

Marshall Memo 273

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
February 16, 2009

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Quotes of the Week

“The question of whether accountability itself is good or bad does not deserve serious debate. As the current economic crisis reminds us, we must all be accountable. This is true especially for those who hold children’s futures in their hands.”

Suzanne Donovan in *Education Week*, Feb. 11, 2009 (Vol. 28, #21, p. 24-25)
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/02/11/21donovan.h28.html>

“Learning to read and write well comes largely from doing reading and writing, the more the better.”

Thomas Landauer, Karen Lochbaum, and Scott Dooley (see item #5)

“It’s like a teacher that helps you get better but doesn’t give you a bad grade.”

A 6th-grader on a computer scoring program that gives instant feedback (*ibid.*)

“Teaching children how to read, no matter how young they may be, or how far behind their peers they find themselves, must involve a balance of both word identification and comprehension instruction... Limiting text comprehension instruction to selections such as ‘the cat sat’ severely hampers the development of children’s metacognitive skills.”

Harry Walker (see item #7)

1. A Young Teacher Learns from Her Veteran Colleagues

In this thoughtful *Education Week* article, Eva Ostrum describes how, as a novice high-school teacher, she asked one of her students why she always hustled at the end of each class to avoid being late for her next-period teacher. “You can’t be late for Ms. Ingram,” said the girl. “She doesn’t play!” Ostrum dropped in on this teacher after school to see what her secret was, and learned a lot. She then asked students and colleagues for the names of other outstanding teachers and began what she describes as “my own, self-devised teacher education program,” observing teachers during her prep periods to get ideas on classroom management, differentiated instruction, explaining difficult concepts, and dynamic, highly effective teaching.

“These veteran educators became an integral part of my development as a teacher,” says Ostrum. “All the motivation, commitment, and raw talent in the world would not have amounted to much without the invaluable on-the-job training I received at that critical point in my teaching career.” She is full of admiration for the mid-career teachers she observed: “They showed up for work, day in and day out, with no special incentives, rewards, or recognition. They drew no attention to themselves. Yet the minute you entered their rooms, you saw how much they had to offer.”

This experience has led Ostrum to conclude that reformers should rely more on high-quality veteran teachers to provide professional development. “Improving urban schools – especially urban high schools, where the new reformers have penetrated less than they have at the K-8 level – depends in large part on the professionals who already inhabit them,” she says. The trick is involving these veteran teachers in developing their younger colleagues – and continuing their own professional growth.

“How I Learned to Teach: An Expanded ‘Human Capital’ Model” by Eva Ostrum in *Education Week*, Feb. 11, 2009 (Vol. 28, #21, p. 24-25)

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/02/11/21ostrum.h28.html>

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2. A New Report on Professional Development of Teachers

Professional development in U.S. schools is often fragmented and ineffective, says a new report described in this *Education Week* article by Stephen Sawchuk. Linda Darling-Hammond, one of the authors, says “We still see teachers engage in really short one- and two-day workshops rather than ongoing, sustained support that we now have evidence changes practices and increases student achievement.”

The report’s review of research on PD found that the most effective programs are closely connected to teachers’ classroom practice, focus on specific content, are aligned with

school improvement goals, and maximize teacher collaboration. Programs with 30-100 hours over six months to a year have a positive impact on student achievement, while those with fewer than 14 hours don't make a difference.

Teacher professional development in Japan, Finland, Singapore, and Sweden aligns with these characteristics – for example Japan's "lesson study" process. These countries give their teachers more time for collaborative learning – 40 percent of the working day, as opposed to 20 percent in most U.S. schools. American teachers spend an average of 3-5 hours a week planning lessons, mostly in isolation, compared to 15-20 hours a week of collaborative curriculum planning in higher-performing countries.

The report found that research on coaching is inconclusive to date, but worthy of additional attention.

For the full report, *Professional Learning in the Learning Profession*, go to <http://nsdc.org/stateproflearning.cfm>.

"Staff Development for Teachers Deemed Fragmented" by Stephen Sawchuk in *Education Week*, Feb. 11, 2009 (Vol. 28, #21, p. 7)

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/02/11/21development-2.h28.html>

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3. Closing the Achievement Gap the Smart Way

In this *New York Times* op-ed article, University of Michigan psychology professor Richard Nisbett says that as policymakers decide how to spend stimulus-package billions, they need to remember "that sometimes very small influences in children's lives can have very big effects." Costly programs like Head Start and whole-school change often produce modest gains, he says, while simpler but better-targeted programs can have dramatic effects. Specifically:

- *Countering stereotype threat* – Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson have found that simply asking African-American and Hispanic students their race at the beginning of a test reduces their achievement by triggering societal "rumors of inferiority." But this dynamic can be counteracted by explaining to students how the brain works and telling them that they can get smarter through effective effort. In one study, this simple strategy erased half of the achievement gap between white and non-white students' schoolwork and performance.

- *Planning a future* – Daphna Oyserman, a social psychologist at the University of Michigan, asked inner-city Detroit junior-high students what kind of future they would like to have, what hurdles they anticipated, how they might deal with them, and which of their friends would be most helpful along the way. After a few future-planning sessions like these, the number of students who had to repeat a grade dropped by more than one half.

- *Naming values* – Geoffrey Cohen, a University of Colorado psychologist, got teachers in a suburban school to have their seventh graders write about their most important values. After several such assignments at the beginning of the year, African-American students improved their performance and 30 percent of the gap that had existed between them and their white classmates disappeared.

Some large-scale programs are also effective, says Nisbett, including the 1960s Perry Preschool program in Ypsilanti, Michigan, which produced remarkable downstream improvements in many people's lives by using highly trained and motivated preschool teachers, very small class size, a focus on social as well as cognitive development, and weekly 90-minute home visits. Nisbett is also intrigued by the impressive results of KIPP schools around the nation.

“Education Is All in Your Mind” by Richard Nisbett in the *New York Times*, Feb. 8, 2009
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/08/opinion/08nisbett.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=Education%20I%20All%20in%20Your%20Mind&st=cse

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4. A Step-by-Step Process for Implementing Peer Assessment

In this article in *Theory Into Practice*, University of Dundee (Scotland) education professor Keith Topping describes the steps to get students doing formative assessments of each others' work, in this case an essay:

- a. The teacher tells the class about the impending writing assignment and asks what criteria might be used to assess it. After some hesitation, students brainstorm a wide range of ideas of what a good essay might look like.
- b. The teacher works with students to synthesize the criteria into a short list, which ends up being quite similar to what the teacher would have used in the first place (however, students don't know that).
- c. The teacher divides students into teams of three of roughly similar levels of writing proficiency, being careful to avoid putting friends or antagonists together.
- d. The teacher uses an overhead projector to display an anonymous piece of student writing from the previous year and proceeds to assess it, thinking out loud about how to apply each of the criteria.
- e. The teacher then hands out other pieces of student writing and asks groups to assess them, using the criteria they developed. The teacher circulates and helps students who are having difficulty, and then works with the whole class to compile a list of tips on assessing essays.
- f. The teacher now gives students a block of time to write their own essays, telling them that their writing will be assessed by the other two members of their group. This sharpens students' motivation to do a good job.
- g. When essays are completed, students are given forty minutes to assess their two group-mates' essays. The teacher circulates and helps students who seem to be stuck and encourages early-finishers to make sure they've written down all their comments.
- h. The teacher then collects the assessments – six from each group – and compares the scores. The first time students experience this process, scores tend to cluster in the middle of the grading scale; students become more courageous about their feedback after that.

- i. If there are discrepancies in the two scores on a particular paper, the teacher reads it and follows up with students in the group.
- j. In the next class, the teacher hands the essays back to students in their groups, and there are animated discussions about the assessments, the merits of the essays, the actual subject matter, and about peer assessment. Students are often “a little dismayed” that the teacher didn’t grade the assessments, says Topping, but can see that peer assessments are just as useful for guiding revision.
- k. Students then start revising their essays, using the feedback they received from their peers, and hand in their finished work to the teacher for final assessment.

“The overriding goal of peer assessment is to provide feedback to learners,” says Topping. One of its great virtues is producing much more feedback much more quickly than a single teacher can possibly provide. The feedback affirms high-quality work, provides suggestions, and corrects errors. Students tend to accept feedback better from their peers than from an adult; peer comments are less authoritarian, richer, and more open to negotiation. Peer assessment is therefore helpful in developing students’ self-regulatory skills – the inner voice that prevents errors from being made in the first place.

Topping says that this process can be used at elementary, middle, and high schools and has a proven track record for benefiting students who do the assessing and have their work assessed. “There is substantial evidence that peer assessment can result in improvements in the effectiveness and the quality of learning,” he reports, “which is at least as good as gains from teacher assessment, especially in relation to writing.” Peer assessment, handled well, increases: academic learning time, a sense of accountability, intelligent questioning, error identification and analysis, filling gaps in knowledge, reflection, generalizing insights to new situations, and self-assessment and self-awareness.

What are the downsides to peer assessment? Topping cautions that it should be used for formative, not summative evaluation, and says teachers need to actively monitor students to make sure that there isn’t social loafing (some students not participating), free riding (students getting others’ work accepted as their own), hesitation and anxiety about giving criticism, diffusion of responsibility within a group, students having problems interacting with each other, and collusion to submit average scores. A number of skills need to be taught explicitly for peer observation to work, and they’re all important long-term. “Learning how to give and accept criticism, justify one’s own position, and reject suggestions are all useful, transferable social skills,” says Topping.

Topping concludes with some advice: (a) Don’t expect peer assessment to save time, he says; if you’re doing it right, it will take about the same amount of time as conventional methods of assessment – but will be more effective; (b) It’s best to work with colleagues rather than trying to launch this initiative alone; (c) It really helps to get students to create and have ownership for the assessment criteria; (d) Relatively homogeneous student groups (in terms of skill development) tend to work better; (e) Explicit training and practice are important before students begin to assess each others’ work; (f) Guidelines, checklists, and other tangible

scaffolding are important as well; (g) Clear timelines help structure the process, and instructions on what students should do if they finish early are also helpful; (h) Teacher monitoring is essential, both as students work and looking over their work at each stage; and (i) So is monitoring the quality of peer feedback and giving students assessments of their assessments. “Unless they have this information,” says Topping, “their ability to provide useful feedback will not change for the better.”

“Peer Assessment” by Keith Topping in *Theory Into Practice*, Winter 2009 (Vol. 48, #1, p. 20-27), no e-link available; Topping can be reached at k.j.topping@dundee.ac.uk.

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5. A Program That Gives Students Instant Feedback on Their Writing

In this article in *Theory Into Practice*, Thomas Landauer, Karen Lochbaum, and Scott Dooley describe WriteToLearn, a web-based program for assessing student writing developed by their company, Pearson Knowledge Technologies. They begin by describing three misgivings that many educators have about current methods of assessing student learning:

- Lack of face validity – There’s often a big difference between what students are asked to do on tests and what they do in real life (for example, a vocabulary test might ask students to choose the best synonym from a multiple-choice list, which is quite different from the use of synonyms in day-to-day reading and writing);
- Narrow sampling – Tests hold students accountable for only a small portion of the curriculum, which can lead teachers to limit what’s taught to what’s tested;
- Tests don’t teach – With a few exceptions, tests measure current knowledge and skills rather than furthering teachers’ instructional aims.

Computer assessment systems have begun to address these concerns, but literacy continues to be the most difficult area.

With literacy, there are four aspects to the challenge: (a) “Learning to read and write well comes largely from doing reading and writing, the more the better,” say the authors, but most students don’t get nearly enough practice at either; (b) Feedback on reading and writing is vital to developing great proficiency, but it’s hard for teachers to give students enough, especially on their writing; (c) The most helpful feedback is immediate, specific, and targeted at content as well as surface errors, but it’s really difficult for teachers to pull this off; and (d) The best scenario is embedding assessments in natural performances that will be used inside and outside the classroom, but most assessments are inauthentic.

WriteToLearn is a web-based program that gives students immediate feedback on two kinds of writing – summaries and essays. Here’s how it works:

- *Summary Sheet* – Students log in to the program, read a short article, book section, or passage from a leveled reader, write a summary, and submit it to the computer, which gives them instant feedback (using Latent Semantic Analysis software) on content (how well their summary captures the key points of the passage), length, copying (whether the student used too many original words from the passage), spelling, redundancy, and whether there are irrelevant

sentences that could be eliminated. Students use the feedback to revise their summary, getting more feedback with each attempt and tracking progress toward goals set by the teacher.

- *Intelligent Essay Assessor* – Students write an essay in response to a prompt, submit it, and get immediate feedback on the overall quality of their writing and each of six traits: ideas, organization, conventions, sentence fluency, word choice, and voice. The program is able to do this because hundreds of student essays written to the same prompt and scored by two experienced educators have been fed in, making it possible for the program to compare each new essay to the characteristics of high- and low-scoring essays in the database. Like the e-rater program developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS), Intelligent Essay Assessor does at least as well as human assessors in the accuracy of feedback to students – but provides the feedback *much* more quickly.

The teacher controls WriteToLearn by setting up class rosters, inputting assignments, specifying the length of each summary and essay, gearing reading levels to students' levels, choosing different spell-checking and grammar options, monitoring activity (they can read each student submission), and following student progress in graphic displays. Students see the similarity to computer games in which they try and try and try again to achieve their goals. Students typically make three to eight revisions of their summaries and essays, using the feedback to constantly improve their work. One sixth grader said, "It's like a teacher that helps you get better but doesn't give you a bad grade." A middle-school English teacher said, "The best part is that feedback is immediate, and I don't have to read 120 summaries."

But how reliable is the scoring, and does this program work? The authors cite several studies that found the essay-scoring software was at least as accurate as individual human scorers, and in some cases better. They also cite studies that found very positive effects on students' reading, writing, and motivation. The most important advantage of this kind of technology is that teachers can get students reading and writing much more – with feedback – than is possible with conventional methods. "With WriteToLearn," conclude the authors, "a teacher can... arrange what each student will do to learn, but the system lets every student get the feedback he or she needs when he or she needs it, even if every student needs something different at the same moment."

"A New Formative Assessment Technology for Reading and Writing" by Thomas Landauer, Karen Lochbaum, and Scott Dooley in *Theory Into Practice*, Winter 2009 (Vol. 48, #1, p. 44-52), no e-link available; for information about WriteToLearn, see <http://www.writetolearn.net>. Landauer can be reached at tom.landauer@pearsonkt.com.

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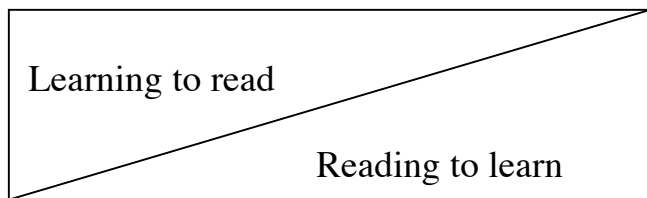
6. What Reading First Got Wrong – and What Schools Need to Do Now

In this thoughtful article in *Reading Today*, Baltimore County principal Harry Walker reflects on the disappointing results from the five-year, \$6 billion Reading First initiative. Two recent reports from the federal Institute of Education Sciences (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs>) have shown that Reading First students made progress in decoding but did no better in

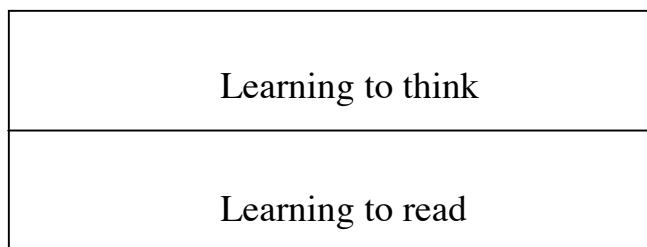
comprehension than the control groups. Reading First educators like himself, Walker says, “have to admit that we missed the boat in some respects when it comes to reading instruction.”

The basic problem, he believes, is that the skills emphasized in most Reading First schools – letter naming fluency, phoneme segmentation fluency, initial sound fluency, nonsense word fluency, and oral reading fluency – don’t reliably produce good reading comprehension. “[T]he process of reading and making meaning is more complex than simply putting these individual skills together,” he says.

The basic flaw in the Reading First approach, he continues, is the assumption that decoding skills need to be mastered before comprehension instruction can begin in earnest. This theory of action looks roughly like this, with decoding skills dominant in the early grades and gradually giving way to the higher-order skills of comprehension and strategy:



A more effective approach, says Walker, is emphasizing comprehension from the very beginning, using readaloud texts that are well above students’ current reading level to engage them in critical thinking and reading strategy skill building. The theory looks like this:



“Teaching children how to read, no matter how young they may be, or how far behind their peers they find themselves, must involve a balance of both word identification and comprehension instruction,” says Walker. “Limiting text comprehension instruction to selections such as ‘the cat sat’ severely hampers the development of children’s metacognitive skills.”

It’s ironic, says Walker, that Reading First schools that believed in a balanced approach had to “fly under the radar” in recent years – just as some schools, during the “whole language” era, had to sneak phonics into their classrooms. “Go figure,” he comments sardonically.

Reading First has emphasized “one set of keys to unlock the door to that magical and powerful skill known as reading,” concludes Walker. “Unfortunately, the door to ‘real reading’ has additional locks, hampering the transition for some of our students to move from ‘Learning to Read’ to ‘Reading to Learn.’” Schools must move beyond the mechanics of decoding and

address comprehension, the most important component of reading, says Walker. “We cannot afford to leave one single reader behind.”

“Why Reading First Has ‘Failed’” by Harry Walker in *Reading Today*, February/ March 2009 (Vol. 26, #4, p. 18), no e-link available

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7. Five Pillars of Literacy Instruction

In her president’s column in *Reading Today*, International Reading Association honcho and Oklahoma State University professor Barbara Walker suggests five activities that should happen every day in literacy classrooms:

- *Comprehension* – “Reading instruction must focus on making meaning or comprehending as well as reading the words fluently,” she says. “This experience includes reading, discussing, and writing about concepts and ideas.”

- *Constant verbal interaction* – “Discussion involves all students and often takes the form of a conversation rather than an interrogation where the teacher asks all the questions,” says Walker. Students talk extensively with their teacher and their peers, explaining their thinking and rethinking what they understand. All students are involved in higher-level cognition, not just curriculum coverage.

- *Reading “just right” texts* – Using books and other materials at the right reading level is crucial, says Walker. Teachers should constantly update students’ levels (through running records and re-telling) to make sure they are working with materials at the optimal level of challenge.

- *Writing* – The more students write, the more deep, complex thinking they’re involved in, and the more they explore and knit together their ideas, says Walker. Writing is a powerful way to develop children’s proficiency with all aspects of literacy.

- *Scaffolding reading and writing* – Effective teachers don’t tell students the correct answer when they struggle, Walker says. They look for parts of student responses that they can use to encourage rethinking and elaboration and offer supporting information to get students thinking on their own. Scaffolding is a distinguishing characteristic of effective teachers and schools, she says.

“An Open Letter to President Obama: Five Keys to Effective Reading and Writing Instruction” by Barbara Walker in *Reading Today*, February/ March 2009 (Vol. 26, #4, p. 16), no e-link

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8. Principles for Using “Response to Intervention” in Literacy Classrooms

This *Reading Today* article presents a draft of six guiding principles for using RTI in language and literacy classrooms from the International Reading Association’s Commission on Response to Intervention:

- *Principle #1: Good initial instruction* – “RTI is first and foremost intended to prevent language and literacy problems by optimizing instruction,” says the document, stressing the importance of first-rate, research-based teaching for all students.

- *Principle #2: Responsive teaching and differentiation* – Based on classroom assessments, teachers should zero in on students who are difficulty learning and flexibly tailor instruction to bring them to proficiency. “Instruction and materials selection must derive from specific student-teacher interactions and not be constrained by packaged programs,” says the IRA document. “No single process or program can address the broad and varied goals and needs of all students, especially those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.”

- *Principle #3: Informative assessment* – “Assessment should reflect the multidimensional nature of language and literacy learning and the diversity among students being assessed,” says the document. “Assessment tools and techniques should provide useful and timely information about desired language and literacy goals. They should reflect authentic language and literacy activities as opposed to contrived texts or tasks generated specifically for assessment purposes.”

- *Principle #4: Collaboration* – Success with all students “depends on strong and respectful partnerships among professionals, parents, and students,” says the document. “Collaboration should be focused on the available evidence about the needs of students struggling in language and literacy.” Reading specialists and literacy coaches should be involved in every aspect of the RTI process: planning, assessment, more intensive instruction and support, and making decisions about next steps.

- *Principle #5: Systemic* – “RTI needs to be integrated within the context of a coherent and consistent language and literacy curriculum that guides comprehensive instruction for all students,” says the document. “Core instruction, and indeed all instruction, must be continuously improved to increase its efficacy and mitigate the needs for specialized interventions.” Principals and other leaders need to provide the time and support for the process to be effective.

- *Principle #6: Classroom skill* – “Teacher expertise is central to instructional improvement, particularly for those who encounter difficulty in acquiring language and literacy,” says the document. This includes understanding of literacy development, skill using assessment tools, and putting data to work in the classroom, as well as knowledge of and sensitivity to the needs of diverse students.

“IRA Commission on RTI: Working Draft of Guiding Principles” in *Reading Today*, February/ March 2009 (Vol. 26, #4, p. 1, 4-6), no e-link available. The International Reading Association is open to comments on this draft: RTICommission@reading.org.

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9. Should Children Be Allowed to *Just Read*?

In this article in *Language Arts*, Patricia Cooper argues that when teachers make every piece of children’s literature into an academic exercise (vocabulary development, predicting what happens next, discussion, worksheets), they run the risk of taking the joy and ownership

out of reading. Remembering how she spontaneously fell in love with books in a Bronx library when she was a first grader, Cooper says, “Story-based literature should be preserved as a repository for the confluence of feelings and instincts, small and gargantuan, that define young children’s lives. I suggest that the acquisition of reading, let alone the *habit* of it, has its healthiest start in the deep and prolonged satisfaction of children’s earliest urges towards story. A curriculum that discourages this relationship cheats young children out of a future relationship with learning literacy, as well as things literary.”

“Children’s Literature for Reading Strategy Instruction: Innovation or Interference?” by Patricia Cooper in *Language Arts*, January 2009 (Vol. 86, #3, p. 178-186), no e-link available
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10. Children’s Book Recommendations

In this regular feature in *Reading Today*, David Richardson recommends nine recent children’s books:

- *Twelve Terrible Things* by Marty Kelley (Tricycle, 2008), age 6 and up. A humorous treatment of things that scare kids.

- *A Thousand Never Evers* by Shana Burg (Delacorte, 2008), age 10 and up. A Mississippi girl’s family is caught up in a small town’s civil rights struggle.

- *Little Beauty* by Anthony Browne (Candlewick, 2008), age 3 and up. A beautifully illustrated book about a friendship between a gorilla and a pet kitten.

- *Pete and Pickles* by Berkeley Breathed (Philomel, 2008), age 5 and up. A humorous treatment of a friendship between prim-and-proper Pete and free-spirited Pickles.

- *Abe’s Honest Words: The Life of Abraham Lincoln* by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Kadir Nelson (Hyperion, 2008), all ages. A biography drawing on Lincoln’s actual words and showing his sense of humor.

- *Lincoln and Douglass: An American Friendship* by Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Bryan Collier (Holt, 2008), age 7 and up. The journey of two great Americans to the White House Inaugural Ball in 1865.

- *Humpty Dumpty Climbs Again* by Dave Horowitz (Putnam, 2008), age 4 and up. A humorous re-take on the familiar nursery rhyme.

- *The Robot and the Bluebird* by David Lucas (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), age 4 and up. A robot with a missing heart walks an injured bird south for the winter.

- *Dandelion Fire* by N. D. Wilson (Random House, 2009), age 12 and up. This is the sequel to *100 Cupboards*, an action tale of evil and magic.

“Thank you, Mrs. Martindale” by David Richardson in *Reading Today*, February/March 2009 (Vol. 26, #4, p. 30), no e-link available

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11. Short Items:

a. Online “field trips” – Many schools are cutting back on field trips because of budget constraints, reports Kathleen Kennedy Manzo in this *Education Week* article, but there are increasingly substantive virtual field trips available online. Among them:

- The Virtual Smithsonian – http://2k.si.edu/2k/node_rotunda/indexe.htm.
- Jet Propulsion Lab at NASA – <http://virtualfieldtrip.jpl.nasa.gov/smmk/top/gates>
- National Geographic Expeditions – <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions>
- Ball State University, including the Buffalo Soldiers, Florida Everglades, gray whale migration, and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway: <http://www.bsu.edu/eft/home/31digest.php>
- Colonial Williamsburg (best for grades 4-8) – <http://www.history.org/trips>

“Virtual Field Trips Open Doors for Multimedia Lessons” by Kathleen Kennedy Manzo in *Education Week*, Feb. 11, 2009 (Vol. 28, #21, p. 9)

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/02/11/21virtualtrip.h28.html>

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b. Four helpful programs – This *Edutopia* link has information on four programs: PASA (after-school systems), Citizen Schools (community members as mentors), Nature Mapping (K-8 field studies), and Build SF (8-12 real-world design and architecture skills). Check it out at <http://www.edutopia.org/new-day-for-learning-two>

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c. A website to learn about neurobiological disorders – This site, created by psychologist Leslie Packer, helps educators understand students with neurobiological disorders such as ADD, Tourette Syndrome, and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, with suggestions for classroom strategies and links to resources: <http://www.SchoolBehavior.com>.

“News to Use: For Better Understanding” in *Middle Ground*, February 2009 (Vol. 12, #3, p. 6)

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d. Poetry website – Online Poetry Classroom has discussion forums, links, curriculum units and lesson plans, biographies of poet, and more than 2,000 poems: <http://www.poets.org>.

“News to Use: Online Poetry Resources” in *Middle Ground*, February 2009 (Vol. 12, #3, p. 7)

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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:

Individual subscriptions are \$50 for the school year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and information on paying by check or credit card.

Website:

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- What readers say
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

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- 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
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Catalyst Chicago
Changing Schools (McREL)
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
New York Times
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
The Atlantic Monthly
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools/The Learning Principal