comparisons among the animals about the roles played by different characteristics in their survival;
- Complete a mini-research project adding a section to the text describing the special characteristics of a different animal that help it survive.

This seems more like a grade 4-5 task. "The point here," say the authors, "is that simply knowing the measured complexity of the text is insufficient to locate the text in the appropriate grade-band level without the simultaneous consideration of text-task factors in the context of specific reading purposes."

"Putting Text Complexity in Context: Refocusing on Comprehension of Complex Text" by Sheila Valencia, Karen Wixson, and David Pearson in *The Elementary School Journal*, December 2014 (Vol. 115, #2, p. 270-289), no e-link available; Valencia can be reached at valencia@uw.edu.

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6. Educational Imperatives When Teens View Online Pornography

In this *New York Times* article, Nick Bilton reflects on recent conversations he's had with the parents of adolescents and says, "Today, teenagers have easy access to a seemingly endless supply of pornography, including things that even many adults don't want to see, such as mock sexual violence, misogynistic videos, and, in extreme cases, child pornography." Trying to stop teens from looking at this stuff is next to impossible, sighs Bilton. Even if

there's a bulletproof web filter on the home computer, there are always friends with permissive or clueless parents. "Here's the new reality," he says: "Thanks to the Internet, children will see things that children probably shouldn't. Teenagers with active hormones will get together with their friends and, when parents are out of sight, seek out and explore dark and salacious imagery." And indeed, according to a study by University of New Hampshire researchers, 93 percent of teen boys and 62 percent of girls are exposed to online pornography before they reach 21.

What impact is all this having? Some experts are convinced teens are being corrupted by what they're seeing, but others disagree. It's striking, for example, that the rate of teen pregnancy has declined significantly in recent years, as has the number of sexual partners per teen and the percent of ninth graders who have had sexual intercourse. "If you just look at the indicators of sexual responsibility, you don't see a generation of kids looking like they are off the rails," says David Finkelhor, director of the Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire. But the long-term impact of exposure to pornography is still under study.

What should parents and schools be doing? It's imperative that teens are educated about sex and online pornography, including the fact that, like movies, pornography is often a fantasy that distorts reality in a number of ways. And teens need to know about the dark and dangerous world that lurks beneath the beguiling surface.

"Parenting and Online Pornography" by Nick Bilton in *The New York Times*, January 8, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/08/style/parenting-in-the-age-of-online-porn.html?_r=0

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7. The Effect of Low-Level Noise in Classrooms

In this *Education Week* article, Sarah Sparks reports on what researchers are finding about the impact of low-level classroom noise on student learning – for example, a heating system turning on and off, an aquarium filter motor, students working in groups, music played to soothe students, a teacher's voice or a movie playing in an adjoining classroom. "It doesn't take very much sound to really be detrimental to the listeners," says Gail Whitelaw (Ohio State Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic). "So much of school is auditory, oral learning, and one of the things we know is sound can create more issues for kids with anxiety and attention." A 2013 study by the New York Academy of Medicine found that 8- and 9-year-old students performed significantly worse on math and French tests when there was more ambient noise – an increase of 10 decibels was associated with 5.5 points lower scores.

Ruth Morgan, a speech pathologist in North Carolina, says, "You can't depend on the kids to complain. Kids generally go with the flow, and they wouldn't let you know there's too much background noise." Students may not even be consciously aware of why they're having trouble concentrating or hearing. "A lot of it is the content of the noise," says Whitelaw. "If someone is having a conversation behind you, it's more distracting if the teacher is lecturing, and you find it boring." Interestingly, the s-, sh-, and ch- sounds are particularly easy to mistake when competing with low-frequency noise. Some possible solutions: Adding soundproofing to classroom walls, ceilings, and doors; putting used tennis balls on chair legs

(although in some cases the soft squeaking sound of the tennis balls can be distracting); equipping classrooms with sound systems and giving teachers microphones (about $1,000 a room).

On the other hand, some studies have found that "desirable difficulty" can improve learning – including students having to focus on blocking out a distracting noise while working on a task.

"In Class, Soft Noises Found to Distract" by Sarah Sparks in *Education Week*, January 7, 2015 (Vol. 34, #15, p. 1, 16), www.edweek.org

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8. Ten Pointers on the Use of Technology in Schools

In this *District Management Journal* article, John Kim and Kyla Wilkes list ten key reminders on the use of technology in schools:

- Take stock of what you have. Before investing in new hardware and software, use or redeploy existing resources.
- Stay focused on the district's needs. What are the most pressing issues? How can technology best address them?
- Don't fall for the latest fad. Ask if it's the right fit.
- Don't forget about the humans. Teachers and administrators need good training before they can use technology confidently and correctly.
- Deal with infrastructure. Fancy new equipment won't work without it.
- Address technology management and support. This includes managing licenses, keeping track of equipment and mobile devices, and keeping everything in working order.
- Invest in management technology. Analytics and management information systems help a district run more efficiently and effectively.
- Don't assume everything is being used with fidelity. Monitor implementation!
- Measure. Collect data and track costs to assess technology's real value.
- Assess and modify as needed. Decide what to expand, make adjustments, cut back, or eliminate.

"Technology's Promise" by John J-H Kim and Kyla Wilkes in *The District Management Journal*, Winter 2015 (Vol. 16, p. 12-27), www.dmcouncil.org

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9. Online Shakespeare Resources

In this *School Library Journal* feature, Stacy Dillon and Amy Laughlin curate high-quality sites for educators teaching the Bard:

• Folger Shakespeare for Kids (grade 3 and up) – http://ow.ly/FZEFV - Resources for teaching young students, including modules, curriculum guides, tips for deconstructing sonnets and plays, guides for ESL students, and webinars.

• Shakespeare's Globe (middle and high school) – www.shakespearesglobe.com - This site includes an interactive guide to teaching "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and also teaching guides and notes for teaching the plays (see "Playing Shakespeare" within the Discovery Space in the drop-down menu under Education).

• MIT Global Shakespeare (high school) – http://globalshakespeare.mit.edu - Full-length performances of plays in dozens of languages, and also essays and content from scholars and educators.

• Shakespeare Uncovered (high school) – http://pbs.org/wnet/shakespeare-uncovered - This site includes full-length performances of select plays, videos featuring Ethan Hawke, David Tennant, and Jeremy Irons exploring key roles, also digital shorts exploring themes, the Bard's biography, discussions with experts, and lesson plans matched to standards.

• The Sonnet Project (elementary to high school) – http://ow.ly/FW4KQ - In this app, various actors read each poem in different locations in and around New York City.

• Shakespeare Pro (middle and high school) – http://ow.ly/FW9Po - The free version of this app has portraits and notes, chronology of works, statistics, roles, scansions, and poetry terms. The Pro version ($9.99) contains 41 plays, 154 sonnets, and six poems, putting Shakespeare at teachers' fingertips, including lists of characters, scene breakdowns, annotated and abridged plot points, and glossary access.

"Where There's a Will" by Stacy Dillon and Amy Laughlin in *School Library Journal*, January 2015 (Vol. 61, #1, p. 39-41)

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10. Short Item:

Peer Instruction Network – This website http://peerinstruction.net gives educators free access to a wealth of clicker questions and other resources for using on-the-spot assessments to get students interacting productively during instruction.

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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.marshall48@gmail.com

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 44 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 64 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 50 issues a year).

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- The current issue (in Word or PDF)
- All back issues (also in Word and PDF)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- A collection of "classic" articles from all 11 years

Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
ASCD SmartBrief/Public Education NewsBlast
Better: Evidence-Based Education
Center for Performance Assessment Newsletter
District Administration
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Middle School Journal
Perspectives
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Responsive Classroom Newsletter
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
School Administrator
School Library Journal
Teacher
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
Teaching Exceptional Children/Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The District Management Journal
The Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Principal/Learning System/Tools for Schools
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time
Wharton Leadership Digest