Marshall Memo 450

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
September 3, 2012

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"I always wanted to be one of those business ladies walking downtown with my briefcase, everybody saying, 'Hi, Miss Lerma!'"

Kewauna Lerma, South Side Chicago teenager (see item #5)

English: *He is an intelligent boy who could do very well.* French: *A disappointing result. He is so fond of obtaining a cheap laugh in class that he has little time for serious concentration.* Mathematics: *Poor. He never makes any really sensible effort.* Art: *Very satisfactory.* Religious instruction: *His work has been of a low standard.* Headmaster's end-of-year comment: *He has too many of the wrong ambitions and his energy is too often misplaced.*

Excerpts from John Lennon's report card, Quarry Bank School, Liverpool, England, 1955-56 (age 15), on display at Rock and Rock Hall of Fame, Cleveland, Ohio

"Character is created by encountering and overcoming failure."

Paul Tough (paraphrased in item #5)

"Our school has shifted from a focus on *my* kids to a focus on *our* kids when thinking about teaching."

A middle-school teacher (see item #1)

"Yes, there are illnesses and family emergencies that necessitate teacher absence. It seems to me, however, that we could do a better job of providing professional development for educators outside of student instructional time. Professional development should be scheduled on noninstructional days and during the summer. Such practices both decrease impediments to student achievement and serve to raise teacher salaries by paying them for their extra time. It also reduces the need for substitutes."

Patrick Durow, Creighton University (NE), in a letter responding to an article on substitute teaching (Memo 449) in *Education Week*, Aug. 29, 2012 (Vol. 32, #2, p. 20)

1. Key Factors in Successful Professional Learning Communities

In this thoughtful article in *Teachers College Record*, Tamara Holmlund Nelson, David Slavit, and Angie Deuel of Washington State University/Vancouver note the great popularity of "professional learning community" work in schools around the country and report on their five-year study of secondary-school math and science teachers working collaboratively with student-learning data such as classwork, homework, oral responses, quizzes and tests, and lab reports. Their goal was to get inside the "black box" of teacher collaboration and find the specific components of successful PLCs.

"Despite the 'optimistic premise' of PLCs," the authors say, "there are numerous pitfalls associated with the enactment and scaling up of these efforts." All too many teachers lack the skills and support to use data in ways that improve classroom practices, and some districts put too much pressure on schools to raise test scores versus pursuing the deeper, longer-range goals of improving instruction and student understanding.

Nelson, Slavit, and Deuel found that teachers' *stance* toward PLC work was what made the difference in how well they used data – "their beliefs and perspectives about what constitutes worthwhile information, how these data might inform their collaborative goals… and the relationship between data, instruction, and learning…" Observing the PLC teams over five years, the authors found that some had a *proving* stance while others had an *improving* stance:

• *Proving stance* – These teams tended to operate at quite a general level, and used data to convince themselves that what they were doing was right. When they retaught material, they did so in the same or a similar manner with little attention to rethinking practice. The authors identified two levels of this stance and called the most rigid categorical:

- Student learning goals are generalizations and/or labels.
- Teachers' content knowledge consists of a set of discrete facts, skills, and isolated statements about concepts.
- Student learning data are used to verify the effectiveness of teaching practices.
- Teams seek confirmation of pre-existing questions related to student achievement.
- Student data tend to be viewed as summative.
- Teachers talk in terms of whether students "got it" or "didn't get it."
- Analysis centers on overall student-achievement trends.

A somewhat less rigid level of the proving stance is teaching-focused:

- With learning goals, there's some attention to sub-concepts within a big idea.
- Teachers know a predetermined set of learning goals.

- Data are used to guide practice.
- Teachers look at student work with respect to tightly bounded answers.
- Findings are used to make superficial or minimal changes in practice, or changes targeted to generalized student populations.
- Analysis uncovers trends in student achievement using refined categories with some attention to specific student understandings.
- Analysis centers on identification of trends in student achievement, sometimes in multiple areas.

• *Improving stance* – These teachers see assessments as tools to better understand their students' thinking, try new things, and improve classroom practice. The first of two levels of the improving stance is learning-focused:

- Learning goals are focused on sub-concepts, but they're not always linked to each other or a big idea.
- Teachers know the big idea they are teaching and isolated sub-concepts.
- Data are used to improve practice.
- Teachers learn from student understandings to improve teaching.
- Findings are used to reflect on and change targeted aspects of instructional practice.
- Analysis uncovers general trends in student thinking and achievement and teachers distinguish between general levels of student understanding.
- Item analysis is used to identify some trends in student ideas and overall understanding.

The highest level of an improving stance is nuanced:

- Learning goals link together specific sub-concepts within a big idea.
- Teachers understand big ideas and multiple, related sub-concepts.
- Teachers use data to think about practice.
- Teachers generate new questions and use data to pursue them.
- Findings are used for reflecting on and changing future practice.
- Analysis focuses on uncovering degrees of (or differences in) student understanding.
- Item analysis is used to identify specific student ideas and multiple views of student understanding.

Teachers with the improving stance also tend to see beyond their own classrooms. One middle school teacher said, "Our school has shifted from a focus on *my* kids to a focus on *our* kids when thinking about teaching."

Nelson, Slavit, and Deuel also analyzed the type of dialogue within PLC teams as they talked about data. They noticed a continuum from *no negotiation* to *sustained negotiation*. Here's the lowest level – disconnected talk:

- Teachers' comments are disconnected from each other and the group's collaborative purpose; teachers tell stories and give each other advice.
- Comments are authoritative statements or personal stories.
- Talk about teaching is general and there's frequent use of labels and generalizations.
- Claims are asserted as fact with only anecdotal evidence.
- Teachers are very sure of what they say.

- When questions are asked, they are technical, procedural, or personal; meanings, assumptions, beliefs, and values are seldom questioned – and when they are, it's considered rude.
- There are few links to instruction.
- Knowledge and beliefs are fixed.
- Teachers are congenial with each other, but some don't contribute.

The next level up is connected talk:

- Comments connect to an immediate task but don't build on other teachers' ideas.
- Ideas are shared as factual or authoritative.
- The dialogue is descriptive or evaluative with frequent use of labels and generalizations.
- Evidence is used to justify claims, sometimes with artifacts, often with anecdotes.
- Teachers occasionally express uncertainty or curiosity.
- Questions are procedural, technical, or for clarification; meanings, assumptions, beliefs, values are not pursued collectively.
- Links to instruction are seldom explored.
- Knowledge and beliefs are relatively fixed.
- Teachers are more or less congenial, with some members contributing only occasionally.

The next-to-top level is exploratory talk:

- Teachers build on each others' ideas with some pursuit of common meaning-making, critical comments, and alternatives.
- Teachers tacitly reach out to each other for genuine dialogue.
- The dialogue alternates between description and analysis.
- Evidence is shared, but it may be weak or unclear; questions are raised.
- There's a noticeable element of wondering and uncertainty.
- Authentic questions emerge; meanings, assumptions, beliefs, values are raised but may not be pursued deeply.
- Some links to instruction are made.
- Knowledge and beliefs are occasionally questioned and reexamined.
- Teachers are congenial, and most contribute in discussions.

The highest level is inquiry-based talk:

- Teachers' comments build on each other and dialogue spans meetings; teachers critique each other; alternatives are posed and examined.
- Teachers' comments are tentative and invite dialogue.
- Descriptions support analysis.
- Evidence is sought, provided, and critically analyzed by the group, and new questions are raised.
- Teachers hypothesize; group members often use tentative statements like, "I wonder," "Maybe," and "Do you think…"

- Authentic questions emerge from artifacts; meanings, assumptions, beliefs, and values are examined.
- Links to instructional practices are critically examined.
- Knowledge and beliefs are regularly questioned and examined.
- Teachers are collegial with each other and, over time, all participants contribute.

Nelson, Slavit, and Deuel close by speculating about the relationship between the two dimensions – are they linked? Can a teacher be at the *proving* end of the spectrum on the first dimension and the *inquiry* end on the other? And what's involved in getting teacher teams to the more effective levels? "[M]oving toward the more transformative ends of each dimension involves cultural, ideological, and intellectual shifts for many teachers," say the authors. Does there need to be a critical mass within a team to make it happen? "To what degree does a dominant voice, or a recalcitrant voice, impact a group stance?" they ask. "Is there a relationship between teacher buy-in for collaborative work in a PLC and an inquiry stance toward student-learning data?" More research is needed to answer these questions, they conclude.

"Two Dimensions of an Inquiry Stance Toward Student-Learning Data" by Tamara Holmlund Nelson, David Slavit, and Angie Deuel in *Teachers College Record*, August 2012 (Vol. 114, #8, p. 1-42), http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=16532

Back to page one

2. Grant Wiggins on the Fine Art of Giving Feedback

(Originally titled "7 Keys to Effective Feedback")

"Decades of education research support the idea that by teaching less and providing more feedback, we can produce greater learning," says author/consultant Grant Wiggins in this trenchant *Educational Leadership* article. He proceeds to clarify a fuzzy term: "Basically, feedback is information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal."

In some situations, feedback is unspoken and immediately informative: hitting a tennis ball, telling a joke, seeing if students are attentive. But when people give us feedback, it often takes the form of value judgments or advice. Aren't judgments and advice helpful? Not if you want to cause learning, says Wiggins. Telling a student, *Good work!* or *This is a weak paper* provides no actionable information. Telling a student, *You need more examples in your report,* or a baseball player, *You might want to use a lighter bat* is, in most cases, annoying. "Unless it is preceded by descriptive feedback, the natural response of the performer is to wonder, 'Why are you suggesting this?'" says Wiggins.

Here are examples of effective feedback: *Good work: Your use of words was more precise in this paper than in the last one, and I saw the scenes clearly in my mind's eye*. or *Each time you swung and missed, you raised your head as you swung so you didn't really have your eye on the ball. On the one you hit hard, you kept your head down and saw the ball*. Here are Wiggins's criteria for effective feedback:

• *Goal-referenced* – "Information becomes feedback if, and only if, I am trying to cause something and the information tells me whether I am on track or need to change course," he says. A teacher might say, *The point of this writing task is to make readers laugh. So, when rereading your draft or getting feedback from peers, ask, How funny is this? Where might it be funnier?*

• *Tangible and transparent* – "Alas, far too much instructional feedback is opaque," says Wiggins. He tells about a student who was confused by his teacher's frequent jotted comment on his English papers – "Vag-oo." (What the teacher meant was *vague*!) Wiggins recommends that teachers videotape themselves teaching at least once a month to see how clearly they are coming across to students.

• *Actionable* – Students need to know specifically what to do. The following pieces of feedback are not concrete, specific, or useful: *Good job! You did it wrong. B+.*

• *User-friendly* – Feedback should not be overly technical or more than the recipient can handle. "Expert coaches uniformly avoid overloading performers with too much or too technical information," says Wiggins. "They tell the performers one important thing they noticed that, if changed, will likely yield immediate and noticeable improvement."

• *Timely* – Too often, students have to wait days, weeks, or even months (in the case of standardized tests) for important feedback on their work. Feedback can arrive more quickly if teachers use technology or peer reviewers.

• *Ongoing* – "What makes any assessment in education formative is not merely that it precedes summative assessments, but that the performer has opportunities, if results are less than optimal, to reshape the performance to better achieve the goal," says Wiggins. "This is how all highly successful computer games work."

• *Consistent* – "Teachers need to look at student work together, becoming more consistent over time and formalizing their judgments in highly descriptive rubrics supported by anchor products and performances," says Wiggins.

Wiggins closes with a sports analogy. His daughter aspires to run a 5:00 mile. As she runs a practice race, her coach yells out split times, gives feedback ("You're not swinging your arms!"), tells her where she stands ("You're on pace for 5:15"), and gives advice ("Pick it up – you need to take two seconds off this next lap to get in under 5:10!"). Wiggins contrasts this to many schools' pacing guides and use of interim assessments. "They yield a grade against recent objectives taught, not useful feedback against the *final* performance standards," he says. All this does is give the teacher a schedule for rolling out the curriculum. "It's as if at the end of the first lap of the mile race," says Wiggins, "my daughter's coach simply yelled out, "B+ on that lap!" To make school feedback more like highly effective sports feedback, he advises gearing interim assessments toward bi-annual goals and using item analysis to give students (and teachers) real *feedback* on what needs work.

"7 Keys to Effective Feedback" by Grant Wiggins in *Educational Leadership*, September 2012 (Vol. 70, #1, p. 11-16), http://bit.ly/SLd3BU; Wiggins is at gwiggins@authenticeducation.org.

Back to page one

3. Mike Schmoker on Teacher-Evaluation Checklists

In this biting *Education Week* article, author/consultant Mike Schmoker lambastes what he calls "complex, bloated…jargon-laced, confusing" rubrics and checklists that some school administrators are being asked to use for classroom observations (he cites a 116-item rubric being used in one state – see Marshall Memo 424, #1). "Once again, we are rushing into a premature, ill-conceived innovation – without any solid evidence that it promotes better teaching," says Schmoker. "Like so many past reforms, this one will be launched nationally, like a bad movie, without being piloted and refined first. (Imagine if we did this with prescription drugs.)… Rather than improve schools, it will only crowd out and postpone our highest, most urgent curricular and instructional priorities."

Schmoker is also critical of the traditional teacher-evaluation model – pre-observation conferences, full-lesson classroom visits (announced in advance), and post-observation conferences – which he says is far too time-consuming and burdened with bureaucratic paperwork.

Not that teacher evaluation isn't important to getting better student results. Schmoker sees far too many ineffective teaching practices in American classrooms and knows they need to be addressed. But to be effective, school leaders need to "focus on only one or two elements at a time, with multiple opportunities for teachers to practice and receive feedback from their evaluators," he says.

Schmoker goes on to ridicule the language of some widely used teacher-evaluation rubrics:

- Lessons need to be taught with "simultaneous multisensory representations";
- Teachers should get their students to apply "interdisciplinary knowledge through the lens of local and global issues";
- Lessons should "reflect understanding of prerequisite relationships among topics and concepts and a link to necessary cognitive structures."

Getting feedback on criteria like these is not going to help teachers improve, says Schmoker. "Moreover, most of these frameworks insist – against all research and evidence to the contrary – that teachers must provide lessons that include special materials for each individual student or subgroup, all while addressing dozens of other criteria."

So what does Schmoker suggest? First, make sure every teacher has a clear, coherent statement of what their students should know and be able to do by the end of the school year (the Common Core is very helpful in this regard). Second, ensure that students have daily opportunities to read, discuss, and write, using high-quality, content-rich texts in all subject areas. "This simple, timeless emphasis is the key to success on tests, in college, and in careers," he says. And third, evaluate teachers on how well they are working with their teams to implement these key factors.

What about classroom visits? Schmoker believes they should be frequent, largely unannounced, and not encumbered by lengthy pre- and post-observation conferences – and administrators should look for these elements:

- A clear, well-defined purpose and objective;

- Student attention and engagement;
- Multiple short segments of instruction, immediately followed by…
- Opportunities for students to process and/or practice what was just taught…
- With the teacher checking for understanding, followed by…
- Adjustments to the lesson and pace to ensure that all students succeed.

In fairness, Schmoker concedes, these elements can be found in some rubrics and checklists. "But they are not written clearly or prominently enough to be seen as indispensable priorities," he says. "Instead, they are obscured by the dozens of other specious, confusing evaluation criteria that surround them."

"It is high time that the reform community grows up and learns that schools won't improve until we put the brakes on untested, overblown initiatives," Schmoker concludes. "These prevent us from focusing on the most effective practices long enough for them to take hold. Clear, minimalist, priority-driven teacher evaluation could play a central role in ensuring that such practices become the norm."

"The Next Education Fad: Complex Teacher Evaluations That Don't Work" by Mike Schmoker in *Education Week*, Aug. 29, 2012 (Vol. 32, #2, p. 24, 20), www.edweek.org

Back to page one

4. How to Get the Most Out of the Flipped Classroom

In this *Education Week* article, Katie Ash reports on recent criticisms of "flipped" classrooms (the idea of replacing traditional lectures with video tutorials, usually viewed by students at home, and using class time for hands-on, interactive learning). One concern is that students may not watch the videos. A second is that the quality of videos is not uniformly good.

A third concern is that instructional videos have the same disadvantages as in-person lectures – students are passive recipients of knowledge. "[W]hen you step back a little bit, what you're looking at is simply a time-shifting tool that is grounded in the same didactic, lecture-based philosophy," says San Francisco teacher Ramsey Musallam. "It's really a better version of a bad thing." In his high-school chemistry classes, he starts with exploratory, guided inquiry activities to pique students' curiosity; then students get basic instructions and materials to complete lab work and observe the phenomena they're studying; only then do they watch videos to address misconceptions and provide direct instruction. "I say keep the flip alive," says Masallam, "but lower the volume and think about it like we think about anything. It's a thing you do in the context of an overarching pedagogy," not the pedagogy itself.

Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams, Illinois teachers who began flipping their chemistry classes in 2006 and recently published a book on the subject, believe the big idea is more efficient use of homework and in-school instruction. "You need to figure out the answer to the question: What's the best use of your face-to-face instruction time?" says Bergmann. Initially, he and Sams required students to watch videos at home, take notes, and come to class with one thoughtful question on the material. Now they've shifted to what they call a "mastery based" model. Students get an outline for each curriculum unit along with all the resources

they will need for each objective: worksheets, textbook excerpts, and videos. Students are responsible for working through the materials at their own pace, taking tests and quizzes and performing labs when they're ready, with the teacher acting as a resource during class time. The assessments are remixes of material so that no two students take the same one.

Deb Wolf, a high-school instructional coach in South Dakota, sees the flipped model as a way to make time the variable and learning the constant. When she and her colleagues tried the mastery model, they found that some students used it well and others didn't. "For students who had not been challenged in the classroom, this was an opportunity to fly," she says. "For others, it was an opportunity to take the time that they needed to move slower. And for some, self-paced became no pace." Teachers realized they need to set deadlines to keep everyone on track; even then, engaging reluctant learners is a challenge.

Wolf is also concerned about how different teachers use the model. "You can't just hand the flipped classroom off to an ineffective teacher and say you're going to transform the classrooms," she says. "It's not going to make a bad teacher a good teacher."

Ash includes a sidebar with her article with tips for effectively flipping classrooms. Her suggestions:

- Immediately address the issue of access and create alternatives for students who don't have Internet access – for example, burning DVDs or creating lists of places students can get access.
- Be thoughtful about which parts of the curriculum to flip and when. Not everything lends itself to being flipped.
- Find a way to engage students in watching the videos – for example, requiring them to take notes, ask questions, or engage in discussion with each other.
- Don't feel you have to create your own videos. There is excellent material available online, including Khan Academy, YouTube EDU, and PBS.
- If possible, work with a partner to create videos. "Students enjoy hearing the back-and-forth conversation of two teachers, especially when one teacher plays the role of mentor while the other plays the role of learner," says Ash.

"Educators View 'Flipped' Model With a More Critical Eye" by Katie Ash in *Education Week*, Aug. 29, 2012 (Vol. 32, #2, p. S6-7), www.edweek.org

Back to page one

5. A Review of Paul Tough's New Book on Character

In the *New York Times Book Review*, Annie Murphy Paul praises Paul Tough's book, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). Most Americans subscribe to what Tough calls the "cognitive hypothesis" – that success is driven primarily by the kind of intelligence that's measured by I.Q. tests – brainy skills like recognizing letters and words, detecting patterns, and performing calculations. Tough believes in the "character hypothesis" – that success depends more on noncognitive skills like persistence, self-control, curiosity, conscientiousness, grit, and self-confidence.

"Psychologists and neuroscientists have learned a lot in the past few decades about where these skills come from and how they are developed," says Tough, and it can be summed up in one sentence: *Character is created by encountering and overcoming failure*. He believes that children at both ends of the economic spectrum are not getting enough of this kind of character building. Children who grow up in wealthy families are sheltered from adversity, even when they are young adults. Children who grow up in poor families have serious challenges with nutrition, medical care, their neighborhoods, and their schools, but often don't have the support to use these adversities to build character. "The book illuminates the extremes of American childhood," says Paul: "For rich kids, a safety net drawn so tight it's a harness; for poor kids, almost nothing to break their fall."

As we all know, some kids beat the odds. Tough profiles Kewauna Lerma, a Chicago teenager growing up in poverty on the South Side, who told him, "I always wanted to be one of those business ladies walking downtown with my briefcase, everybody saying, 'Hi, Miss Lerma!'" Tough muses, "What was most remarkable to me about Kewauna was that she was able to marshal her prodigious noncognitive capacity – call it grit, conscientiousness, resilience or the ability to delay gratification – all for a distant prize that was, for her, almost entirely theoretical. She didn't actually *know* any business ladies with briefcases downtown; she didn't even know any college graduates except her teachers."

Kewauna made it into college and is working hard, but she's the exception. Tough explains how for most poor children, a stressful environment affects the prefrontal cortex, undermining emotional and cognitive self-regulation. This is why so many children who grow up in poverty find it harder to sit still, concentrate, and follow directions in school. "When you're overwhelmed by uncontrollable impulses and distracted by negative feelings, it's hard to learn the alphabet," says Tough. Attentive, responsive parents can ameliorate the situation, but too many of these children's parents are too burdened by their own problems to do the job.

Rich children's problems tend to show up in adolescence, most often taking the form of excessive pressure to achieve and parents who are physically and emotionally distant. "Fewer and fewer young people are getting the character-building combination of support and autonomy that Tough was fortunate enough to receive," concludes Paul. "This is a worrisome predicament – for who will have the conscientiousness, the persistence, and the grit to change it?"

"School of Hard Knocks" by Annie Murphy Paul in *The New York Times Book Review*, Aug. 26, 2012 (p. 19), http://nyti.ms/PNu25f

Back to page one

6. Bystanders and Bullying

In this *NJEA Review* (New Jersey Education Association) article, 8th-grade teacher Michael Seaman says the goal of anti-bullying programs is "fostering compassion in classrooms where no student wears a label on his or her forehead." But this isn't easy. "How do we walk the fine line between creating an environment of acceptance and boring students with redundant anti-bullying messages?" he asks.

Seaman has found that his Holocaust unit is an excellent vehicle for getting into issues of intolerance and building students' emotional intelligence. He begins with a pre-assessment in which students anonymously answer these questions:

- Do you think bullying is a serious problem in your school or community? Why or why not?
- How do you think bullies feel when they demean someone else?
- Is it possible to make a bully understand other people's feelings? Why or why not?
- How do adults in your school address bullying? What interventions do they use to prevent or stop bullying?
- What interventions can young people use to prevent or stop bullying?
- Do you think you've ever bullied someone? If so, what made you stop? What made you want to bully someone again?

Seaman is surprised by his students' answers to some of the questions. Almost all students think bullying isn't a problem because they have the Olweus Program in their school. But a large percentage of the same students admit to bullying actions, mostly driven by anger or frustration. Fear of retribution is the most common reason for stopping. "Shockingly," says Seaman, "almost every student admitted to witnessing an adult figure turn his or her head instead of addressing the bullying situation."

This is why a key component of his Holocaust unit is the bystander's responsibility to act. Seaman has students choose a teenage Holocaust victim from a variety of resources and, putting themselves in the person's shoes, write a song or poem. "My students escape their own identities and enter the minds and hearts of another teenager who might have been helped by a bystander," he says. "I am always amazed by what students produce. Their poems and songs are beautiful, and they show an increased awareness of empathy for those who lost their lives."

Seaman describes other curriculum experiences he gives his own students, and then has suggestions for anti-bullying activities in language arts, social studies, world languages, art, music, science, and math.

"Beyond Anti-Bullying Programs" by Michael Seaman in *NJEA Review*, May 2012 (Vol. 85, p. 22-24), http://bit.ly/IE8lTG, spotted in *Education Digest*, September 2012 (Vol. 78, #1, p. 24-28)

Back to page one

7. Killing Math Achievement with Kindness

(Originally titled "It's OK – You're Just Not Good at Math")

In this review, *Educational Leadership* summarizes a report by Aneeta Rattan, Catherine Good, and Carol Dweck entitled, "It's OK – Not Everyone Can Be Good At Math: Instructors with an Entity Theory Comfort (and Demotivate) Students" (*Journal of Experimental Social Psychology,* April 2012). Key points: Teachers who believe math intelligence is fixed are quick to judge students based on a single assessment, and they are more likely to comfort students for their lack of ability and use "kind" strategies that are ineffective at motivating students to improve.

"Research Alert: 'It's OK – You're Just Not Good at Math'" in "Double Take" in *Educational Leadership*, September 2012 (Vol. 70, #1, p. 8), http://www.ascd.org

Back to page one

8. Short Item:

a. History assessments – (Originally titled "From Bubbles to HATs") This website http://beyondthebubble.stanford.edu has 55 formative social studies assessments developed by the Stanford History Education group. Called History Assessments of Thinking (HATs), they draw on the Library of Congress's documents, photos, paintings, radio broadcasts, and film clips to measure historical understanding and critical thinking skills. Interactive scoring rubrics show sample student responses at each level.

"Research Alert: 'From Bubbles to HATs'" in "Double Take" in *Educational Leadership*, September 2012 (Vol. 70, #1, p. 9), http://www.ascd.org

Back to page one

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 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 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:

If you go to http://www.marshallmemo.com you will find detailed information on:

- How to subscribe or renew
- A detailed rationale for the Marshall Memo
- Publications (with a count of articles from each)
- Article selection criteria
- Topics (with a count of articles from each)
- Headlines for all issues
- Reader opinions (with results of an annual survey)
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

Subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

- The current issue (in Word or PDF)
- All back issues (also in Word and PDF)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- How to change access e-mail or log-in

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Better Evidence-Based Education
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
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
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
The Atlantic Monthly
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
The School Administrator
Theory Into Practice