Marshall Memo 521

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
January 27, 2014

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"It turns out that for all their diversity, the strikingly successful groups in America today share three traits that, together, propel success. The first is a superiority complex – a deep-seated belief in their exceptionality. The second appears to be the opposite – insecurity, a feeling that you or what you've done is not good enough. The third is impulse control."

Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld (see item #1)

"The good news is that it's not some magic gene generating these groups' disproportionate success. Nor is it some 5,000-year-old 'education culture' that only they have access to. Instead their success is significantly propelled by three simple qualities open to anyone."

Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld (*ibid.*)

"Today, technology means that we're all available 24/7. And because everyone demands instant gratification and instant connectivity, there are no boundaries, no breaks."

David Solomon of Goldman Sachs (quoted in item #2)

"I mean, we all have these needs so you have to be careful about not being a vampire and sucking someone else dry, or hurting and discarding them. But you have to be really careful not to let someone do it to you, too, like dominate you, just because you like being liked or feeling attractive or whatever."

A teenager quoted in item #8

"I think that we have a lot of systems that train teachers to control behavior as opposed to changing it."

Camia Hoard, a Washington, D.C. administrator (quoted in item #6)

"If a first-grader has nine absences, that is not a six-year-old's problem; that's a family issue."

Joshua Starr, Montgomery County superintendent (quoted in item #6)

1. The "Triple Package" for Success in America

In this intriguing *New York Times* article, Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld (Yale Law School) ask why some American racial, ethnic, religious, and national-origin groups are doing much better than others. For example:

- Indian-Americans earn almost double the national average.
- Iranian-, Lebanese-, and Chinese-Americans are also disproportionately successful.
- In the last three decades, Mormons have become leaders in many businesses.
- Jews make up one-third of American Nobel laureates.
- Immigrants from Jamaica, Haiti, and Ghana are climbing the higher-education ladder faster than other groups.
- Over 25 percent of Nigerian-Americans have a graduate or professional degree compared with 11 percent of whites.
- In 1990, Cuban-Americans were twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites to earn over $50,000 a year, and all three Hispanic U.S. Senators are of Cuban origin.

At the same time…

- Some Asian-American groups, including Cambodian- and Hmong-Americans, are among the poorest in the U.S.
- The same is true of some predominantly white communities in central Appalachia.

The conventional wisdom is that all this is an artifact of social class – rich and well-educated parents pass along advantages to their children. But in many cases this is not true: more than half of immigrants from China are poor and poorly educated, and many Korean and Vietnamese children have thrived even if their parents weren't advantaged. Of the 620 Asian-American students admitted to selective Stuyvesant High School in New York City last year (in an entering class of 830), many were children of restaurant employees and other working-class parents.

Group advantages, of course, aren't permanent. For example, despite the fact that Asian-American students have a 63-point advantage over white students on the SAT, a 2005 study found that third-generation Asian-Americans performed no better than whites. And WASPs are no longer as dominant as they once were. "The fact that groups rise and fall this way punctures the whole idea of 'model minorities' or that groups succeed because of innate, biological differences," say Chua and Rubenfeld. "Rather, cultural forces are at work. It turns out that for all their diversity, the strikingly successful groups in America today share three traits that, together, propel success. This first is a superiority complex – a deep-seated belief in their exceptionality. The second appears to be the opposite – insecurity, a feeling that you or

what you've done is not good enough. The third is impulse control… Ironically, each element of the Triple Package violates a core tenet of contemporary American thinking."

• *Exceptionality* – Claims of group superiority are "specious and dangerous," say the authors, but successful groups tend to believe they are, in a deep sense, special. For example, Mormons are taught they are "gods in embryo" placed on earth to lead the world to salvation. Iranians refer to a Persian "superiority complex." At Passover Seders, most Jewish children hear that Jews are the "chosen" people.

• *Insecurity* – "[P]arents deliberately instilling insecurity in their children is almost unthinkable," say Chua and Rubenfeld. "Yet insecurity runs deep in every one of America's rising groups; and consciously or unconsciously, they tend to instill it in their children." Being outsiders engenders a sense of precariousness in immigrants (for example, early Cuban refugees encountered signs in apartment buildings, "No Dogs, No Cubans"), and this may lead new arrivals to tell their children, "They can take away your home or business, but never your education, so study harder." Chinese-American parents often impose extraordinary academic demands on their children ("Why only a 99?") and tell them that their success is a matter of "family honor." Asian-American high-school students have the lowest self-esteem of any racial group – while getting the best grades. "In combination with a superiority complex," say Chua and Rubenfeld, "the feeling of being underestimated or scorned can be a powerful motivator."

Overcoming prejudice has been more difficult for some groups. "For most of its history, America did pretty much everything a country could to impose a narrative of inferiority on its nonwhite minorities and especially its black population," say the authors. "Over and over, African Americans have fought back against this narrative, but its legacy persists… In any given family, an unusually strong parent, grandparent, or even teacher can instill in children every one of the three crucial traits. It's just much harder when you have to do it on your own, when you can't draw on the cultural resources of a broader community, when you don't have role models or peer pressure on your side, and instead are bombarded daily with negative images of your group in the media."

• *Impulse control* – As with the first two, this runs counter to what many parents tell their children (*Be happy now, live for the present*). "By contrast, every one of America's most successful groups take a very different view of childhood," say Chua and Rubenfeld, "inculcating habits of discipline from a very early age – or at least they did so when they were on the rise… At the same time, if members of a group learn not to trust the system, if they don't think people like them can really make it, they will have little incentive to engage in impulse control." In a recent reprise of the famous marshmallow experiment at the University of Rochester [see Marshall Memos 258, 292, 393, and 409 for more on this], children who had experienced a broken promise (the researchers promised a new art set and failed to deliver) almost always "failed" the test, eating the marshmallow immediately, while children who got the art set deferred gratification and resisted temptation.

Each of these three characteristics in isolation can lead to problems. A feeling of exceptionality can breed arrogance, intolerance, and complacency. Insecurity can create stress ("I'll never be good enough to please my parents") and hobble performance. Impulse control

can create unhealthy asceticism and take away the ability to experience beauty. Even together, they can be problematic: "Individuals striving for material success can easily become too focused on prestige and money, too concerned with external measures of their own worth," say Chua and Rubenfeld. In addition, "The same factors that cause poverty – discrimination, prejudice, shrinking opportunity – can sap from a group the cultural forces that propel success. Once that happens, poverty becomes more entrenched. In these circumstances, it takes much more grit, more drive, and perhaps a more exceptional individual to break out."

But for rising groups in American, the Triple Package has been a powerful engine of improvement. "The good news," conclude Chua and Rubenfeld, "is that it's not some magic gene generating these groups' disproportionate success. Nor is it some 5,000-year-old 'education culture' that only they have access to. Instead their success is significantly propelled by three simple qualities open to anyone. The way to develop this package of qualities – not that it's easy, or that everyone would want to – is through grit. It requires turning the ability to work hard, to persevere and to overcome adversity into a source of personal superiority. This kind of superiority complex isn't ethnically or religiously exclusive. It's the pride a person takes in his own strength of will."

"What Drives Success?" by Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld in *The New York Times*, Jan. 26, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/26/opinion/sunday/what-drives-success.html?_r=0

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2. Why Do People Work Crazy Hours?

In this troubling *New Yorker* article, James Surowiecki explores the pressures that lead many up-and-coming leaders in the financial world [and the world of K-12 schools] to work very long hours "and forgo anything resembling a normal life." Thirty years ago, the best-paid workers in the U.S. were much less likely to work long hours than the lowest-paid workers, but now the opposite is true, and the trend seems to be accelerating.

This has led some businesses to try limiting the hours people work and requiring them to take at least four weekend days a month off – but it's not clear that it's having much impact. One consulting firm forbade employees from coming to the office on weekends and found they were spending their weekends working at home. "Today, technology means that we're all available 24/7," says David Solomon of Goldman Sachs. "And because everyone demands instant gratification and instant connectivity, there are no boundaries, no breaks."

Surowiecki says this makes no sense, since research shows that working long hours has a negative effect on productivity and quality:

- Among industrial workers, overtime work is associated with an increase in mistakes and safety mishaps.
- For knowledge workers, fatigue and sleep deprivation detract from higher cognitive performance.
- In one study, bankers who worked long hours for four years suffered from depression, anxiety, and immune-system problems and their creativity and judgment declined.

But expectations within an organization can lead people to ignore obvious problems. In hospitals, for example, senior doctors who suffered through the grueling residency experience are apt to say to young residents, "I went through it, so you should." Besides, medical residents are a source of cheap labor, and in other workplaces, it seems cheaper to pay one person to work 100 hours than to pay two people to work 50 hours.

"In a culture that venerates overwork, people internalize crazy hours as the norm," says Surowiecki. "Over time, the simple fact that you work so much becomes proof that the job is worthwhile, and being in the office day and night becomes a kind of permanent initiation ritual."

"The Cult of Overwork" by James Surowiecki in *The New Yorker,* Jan. 27, 2014, http://www.newyorker.com/talk/financial/2014/01/27/140127ta_talk_surowiecki

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3. Effective Curriculum, Assessments, and Follow-Up

"This generation is motivated by achievable challenges," says author/speaker Bobb Darnell in this thoughtful article in *AMLE Magazine*. "They actually thrive on assessment and improvement. They play video games or participate in sports or other organized activities for hundreds of hours to 'get good' at them." Here's what Darnell believes today's students are saying to their teachers:

• *Please show us the essential concepts, vocabulary, and skills in each unit and clearly communicate the learning goals*. Kids need to see the big picture – the structure and organization of what they are supposed to learn. "The big picture gives them a sense of safety, which allows them to take learning risks," says Darnell. "Without the structures, learning seems random, chaotic, and overwhelming to some students – like trying to put together a 1,000-piece puzzle without the picture on the box."

• *Please use a variety of assessments that have real-life connections and show and tell us the characteristics of a great product or performance*. Clones of state tests don't do this, says Darnell. "Assessment-literate teachers vary their assessments, using product and performance assessments and authentic tasks to give students opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and apply what they've learned… These assessments can spark students' intrinsic motivation when they involve relevant issues and intriguing situations, encourage problem solving and decision making, and promote creativity." Students also want exemplars of high-quality work and guidelines for what makes it good.

• *Please assess us often, covering smaller amounts of information at a time and giving us feedback on our progress*. Continuous feedback is part of students' video-game culture, and it's expected in sports. "We can help them feel this way about classroom learning and assessment," says Darnell, "but not if we make them wait days before we give them feedback on their progress." Students shouldn't go more than five days without an assessment and quick feedback on their progress – exit slips, summaries, graphic organizers, mini-quizzes, self-assessments, and checklists.

• *Please analyze the assessment results to determine my strengths and weaknesses, teach me strategies to improve, and let me redo or retake assessments*. What were the reasons for those disappointing results? "Was it questionable assessment items, mismatches between instruction and assessment, or a lack of students' prerequisite knowledge or skills?" asks Darnell. "Students especially want us to recognize that they lack the learning-to-learn strategies and skills they need to succeed." Students need immediate correctives, different approaches to learning, small-group study sessions, individual tutoring, and computer-assisted instruction as a follow-up.

"Listening to the Data" by Bobb Darnell in *AMLE Magazine*, January 2014 (Vol. 1, #5, p. 10-13), www.amle.org; Darnell can be reached at bobbdarnell@mac.com.

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4. How to Cultivate "Grit"

In this article in *AMLE Magazine*, consultant/writer Rick Wormeli says that in some domains, today's students are incredibly tenacious: "If the story is good, they read 700-page books. They play online games, working their way through 12 levels of difficulty for six hours or more. They stay well into the evening hours to practice for theater productions and sports tournaments, and they work diligently for weeks on video projects to support favored causes." But in other arenas, not so much. They abandon a website if it doesn't download in two seconds. They think they know world events by skimming headlines and listening to short sound bites. They tune out if a text message is too long. And long reading assignments are anathema. So how do we build stick-to-it-iveness in classrooms? Here are Wormeli's suggestions:

• *Cultivate trust*. "Students will take risks and push themselves harder if they can trust the adult in charge won't humiliate them," he says. Don't use sarcasm and "gotcha" language. Some positive examples: "Can you help me find the supportive details in this paragraph?" "The first part of your response provides the insight we needed. Tell me more about that second part."

• *Make connections*. When a student is deciding whether to watch a movie with a friend or finish a project that's due tomorrow, the deciding factor will be whether the student wants to avoid disappointing the teacher.

• *Be happy*. Students are drawn "to the bright oasis of the teacher who keeps cynicism and indifference at bay," says Wormeli.

• *Provide descriptive feedback*. Focus on the decisions students made while doing their work, he suggests: "Judgments and labels shut down the reflective, growth-mindset process." Some templates*: I noticed you decided to _____. As a result, you were able to _____*.

• *Show growth*. Use pre-assessments to set a baseline and create a growth-over-time dynamic, says Wormeli: "When students see that they were once struggling and then worked hard and eventually achieved success, they are more likely to endure the next challenge; they have personal proof that they can go from nothing to full success if they put in the time and energy necessary."

• *Provide constructive responses to relearning and reassessing*. An unchangeable 'F' grade teaches very little. Better for a student to go through the steps of a failed project a second time and get it right.

• *Provide meaningful work*. Students respond to real-life connections. "Meaning-making is the root of perseverance," says Wormeli.

• *Clearly articulate the goals*. "At any given moment, every student in our classes should be able to tell us both the learning goal/objective and where he is in relation to it," he says. "If the goal is vague, we're more likely to put it off and we give it less energy in its completion."

• *Provide multiple tools and models*. If students believe they have the building blocks, they're more likely to commit their effort.

• *Make sure students experience success*. "Nothing motivates students to stick with something like success," says Wormeli. "We all enjoy complex, demanding challenges if we have the tools to achieve them and proof of success."

"Perseverance and Grit" by Rick Wormeli in *AMLE Magazine*, January 2014 (Vol. 1, #5, p. 41-43), www.amle.org; Wormeli can be reached at rwormeli@cox.net.

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5. Making Science Tests Fun

In this charming article in *Science Scope*, former middle-school science teacher Fred Ende says that if students are uncomfortable and anxious when they take assessments, validity and reliability suffer, no matter how well-designed the assessment is. "[A]nxious students are often less able to concentrate (thus affecting validity) and regularly second-guess their thinking (likely having an impact on reliability)," says Ende. "If we cannot even rely on the measures we've designed with reliability and validity in mind, how can we hope to accurately assess our students and provide them with useful feedback?"

One answer, he says, is to reduce students' anxiety by making assessments into stories that contain an element of humor and the unexpected. Here's one of his tests:

> **Snow Day!** It's a few weeks after the February break, and it seems like another regular day at school. You've attended your morning classes and are sitting in your fifth-period class when all of a sudden a tremendous blizzard begins. Before you know it, there is so much snow on the ground, students and faculty can't leave the building. The phone lines are down, and the roads are impassable. Looks like you'll be here for a while.
>
> - Which of the main types of energy did the snowflakes have right before they fell from the clouds? Why?
> - Some of the flakes that are falling are moving really fast! At what point in their fall would they have the greatest kinetic energy? Why?
> - Suddenly the heat shuts down and the temperature starts to drop. You open your binder and with the help of your handy-dandy belt-buckle thermometer, you begin to record the change in temperature. [A table with declining temperature over eleven minutes: 77, 72, 68, 66, 64, 62, 61, 60, 59, 58, 58 degrees]

- Graph the data in this table on the attached graph paper using a ruler, making sure to include labels for each axis, units for each label, and a title.
- Calculate the rate of change for your line from zero to five minutes in the space below, showing all your work.
- Is this graph an example of a direct or inverse relationship?
- What happens to the rate of change in this graph as time changes? How do you know?

When Ende first rolled out a story assessment, a few students asked, "Is this for real?" and when he said yes, he got smiles, head-shakes, and blank stares. "Interestingly, five minutes later, the mood seemed to have lifted dramatically," he says. "An otherwise quiet room was interspersed with laughter as students read through the more humorous segments. Students would look up at me, make eye contact, and grin before going back to their work, and I'm confident that the majority of students were smiling as they finished that first assessment, regardless of whether or not they believed they did well."

Did the story assessments affect performance? Ende says that compared to tests on the same content the year before, scores were 10 percent higher. More important, students were happier after taking the tests, according to surveys conducted during the year: 90 percent of students said they preferred this type of test, and 75-80 percent said the tests lowered their anxiety level. Students were also more likely to ask for help when they finished, especially students who hadn't reached out for help before. "Whether students inquired about where the story came from or told me how bad my sense of humor was, the narrative nature of the assessments served as a bridge to discussing student achievement, giving feedback, and constructing steps for future improvement," he says.

Ende kept creating story assessments over several years, and says students frequently came back to tell him how much they enjoyed his tests. Here are his suggestions for writing such assessments:

- First, create your test in the "standard" format, focusing on the "big ideas" and skills students are expected to master.
- Think about a story that might fit. Do you want a character in it? Should students play a role? Can you use any humorous situations from your classroom, current events, or pop culture?
- Create the story, focusing at first on injecting personality and a moving plot. Don't make it too involved, and keep it light and humorous.
- Combine the story with the substance, starting with natural melding points. "The story should flow well, and remember, you're not writing a novella," says Ende. "Keep it simple."
- Do the assessment yourself and see how long it takes, adding time for students who work more slowly. Trim if necessary.
- Administer and make adjustments based on students' reactions and performance.
- Compare results with standard assessments on the same content.

"Every Assessment Tells a Story" by Fred Ende in *Science Scope*, January 2014 (Vol. 37, #5, p. 32-37), http://digital.nsta.org/publication/index.php?i=188346&m=&l=&p=4&pre=&ver=flex; Ende can be reached at fende@pnwboces.org.

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6. Very Early Dropout Prevention

In this article in Harvard's *Ed. Magazine*, Jonathan Sapers describes how the Montgomery County Schools in Maryland traced the correlates of dropping out of high school all the way back to first grade. The early warning signs, indicating the beginnings of disengagement from school, were: having been absent nine or more times by the third marking period; being below grade level in reading and/or math; and/or having a calculated grade-point average below 1.3 in the third marking period. The district's retrospective research showed that 79 percent of eventual dropouts could be identified by these first-grade indicators. Conversely, 47 percent of first graders who had these indicators didn't end up dropping out.

Montgomery County chose ten schools to pilot an early intervention program for at-risk first graders and dubbed it EPIC: Early warning indicators, Personalized learning plan, Implementation, and Culture of high expectations. As the acronym indicates, the scope of the intervention is holistic, and it *names* children and focuses on what can be done for each one. "If a first-grader has nine absences, that is not a six-year-old's problem," says superintendent Joshua Starr; "that's a family issue… If a family is not able to get their kids to school, that family may be working with other agencies: Health and Human Services, the police department, juvenile justice, whatever it may be. And we've got to organize ourselves to work with those groups… It creates a degree of accountability and opportunity to say there are real-time indicators and real actions we can take every day to reverse the potential that some of our kids aren't going to graduate."

Montgomery PTA president Janette Gilman supports this early-intervention program, contrasting it to a grim medical diagnosis: "If I take a test and find out I'm prone to early Alzheimer's, what do I do?" she asks. "There's no intervention." But with first graders, there's a lot that can be done.

What kinds of data are most helpful at the school level? "If I were a first-grade teacher or principal of an elementary school, finding out that my students are at risk for not graduating from high school – it's important, but it's not very tangible or actionable or relevant to where I'm at today," says Jenny Curtin, coordinator for high-school graduation initiatives in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. "Saying that they're at risk for not reading by the end of third grade is really meaningful to the educators working in the building." Of the data on early warning signs, Curtin says "it's a tool to flag students… But it's not going to tell educators the root causes of what's happening with students. We'll never be able to have that information at the state level. That's always going to have to be done at the local level."

Camia Hoard, who works with elementary teachers in the Washington, D.C. schools, agrees and talks about her work improving classroom interventions: "I think that we have a lot of systems that train teachers to control behavior as opposed to changing it. What I would like to see happen from the perspective of my teaching experience is to take a look at what things we are doing as teachers that are pushing kids out." Hoard is especially concerned about the green-yellow-red-light discipline system used by many teachers. "You've done something wrong, now you're on yellow; you've done something wrong again, now you're on red; now

we tell your mom." Much better to say, "Let's have a conference about why walking in a line is important or safety issues around body space," or "What can Ms. Hoard do to help you?"

Digging into the data can yield surprising results. In one Ohio school, large numbers of ninth graders were failing one or more courses and the immediate suspects were algebra and English. But closer examination revealed that biology was the problem – a course that required more writing than students could handle. The school dialed back on biology writing requirements and shifted the course later in the year, replacing it with physical science. In another school, a surge in student absences turned out to be caused by parents working double shifts, with older students tasked to get their younger siblings to school. The solution: a night-school option for credit recovery.

"Dropping Out: Is Your First Grader At Risk?" by Jonathan Sapers in *Ed. Magazine*, Winter 2014 (p. 28-33), http://bit.ly/1mQo4hu

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7. Supporting Common Core in the School Library

In this article in *Knowledge Quest*, Ruth Uecker, Shelly Kelly, and Marni Napierala (Great Falls Schools in Montana) suggest how school librarians can support each of the major shifts involved in the Common Core State Standards:

• Balancing informational and literary texts:
- Increase the percent of nonfiction text in the library collection.
- Motivate students through nonfiction book talks.
- Learn about students' interests.
- Teach strategies for accessing print and electronic nonfiction materials.
- Teach reading skills specific to nonfiction material.

• Knowledge in the disciplines:
- Plan and co-teach lessons on content-specific topics with classroom teachers.
- Teach strategies for research skills and help students apply them directly to a project.

• Staircase of complexity:
- Review the current collection and work with classroom teachers to determine the genres and complex texts that students will need to use.
- Teach how to choose appropriate texts.
- Support the teaching of reading strategies.
- Ascertain students' reading levels and use them with book selection and projects.
- Expose students to more-rigorous text aligned to what is being taught in the classroom.

• Text-based answers:
- Teach students how to select a source and evaluate possible bias.
- Help students develop their critical-thinking skills.
- Teach students how to support a claim or assertion by drawing on a selected text.

• Writing from sources:
- Align the library collection with current, updated source material.
- Get students accessing information, researching topics, and citing sources.

- Guide students through the process of reading and writing.
- Teach students how to use text references and evidence to support conclusions and opinions.

• Academic vocabulary:

- Provide access to resources with rich, engaging vocabulary.
- Focus instruction on the comprehension of essential and commonly-used words so students are constantly building richer vocabularies.

"Implementing the Common Core State Standards: What Is the School Librarian's Role?" by Ruth Uecker, Shelly Kelly, and Marni Napierala in *Knowledge Quest*, January/February 2014 (Vol. 42, #3, p.), www.alaorg/aasl; Uecker can be reached at ruth_uecker@gfps.k12.mt.us.

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8. Is Reading Popular Fiction Worthwhile?

In this article in *Education Week*, Jeffrey Wilhelm (Boise State University) and Michael Smith (Temple University) push back on the notion that students get much more from reading literary fiction than popular fiction – the idea that reading good literature is like cod liver oil (you may not like it, but it's good for you), while popular fiction is worthless and even degrading. Wilhelm and Smith cite research findings that when students *enjoy* reading and do lots of it, their academic and social skills benefit. Interviews with teenagers showed that romance novels helped them learn about other people's strengths and shortcomings; helped them deal with the struggle to become adults; and helped them think about what an admired character in a book would have done in a similar situation. One student had this to say about reading vampire books: "I mean, we all have these needs so you have to be careful about not being a vampire and sucking someone else dry, or hurting and discarding them. But you have to be really careful not to let someone do it to you, too, like dominate you, just because you like being liked or feeling attractive or whatever."

"Reading for pleasure outside of school has real and long-lasting benefits," say Wilhelm and Smith. "Adults should listen hard to the wisdom of young readers of marginalized texts, who, as they read these texts, are deepening their understanding of themselves in the world and expanding the possibilities of who they might become."

"Don't Underestimate the Power of Pleasure Reading" by Jeffrey Wilhelm and Michael Smith in *Education Week*, Jan. 22, 2014 (Vol. 33, #18, p. 25), www.edweek.org;

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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 43 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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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 Update/Curriculum Update
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Middle School Journal
NASSP Journal
NJEA Review
Perspectives
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
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Teaching Children Mathematics
Teaching Exceptional Children/Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The District Management Journal
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
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