Marshall Memo 332

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
April 19, 2010

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"The sources of educational science are any portions of ascertained knowledge that enter into the heart, head, and hands of educators, and which, by entering in, render the performance of the educational function more enlightened, more humane, and more truly educational than it was before."

John Dewey, 1929 (quoted in item #1)

"[I]f the community of teachers looks overwhelmingly within itself, new research cannot break in… There is the danger of simply recycling old, stale concepts rather than spreading strong practice."

Shazia Rafiullah Miller, Karen Drill, and Ellen Behrstock (*ibid*.)

"It's not magic. It can be used very badly or well."

Physics professor Michael Dubson on "clicker" technology (see item #8)

"The teacher just has to be more interesting than YouTube."

Physics professor Eric Mazur on high-tech classroom distractions (*ibid*.)

"No amount of dedication, lesson planning, or content knowledge is sufficient to compensate for ineffective classroom and behavior management techniques that result in discordant learning environments."

Matthew Kraft (see item #2)

"Students are off-task when they don't perceive any benefit from on-task behavior."

Matthew Kraft (*ibid*.)

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1. Why the Worlds of Teachers and Research Are So Far Apart

In this thoughtful *Kappan* article, Illinois-based researchers Shazia Rafiullah Miller, Karen Drill, and Ellen Behrstock report on what they learned from nine focus groups with Chicago-area public school teachers about why educational research has so little impact on classrooms. It turns out that teachers *do* use research, but only under certain conditions:

- In response to an immediate, pressing concern – for example, how to differentiate instruction for English language learners;
- To gather information for an upcoming lesson or another specific content need;
- To reinforce a best practice they've encountered in the past;
- In a study group that uses research to improve teaching and learning.

When teachers do look for research, how do they know it's good? Miller, Drill, and Behrstock found that teachers have three criteria:

• *A trusted colleague vouches for it* – Most teachers rely on the opinions of seemingly authoritative colleagues within their school to decide whether research is credible. This is good if the teachers or administrators in question are well-informed, but if they aren't, teachers will be caught in a closed loop of less-than-helpful information. "There is the danger of simply recycling old, stale concepts rather than spreading strong practice," say the authors. "[I]f the community of teachers looks overwhelmingly within itself, new research cannot break in." A number of schools use study groups and outside readings to escape from this trap.

• *It's time-friendly* – Teachers have very little discretionary time to explore the Web and visit libraries to track down information, and they have even less time for turgid academic prose. "Good" research, therefore, is research that is readily accessible, practical, pithy, user-friendly, has bulleted lists, and avoids jargon. These criteria are, of course, quite different from those that drive academic researchers, whose work must have internal validity, rigorous analysis, strong methodological design, triangulated data, appropriate measurement, and peer review.

• *It's immediately relevant* – Teachers value research that can be put to work *tomorrow*. They are wary of studies that were conducted by non-teachers in settings that differ in significant ways from their own. Some teachers take this a step further, trusting only research that supports their current practices and backs up what they believe is already working with their students. "They're more likely to believe research that supports their current instructional pedagogy than research that might require them to substantially change their practice," say the authors.

What is to be done about this gaping disconnect between teachers and educational research? Miller, Drill, and Behrstock say the burden is on researchers, who should do four things to "improve the translation from research to practice":

- Acknowledge and use the strengths of teachers' local experts. "Teachers are likely to increase their use of research if they're pointed toward high-quality studies by colleagues and administrators," say the authors. School administrators can play a key role by putting good research summaries in teachers' hands.
- Adapt research to teachers' needs rather than expecting teachers to learn to read research. "Researchers who want their research to be used by teachers should present it in an easily accessible way," say the authors.
- Use existing venues for reaching teachers with user-friendly research, including the Doing What Works website – http://dww.ed.gov.
- Ensure that teacher preparation programs discuss the basics of good research.

This article leads with a 1929 quote from John Dewey: "The sources of educational science are any portions of ascertained knowledge that enter into the heart, head, and hands of educators, and which, by entering in, render the performance of the educational function more enlightened, more humane, and more truly educational than it was before."

"Meeting Teachers Half Way: Making Educational Research Relevant to Teachers" by Shazia Rafiullah Miller, Karen Drill, and Ellen Behrstock in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2010 (Vol. 91, #7, p. 31-34); this article can be purchased at http://www.pdkintl.org.

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2. Classroom and Behavior Management 101

"No amount of dedication, lesson planning, or content knowledge is sufficient to compensate for ineffective classroom and behavior management techniques that result in discordant learning environments," says former teacher and school founder Matthew Kraft in this helpful *Kappan* article. "Effective teaching and learning can take place only in a harmonious learning environment." To help move from discipline ringmaster to learning conductor, Kraft suggests five classroom management techniques and five behavioral management techniques:

• *Classroom management #1: Good curriculum* – "There's no substitute for teaching a rigorous curriculum that's relevant to students' lives and actively engages students in their own learning," says Kraft. "Despite common assumptions about the immature and impulsive nature of students, more often than not, they're making very calculated, rational choices to act inappropriately. Students are off-task when they don't perceive any benefit from on-task behavior."

• *Classroom management #2: Nonnegotiable rules* – Kraft believes that a short list of classroom rules should be laid down unilaterally by the teacher. In his own classroom, there were two rules: (a) Don't interrupt the speaker, and (b) Don't use inappropriate language.

• *Classroom management #3: Clear expectations* – Students are often flummoxed as they move from one teacher's expectations to another. "Students might be rewarded for interjecting ideas during history class while they're reprimanded in math for speaking without being called on," says Kraft. "They may be encouraged to get out of their seats in art class while they're prohibited from leaving their seats in English." Kraft believes there are three basic types of classroom activity, each with its own expectations:

- Direct instruction – Students stay at their desks, pay attention to the teacher, raise their hands before speaking, and speak one at a time.
- Working time – Students can get out of their seats, should direct their attention to their collective work, can speak freely, and can work with each other.
- Individual silent time- Students remain in their seats, direct their attention to their own work, should not speak out, and should work individually.

Kraft suggests telling students explicitly at the beginning of each lesson segment exactly which mode they're in and what the expectations are.

• *Classroom management #4: Smooth transitions* – Transitions can be ragged and lead to problems. They are best managed by "Do Now" assignments at the beginning of each class, clear routines, and assigning students jobs.

• *Classroom management #5: Getting attention* – "One of the simplest but most commonly cited frustrations among teachers is that they can't get their classes to quiet down," says Kraft. He suggests three techniques: (a) Ask for students' attention and wait – in other words, don't talk while students are talking; (b) Use a zero-noise device like a rain stick or chime; and (c) If things are out of control, raise your voice with a serious tone. "If you rarely shout, this is extremely effective because it startles students," says Kraft. "But be careful not to abuse it, or it loses its impact."

He then turns to behavior management. "Fundamentally," he says, "all behavior is a form of communication. Students are often unable to communicate or are uncomfortable expressing their feelings, so they act out." Here are his suggestions for preventing and dealing with this:

• *Behavior management #1: Behavior modification systems* – This is the teacher's way of communicating to students when their behavior is inappropriate. Kraft's system was to give a citizenship grade, with all student's grade reset to an A at the beginning of each class. He would then lower individual grades if a student used profanity, socialized during silent time, talked over someone, etc. Citizenship grades were factored into students' overall grades.

• *Behavior management #2: Avoiding public confrontations* – "Students will go to great lengths to avoid being embarrassed in front of their peers," says Kraft. "When students are publicly reprimanded, they often feel disrespected and respond by drawing teachers into arguments to bolster their image." Kraft suggests reprimanding students in silent or low-key ways, including physical proximity, hand signals, facial expressions, or indirect prompts such as, "Do you need anything to get started?"

• *Behavior management #3: Private conversations* – Inevitably, some students will challenge the teacher, and Kraft says the best strategy is to talk to the student away from his or

her peers. In these conversations, it's important to listen to the student first and make sure, if there is a reprimand, that the student understands the logic behind it, signing a contract if necessary.

• *Behavior management #4: Overcome the discipline myth* – What's the myth? That teachers love to get students in trouble. "Remind students daily that you're a teacher because you want to help them achieve their goals," says Kraft, "not because you want to police them in the classroom."

• *Behavior management #5: Communicating about moods* – Students should feel able to give you a heads-up if they are feeling poorly, and the teacher can model this by disclosing occasionally about feeling tired or frustrated. "When students learn to communicate about their moods, they're offering precious information that teachers can use to prevent conflicts," says Kraft. "Allowing an irritated student to work individually instead of in a group or to skip a turn at reading aloud is far better than forcing them into a situation that will likely cause them to act out."

"From Ringmaster to Conductor" by Matthew Kraft in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2010 (Vol. 91, #7, p. 44-47), http://www.pdkintl.org.

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3. Robert Marzano on Teaching Inference

(Originally titled "Teaching Inference")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Robert Marzano tackles inference, which is foundational to higher-order thinking. He gives two examples of students making erroneous inferences:

- A story: two children are walking alone through a forest. Inference: something bad is about to happen.
- A video shows the earth's elliptical orbit. Inference: it's summer when the earth is closer to the sun and winter when it's further away.

Marzano suggests four questions to help students analyze their inferences:

• *What is your inference?* This helps students realize they have filled in information that was "between the lines." Students who thought something bad was about to happen in the forest made a *default inference* based on other stories with similar plots. Students who guessed the cause of the seasons made a *reasoned inference* based on knowing that the closer you get to something hot, the hotter you get.

• *What information led to this inference?* This helps students articulate what was behind their inference (similar folk tales; experience with hot things).

• *Was your thinking valid?* The teacher probes: does something bad always happen in walking-in-the-woods stories? Is distance from the sun the key factor in the seasons?

• *Do you need to change your thinking?* This helps students continuously update their thinking as they gather new information – and remain alert to different twists in stories and the need for additional information in science scenarios.

"Teaching Inference" by Robert Marzano in *Educational Leadership*, April 2010 (Vol. 67, #7, p. 80-81); this article can be purchased at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/current_issue.aspx.

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4. Early-College High Schools

(Originally titled "From Hope to Belief")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Nancy Hoffman and Michael Webb tout the Early College High Schools Initiative, which was launched in 2002 with foundation and nonprofit support and is now operating in 208 schools in 24 states. "Challenge, not remediation, coupled with substantial supports and free college courses in high school," they say, "can result in college success for students underrepresented in higher education."

What can make this counterintuitive idea succeed? Most early-college high schools are small (100 or fewer students at each grade level), are situated on or near a college or community college campus, and strive to give students a high-school diploma and up to two years of transferable college credit (or an associate's degree). Using 6-12 and 9-12 grade configurations (sometimes adding a fifth year in a 9-12 course of study), they make a point of recruiting students who are at risk of not making it to college. Entering freshmen and sophomores get intensive academic and counseling support, including programs like AVID, putting them on what used to be called the "smart kids' track" – skipping grades rather than repeating them. Juniors and seniors begin taking college courses, and students "wear their college credits like scout badges of success," say Hoffman and Webb. Early-college students don't regard themselves as geniuses, just as hard-working students with dreams of becoming filmmakers, scientists, nurses, youth advocates, and lawyers.

Hoffman and Webb's organization, Jobs for the Future, recently conducted a study of early-college schools and identified two key success factors, which seem to be especially important for male students:

• *The power of place* – Being part of the college community and being exposed to academic challenge and a wider world of opportunity they might never have imagined is huge. "The campus experience is especially powerful for first-generation students," say Hoffman and Webb. "They interact with college professors in multigenerational classrooms where they learn about the good (and bad) choices their classmates have made. They attend guest lectures, and they use college writing and math centers, the library, and athletic facilities."

• *The power of support* – Early-college students get an exceptional level of academic and personal support, including extended-day schedules (often including weekends), tutoring, critical-thinking courses, discussions with college students, and "stretch" courses that extend a one-semester course over an entire year to allow greater depth.

Two challenges to setting up more early-college schools are funding (needed for high-school students to take college courses for free) and state regulations that often prevent college courses from being substituted for high-school credits. These can be surmounted. Even more important, conclude Hoffman and Webb, is the belief system of early-college staff. "They must

believe that every student will develop an identity as a college goer from day one," they say, "and they must act on this belief not by exhortation but by preparing students to enter and pass college courses."

"From Hope to Belief" by Nancy Hoffman and Michael Webb in *Educational Leadership*, April 2010 (Vol. 67, #7, p. 54-58); this article can be purchased at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/current_issue.aspx. The authors can be reached at nhoffman@jff.org and mwebb@jff.org.

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5. How the "Sheepskin Effect" Differs from Group to Group

In this *Education Week* article, Alyson Klein reports on a recent *American Sociological Review* study showing that students who are African-American, Latino, low-income, and whose parents received only a high-school education get a more significant income bump from attending college than students from other racial and economic groups. Specifically, disadvantaged male and female college graduates earned 30 percent and 35 percent more over their lifetimes, respectively, than students from similar circumstances who had only a high-school diploma, compared to a 10 percent and 20 percent income advantage of more-advantaged male and female college graduates over peers who earned only a high-school diploma.

Why is a college degree more important to the futures of minority and low-income youth? Because middle-class youth are better able to tap parental and other social connections for employment if they decide not to go to college. Less-advantaged youth need the college degree to break into higher levels of the labor market.

"College Seen to Aid Disadvantaged Youths the Most" by Alyson Klein in *Education Week*, April 7, 2010 (Vol. 29, #28, p. 15), e-link for subscribers only. The full study, "Who Benefits Most from College?" by Jennie Brand and Yu Xie, is available at http://www2.asanet.org/journals/asr/2010/brandapril10.pdf

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6. Improving High-School Guidance Counseling

(Originally titled "Why Guidance Counseling Needs to Change")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Public Agenda officials Jean Johnson, Jon Rochkind, and Amber Ott report that guidance counseling received "stunningly poor reviews" in their recent survey of young adults:

- 60 percent rated their high-school guidance counselors fair or poor on helping think about careers;
- 67 percent rated them fair or poor on helping decide which college to attend;
- 55 percent rated them fair or poor on helping with the college admissions process;
- 33 percent rated them poor on figuring out how to pay for college;

- 48 percent said they remembered feeling like "just another face in the crowd" with their counselor;
- Some felt counselors paid attention only to students who seemed likely to go to college.

"These are harsh judgments – perhaps too harsh – of a group of professionals who must routinely feel besieged and overworked," say Johnson, Rochkind, and Ott, "scarcely able to keep up with the demands and expectations placed on them." The American School Counselor Association says that the counselor-to-student ratio should be 1 to 100, but the average caseload nationwide is 265, in Minnesota, Arizona, and Washington, D.C. it's over 700, and in California, it's 1,000.

In addition, many counselors are asked to spend a substantial portion of their time on test administration, attendance monitoring, discipline, untangling scheduling snafus, and substitute teaching. Most school districts seem to think that counselors can juggle all this and still give meaningful counseling to hundreds of students. But this is clearly not going to happen in many high schools today, where a large majority of students want to go to college and about 60 percent come from families with no experience with the college selection and application process.

What is to be done? Johnson, Rochkind, and Ott make the following recommendations for improving guidance:

- Reduce the student-counselor ratio;
- Relieve counselors of other chores;
- Improve the preparation and training of counselors and provide ongoing PD;
- Have guidance counselors in the same school specialize, with some focusing on college and careers while others focus on one-on-one help and dropout prevention.

They close with some deeper questions:

- When should students begin thinking about their educational and career goals?
- How can we let students try out different ideas about their future careers, changing their minds as they mature?
- Should we encourage all students to go to college?
- What should we do when a student's academic skills simply don't match his or her career goals?

"Why Guidance Counseling Needs to Change" by Jean Johnson with Jon Rochkind and Amber Ott in *Educational Leadership*, April 2010 (Vol. 67, #7, p. 74-79); this article can be purchased at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/current_issue.aspx. The authors can be reached at jjohnson@publicagenda.org, jrochkind@publicagenda.org and aott@publicagenda.org.

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7. Should Value-Added Data Be Used to Evaluate Teachers?

In this *Education Week* commentary article, Columbia Teachers College president Susan Fuhrman explores whether student achievement should be a factor in teacher evaluation,

as the Obama administration is urging in its Race to the Top program. To be fair to teachers, says Fuhrman, it's important to control for family and economic factors that are beyond their control – which points to measuring student growth (or lack of growth) *within* the school year.

But Fuhrman cites a recent report from the National Research Council and the National Academy of Education raising concerns about making high-stakes decisions about teachers based on value-added data. For such measures to be fair and accurate, students need to be randomly assigned to different classrooms and all other factors must be equal. Here are some ways this might not be true:

• In some schools, administrators assign the neediest students to the "best" teachers; in other schools, the neediest students wind up having the newest and least experienced teachers.

• Many state tests cover different content and skills at different grades and are not vertically scaled to make grade-to-grade growth comparisons. This means that test-score gains don't have the same meaning across grades.

• A classroom that has high student turnover during the year may experience poor learning growth, through no fault of the teacher.

• If class size is small, the scores of one or two students can disproportionately raise or lower the class's achievement.

• The work of pullout and specialist teachers can affect the achievement of students for better or for worse, complicating the job of measuring the homeroom teacher's value-add.

• Some students get more help outside school – with their homework, in one-on-one parent help, from tutors, or in after-school programs – than others.

Fuhrman says that all this means we should be cautious about making high-stakes evaluative decisions about teachers based on before-and-after test scores. "Value-added approaches hold great promise," she says, "but there is a need to develop better tests (and other thoughtful measures of student learning) and better measures of teacher practice to use along with test scores, so they are not the sole factor used to evaluate teacher effectiveness."

"Tying Teacher Evaluation to Student Achievement: Caution, Yellow Light Ahead" by Susan Fuhrman in *Education Week*, April 7, 2010 (Vol. 29, #28, p. 32-33), e-link for subscribers only

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8. "Clickers" in Classrooms – Do They Help?

This Associated Press article in *Education Week* reports on the growing use of "clickers" (wireless audience-response devices) to check for real-time student understanding in college, nursing school, professional school, and K-12 classes. Do clickers improve student learning? An article in the November issue of the *North American Journal of Psychology* reports that some studies show modest gains in retention and test scores while others have found little or no improvement. "It's not magic," says University of Colorado physics professor Michael Dubson. "It can be used very badly or well." In his classes, the stakes for clicker questions are relatively low: right answers are bonus points, counting for a maximum of two percent of a student's grade. The clickers also keep track of students' attendance.

Dubson and others have found that clickers are at their best when instructors use them to spark discussion and get students explaining concepts to one other. Clickers are much less effective when they are used sporadically or to test rote memorization. Two-thirds of the 30,000 students at the University of Colorado carry clickers to class, and although there is some grumbling about the cost, the responsibility of remembering them, replacing batteries, and some professors' use of clickers to play attendance cop and spring pop quizzes, most students are positive. "It's a good impetus to pay attention and not let your mind wander during the lecture," says junior William Powell. "You can see how other people are doing compared to you… and analyze why someone may have picked a different answer."

Some instructors prefer simple clickers that can handle only multiple-choice questions; others prefer fancier clickers that let students enter text responses; a third option is using new Web applications for smartphones and laptops that allow students to answer instructors' questions in their own words, query the professor by text or e-mail during the class, and e-chat with classmates about the content. The argument for simple remotes is that they reduce distractions in a multitasking world. The counter-argument is that fighting the march to smartphones and digital tablets is a losing battle. Eric Mazur, who pioneered the use of clickers and peer instruction in his Harvard physics classes (see Marshall Memo 241 for a summary of his work), predicts that clickers will be obsolete in ten years because everyone will have a laptop, tablet, or smartphone and be able to use the Web applications. As for distractibility, Mazur believes that's all about engaging instruction. "The teacher just has to be more interesting than YouTube," he says.

"Professors Ask, Is Classroom Clicking Better Learning?" by Associated Press, *Education Week*, April 7, 2010 (Vol. 29, #28, p. 10), e-link for subscribers only

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9. A Book That Clarifies What Guided Reading Is

This *Reading Today* review of the new book, *Preventing Misguided Reading: New Strategies for Guided Reading Teachers* by Jan Miller Burkins and Melody Croft (Corwin Press 2010), notes the widespread misunderstanding of the term "guided reading." Why the confusion? Burkins and Croft think it's because subtleties have gotten lost in translation as the concept has been disseminated, plus the pressure of accountability has led some teachers to revert to more traditional methods, still calling them guided reading. So what is guided reading, really? The authors list these key components:

- Teaching lessons in small groups.
- Attempting to match students to texts at their instructional reading level.
- Using a text gradient to help match texts to students.
- Teaching groups with a common text.
- Assigning students to specific groups that may change text levels but change little in terms of configuration.
- Introducing the text.
- Listening to individual students read the text.

- Scaffolding student reading with prompts.
- Asking students questions about the story or engaging them in conversation about the text.
- Engaging students in direct instruction based on reading behavior they exhibit.

"Guided reading is not really about levels, benchmark texts, or offering the right prompt to students when they struggle with words," say Burkins and Croft. "Rather, guided reading is, for us, about supporting students as they develop strategic approaches to meaning making." That means scaffolding students toward being independent readers and gradually releasing responsibility to students.

"How to Teach Toward Students' Reading Process" in *Reading Today*, April/May 2010 (Vol. 27, # 5, p. 31).

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10. An Arkansas Community Reads the Same Book Together

This *Reading Today* article describes how Bentonville (AR) had the entire community – students, teachers, staff, parents, and others connected to the city's nine elementary schools – read *The Trumpet of the Swan* by E.B. White during the month of February. Parents were asked to read the book aloud to their children each day, following a pacing guide, and organizations throughout the community – from Cub Scouts to Wal-Mart – were encouraged to promote the program. The result was a community-wide buzz about the book and lots of positive energy. One parent said, "With afterschool activities, friends, and a general lack of common interest in books, it is rare that I can get my kids to listen to a book together. Having a school program has given them incentive and interest to participate. I have so enjoyed this time reading to my children and hearing their daily updates."

"One Community, One Book" in *Reading Today*, April/May 2010 (Vol. 27, # 5, p. 25). The One School, One Book program is the brainchild of Bruce Coffey and is run by Read to Them, a non-profit literacy organization – http://www.readtothem.org.

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11. Recommended Children's Picture Books

In this *Reading Today* feature, Illinois children's librarian Susan Dove Lempke showcases nine new books that she says are "lushly illustrated" and use words and pictures effectively to tell the story:

• *Mama's Bayou* by Dianne de Las Casas (Pelican 2010) ages 2-6 – A series of bayou animals – crickets, frogs, "skeeters", alligators, etc. – make their sounds in an echoing refrain.

• *Roly Poly Pangolin* by Anna Dewdney (Viking 2010) ages 2-6 – The author of *Llama, Llama, Mad at Mama* spins another animal tale that addresses the anxiety of human children.

• *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down* by Andrea Davis Pinkney (Little Brown 2010) ages 6-10 – The story of the Woolworth's counter sit-in of 1960 and how it spread in the Civil Rights Movement.

• *Cat the Cat, Who Is THAT?* By Mo Willems (Balzer & Bray 2010) ages 3-6 – Simple repetitive text with predictable page-turns – and then a twist.

• *SCHOOL! Adventures at the Harvey N. Trouble Elementary School* by Kate McMullan (Feiwel & Friends, July 2010) ages 7-11 – At this school, each student, teacher, and support staff member has a distinct personality quirk embodied in their names (principal Miss Ingashoe and janitor Iquit).

• *The Wonder Book* by Amy Krouse Rosenthal (Harper 2010) ages 6-10 – A collection of poems, palindromes, and random thoughts to stretch kids' imaginations.

• *Doodlebug: My Book in Drawing and Writing* by Karen Romano Young (Feiwel & Friends, July 2010) ages 9-13 – Twelve-year-old Doreen finds that doodling helps her manage her attention deficit disorder without Ritalin.

• *The Wimpy Kid Movie Diary* by Jeff Kinney (Amulet 2010) ages 7-12 – Another in the Wimpy Kid series.

• *I Dream of an Elephant* by Ami Rubinger (Abbeville 2010) ages 2-6 – A rhyming picture book with a built-in game, each spread asking a question that isn't answered in the text.

"Read Me, Look at Me! New Titles Engage Young Readers Accustomed to Visual Stimulation" by Susan Dove Lempke in *Reading Today*, April/May 2010 (Vol. 27, # 5, p. 30); for other book recommendations by Lempke, see Marshall Memos 191, 197, 217, 240, 264, 282, and 298.

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12. Short Item:

Global connections – In this *Educational Leadership* article (originally titled "How Flat Is Your Classroom?"), North Carolina teacher William Ferriter shares a number of websites designed to link teachers, students, and classrooms around the world:

• The Flat Classroom Project – http://www.flatclassroomproject.org/About

• International Education and Resource Network – http://iearn.org

• ePals – http://www.epals.com - elementary and middle-school connections with classes around the world

• Teach Connect – http://teachconnect.ning.com

"How Flat Is Your Classroom?" by William Ferriter in *Educational Leadership*, April 2010 (Vol. 67, #7, p. 86-87); this article can be purchased at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/current_issue.aspx. Ferriter can be reached at wferriter@hotmail.com.

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Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

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

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

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

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

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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
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
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Teachers College Record
The Atlantic Monthly
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Language Educator
The Learning Principal
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools