Marshall Memo 732

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
April 16, 2018

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Quotes of the Week

"There is no such thing as time management. Time can't be managed. It simply is. Nothing you do changes time. Time management is really self-management."

Dan Rockwell (see item #7)

"Any decision that I make, I always put two hats on: I put my teacher hat on, and I put my principal hat on. The reason I do that is that, one of the reasons I went into administration was because as a teacher, I kept saying to myself, 'Who's the bonehead who decided this? Because they have no idea what this is doing to me in the classroom.' So I put my teacher hat on. And then I put my principal hat on, because I found myself as a principal saying, 'Who's the bonehead who decided this? They have no idea what the effect is on my campus.'"

Richard Carranza, New York City Schools chancellor, in an interview with Christina Veiga and Alex Zimmerman in *Chalkbeat*, April 13, 2018, https://bit.ly/2H3W9we

"Students don't hate writing – they hate how we teach it."

Ruth Culham in "Turn and Talk: Q&A," an interview in *Educational Leadership*, April 2018 (Vol. 75, #7, p. 10)

"There are many problems in education that we don't know how to solve, but reading failure in elementary school isn't one of them."

Robert Slavin (see item #1)

"Technology may be fun, and may be individualized, but it usually separates students from the personal attention of caring adults."

Robert Slavin (*ibid.*)

1. Robert Slavin Shares Some Surprising Findings on Elementary Tutoring

"There are many problems in education that we don't know how to solve, but reading failure in elementary school isn't one of them," says Robert Slavin (Johns Hopkins University) in this online article. Research has shown that tutoring is one of the most effective strategies, especially for students who are way behind grade level. But it's expensive – so what are schools supposed to do?

Slavin and his colleagues took a closer look at tutoring and came to four "shocking" conclusions: (a) Paraprofessional tutors are at least as effective as teachers; (b) Volunteer tutors are much less effective than teachers and paraprofessionals; (c) Computer and online tutoring gets very disappointing results; and (d) Some whole-class and whole-school programs get results comparable to tutoring. Why are these findings surprising? Because the common assumption is that tutoring works because it's individualized – and one-on-one tutors (and computers) can customize instruction to each child's needs.

But if that's true, Slavin wonders, why are paraprofessionals as effective as more-skilled teachers? Why can't volunteers individualize when they're working one-on-one with students? Why are some all-class and all-school programs as effective as tutoring? And why aren't super-individualized computer programs working? Slavin's theory is that the positive effects of tutoring stem from the *nurturing and personal attention* the tutor provides in addition to individualization. All children, but especially those having academic difficulty, "are eager to please adults who relate to them personally," he says. "The tutoring setting, whether one-to-one or one-to-very-small-group, gives students the undivided attention of a valued adult who can give them personal nurturing and attention to a degree that a teacher with 20-30 students cannot. Struggling readers can be particularly eager to please a valued adult, because they crave recognition for success in a skill that has previously eluded them."

Here are Slavin's explanations for why each of the researchers' counterintuitive findings makes sense:

• *Paraprofessional tutors doing at least as well as teachers* – It's true that teachers are more highly trained than paraprofessionals, but in one-on-one tutoring, nurturing and personal caring are more important than lesson design and execution. That's why paraprofessionals who relate well to students and have good materials can match teachers' impact as tutors.

• *Volunteer tutors in schools being much less effective than educators* – Slavin believes the issue here is consistency; many volunteers aren't in schools every day and aren't in classrooms enough to build the relationships necessary for tutoring to be effective. When

outside tutors are paid a stipend, they are much more effective – undoubtedly because they're more consistently on site. In addition, when volunteers are trained and use structured materials, they do better, but still not as well as teachers and paraprofessionals. Given the need for recruiting, training, materials, and supervision, volunteers aren't a whole lot less expensive than educators.

• *The disappointing results of computer and online tutoring* – "Technology has long been touted as a means of simulating tutoring," says Slavin, "yet even when computer-assisted instruction programs have been effective, their effect sizes have been far below those of the least expensive tutoring models, one-to-small-group tutoring by paraprofessionals." Why? "Technology may be fun, and may be individualized, but it usually separates students from the personal attention of caring adults."

• *The surprising results of whole-class and whole-school approaches* – In one study, the effect size for one-to-one tutoring was +0.31, for small-group tutoring +0.14. Here are effect sizes for some whole-class programs:

- Ladders to Literacy +0.48
- PALS +0.65
- Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition +0.19

and for two whole-school programs (both of which have a tutoring component):

- Success for All +0.41
- Enhanced Core Reading Instruction +0.22

What's going on here? Slavin believes these programs are effectively implementing the research-based principles of RTI (Response to Intervention): good Tier 1 instruction by an expert teacher who knows students well; frequent assessment and identification of students having difficulty; and strategic small-group and one-on-one instruction with caring and nurturing adults for students with the greatest needs.

"Perhaps the most important practical implication of this discussion," Slavin says, "is a realization that benefits similar to or greater than those of one-to-one tutoring by teachers can be obtained in other ways that can be cost-effectively extended to many more students: using paraprofessional tutors, using one-to-small-group tutoring, or using whole-class and whole-school tiered strategies. It's no longer possible to say with a shrug, 'of course tutoring works, but we can't afford it.' The 'four shockers' tell us we can do better, without breaking the bank."

"New Findings on Tutoring: Four Shockers" by Robert Slavin in Robert Slavin's Blog, April 5, 2018, https://bit.ly/2HCRG4I

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2. Getting the Most from Instructional Coaches

In this article in *Phi Delta Kappan*, Britnie Delinger Kane (The Citadel) and Brooks Rosenquist (Vanderbilt University) say that instructional coaching would seem to be "a near-holy grail for teachers' professional learning." Why? Because it embodies three key characteristics of effective PD: It's ongoing (compared to one-shot workshops); it takes place

in teachers' daily workplace; and coaches have content-specific expertise that is of great value to teachers.

But the evidence on coaching's impact on teaching and learning is mixed. One reason is that many instructional coaches spend only a quarter of their time working directly with teachers on instruction; the rest is spent on activities like locating curriculum materials, tutoring students, substitute teaching, collating test data, making copies, and organizing students' log-in information for software programs.

Kane and Rosenquist report on an eight-year study that provides insights on various ways of organizing instructional coaching. Researchers noticed important differences between coaches hired by schools and coaches hired and deployed by the central office:

• School-hired coaches worked full time in their school and had the advantage of knowing the school's personnel, students, and culture (many had been teachers in their school prior to becoming coaches). But school-hired coaches often had additional duties: teaching full classes, tutoring, substitute teaching, acting as department heads or Title I coordinators, organizing assessments and curriculum materials, proctoring interim assessments, identifying students for interventions, and teaching courses created in response to low test scores. All this took 60 percent of coaches' time.

"Unfortunately," say Kane and Rosenquist, "none of these activities helps teachers improve their instructional practice, which means that school-hired coaches did not necessarily get to make the best use of the strong relationships they built with teachers." Although all the principals interviewed appreciated the coaches for their instructional expertise, they were under pressure to raise test scores and chose to allocate coaches' time to short-term activities related to test preparation and administration (as well as other immediate needs), versus the long-term goal of improving teachers' instructional effectiveness.

• Central-office hired coaches generally spread their time among several sites, with one day a week in each school and then Fridays attending meetings in the office. The obvious disadvantage of this arrangement is that coaches aren't in any one school enough to build trusting relationships with teachers, especially veteran teachers whose doors are "open, but just a crack." Principals seem to have regarded district-hired coaches as marginal to the school's improvement goals, often having them work with new or struggling teachers. While those teachers' needs were real, research suggests that a better use of coaches' time would be working with veteran as well as novice teachers. The researchers found that these coaches spent as much as 92 percent of their time on co-teaching, modeling, observing, giving feedback, and orchestrating collaborative teamwork. That was because their district bosses viewed these as the core of their jobs and made sure they allocated their time accordingly.

Kane and Rosenquist believe there's a way to have the best of both worlds, and they were fortunate enough to observe such a model in the course of their study. The solution, they suggest, is hiring and directing instructional coaches centrally but having each one spend full time in one school. "Because the coaches were accountable to district leaders," the authors explain, " – who were shielded to some extent from the accountability pressures that principals faced, giving them more freedom to invest in long-term instructional improvement – district-

hired coaches were less likely to be assigned to non-coaching duties meant to help boost test scores. And because they now spent their time in a single building, they were able to develop stronger relationships with teachers and staff." Principals were also required to apply for an instructional coach and agree to set aside specific times when coaches and teachers would work together. During the year studied, coaches using this model spent 66 percent of their time working closely with teachers and principals – significantly more than the 40 percent spent by school-hired coaches.

"Making the Most of Instructional Coaches" by Britnie Delinger Kane and Brooks Rosenquist in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2018 (Vol. 99, #7, p. 21-25), www.kappanmazine.org; Kane can be reached at kaneb2@citadel.edu.

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3. A Connecticut High School Tackles Its Outmoded Vocabulary Program

In this article in *English Journal*, Robert Ford and Megan Lee (North Branford Public Schools) describe the vocabulary-teaching strategy that had been in place in their high school for 30 years: teach 20-word units each marking period (from a workbook); quiz students after each unit; give a test at the end of the marking period; teach a total of 240 words each school year. Teachers moved quickly through the units, students weren't engaged (some found the answers to workbook activities online), the words weren't learned very well, and students consistently underperformed on the vocabulary sections of Smarter Balanced, iReady, PSAT, and SAT tests. But "complacency persisted," say Ford and Lee. "A system was in place. The workbooks were in the bookroom. Did we really want to tackle this problem when we had so many other things to do?"

Lee was a tenth grader at the same high school in 2001 and remembers the despair she felt when she failed her English midterm, largely because she did poorly on the vocabulary section. She had studied hard, copying words onto 3x5 cards and arranging them in alphabetical order on her bedroom floor – *immutable, impugn, ignoble, inauspicious, incontrovertible, implicit, incisive, imperious, invective*. But the words didn't sink in, largely because she didn't understand how words worked. When she became an English teacher at her alma mater, she was required to use the same skinny red workbooks as when she was in school, and most of her students performed just as poorly on quizzes and tests. Yes, there were excuses – the distraction of social media, sports, talking in class, Snapchatting – but Lee knew something was missing in the school's approach to vocabulary.

Ford and Lee decided to present their department with some carefully curated information in hopes of building consensus for change. They surveyed ELA teachers in neighboring schools on how they taught vocabulary (everything from workbooks to no program at all), looked at their students' standardized test data (sure enough, vocabulary was weak year after year), and gathered research on what works. Six practices stood out:

- Students benefit from direct and indirect vocabulary instruction using definitions, context, and images.
- It's important to connect new words to students' prior knowledge and experiences.

- Students' vocabularies grow through wide reading coupled with actively learning new words.
- Students need multiple exposures to new words – as many as six times per word.
- Technology can be helpful.
- Student engagement is key.

Presenting this information to the ELA department was "transformational," say Ford and Lee. Quite quickly, their colleagues collectively decided that:

- It was impossible to adequately teach 240 words during the school year.
- While reluctant to let the workbooks go, most teachers agreed there was a better way.
- Teaching vocabulary through the context of course readings would be more effective than teaching it through a separate curriculum.
- They needed to teach more about word roots and other aspects of vocabulary structure so students could be better at figuring out the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- They needed to agree on 100 core words to be learned each year, connected by common roots, and each year's words should be included in subsequent years' instruction.

Based on this consensus, the department launched a radically different approach to teaching vocabulary. Weekly department meetings devoted significant time to discussing and sharing vocabulary-teaching strategies and learning activities, including:

- Embedded vocabulary – Each grade's 100-word list is drawn from different content areas and emphasizes root words – for example, *am-* in *Romeo and Juliet* (*enamored, amicable*) and *jur-* in *To Kill a Mockingbird* (*perjury*).
- Visual representations and organizers – Students create classroom word walls organizing words in root word wheels, breaking words into root, prefix, and suffix, and creating image-based representations.
- Vocabulary logs and independent reading – Some teachers have students keep an active vocabulary log when they do independent reading and use it during lessons.
- Vocabulary in the real world – Teachers have students search Google News and compile examples of words used in articles and headlines, and predict words that would be used in article headlines.

Reflecting at the end of their first year with the new vocabulary approach, teachers had two concerns: planning vocabulary activities was time-consuming, and many students had difficulty with root words. But there was no desire to return to the workbooks, say Ford and Lee, and the big upside of crafting their own approach was that "now our vocabulary curriculum and its learning activities have become a living document that we constantly review, discuss, and modify, as opposed to the fixed workbooks of the past."

A survey of students showed strong approval of the shift: 89 percent said the number of words they knew and used had improved; 79 percent said they had a better understanding of how words are related to their roots; and 86 percent said their ability to figure out the meaning of words improved. And… preliminary test results are promising.

"Fostering a New Approach to Vocabulary, 30 Years in the Making" by Robert Ford and Megan Lee in *English Journal*, March 2018 (Vol. 107, #4, p. 39-44), available to NCTE members at https://bit.ly/2HESpT9; Ford can be reached at rford@northbranfordschools.org.

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4. A Four-Stage Process to Get High-School Students Writing Well

(Originally titled "Giving Students the Right Kind of Writing Practice")

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, teacher/authors Kelly Gallagher and Penny Kittle describe the pacing-guide-driven approach to writing used in many schools: a narrative essay in the first quarter, an argument essay in the second, and so on. "We reject this approach," sat Gallagher and Kittle. "Writing four major essays simply doesn't offer enough time immersed in the art of crafting words and sentences. Improvement in writing is grounded in practice, in getting words on the page – lots of them. There are no shortcuts." Some schools have students write more frequently, perhaps an essay a month, but if students are required to use the same five-paragraph format every time, they'll have little chance to develop fluency, voice, and agency.

Gallagher and Kittle read up on Jerome Bruner's theory of the spiral curriculum and designed a narrative writing unit to get their students revisiting the genre multiple times, each time with increasing complexity and challenge. Students got a road map of the stages up front and then dove in, with Gallagher's students in California and Kittle's in New Hampshire communicating and sharing throughout the unit:

• *Reading several short memoirs* (one week) – Students read a poem by Billy Collins ("On Turning Ten") and stories by other authors and jotted notes about memories evoked by the authors. The teachers did the same, modeling the messiness and creativity of writing. Students generated a lot of story possibilities in their notebooks, zoomed in on details, and used all their senses to describe people, places, and events. After several days of reading and jotting, students selected one idea and wrote a 100-word memoir focusing on two skills: using sensory details and choosing strong verbs to evoke images.

• *Writing one scene* (one week) – The teachers used several mentor texts to show how different authors write a scene. Then students chose a moment in their emerging story and wrote about it, using specific, sensory detail to slow down action, used dialogue to develop characters and situations, and worked on a strong narrative voice.

• *Crafting several scenes to tell a story* (three weeks) – The teachers taught several mini-lessons on different authors' stories and specific craft elements, then had students write a series of scenes, conferencing with them as they wrote. The teachers' injunctions: Develop your story around an idea, a place, or a quality (like courage). Organize scenes to create momentum. Create effective transitions to link scenes and bring cohesion. Engage readers with a dynamic lead sentence. Write an effective ending to show why the story matters. Work on word choice and tone and develop the narrator's voice. Proofread, edit, and polish as you write. "We have students notice how a scene can either slow down time or build momentum," say Gallagher and Kittle, "and we note how dialogue reveals character through what is said – or not said."

• *Differentiated support* (three weeks) – Some students further developed their stories seen through the lens of multiple narrators, while others continued working on their scenes and closings. The teachers' injunctions: Develop a voice for each narrator. Recognize your power as a writer to change thanking. Experiment with literary devices to develop your ideas, your setting, and your characters. Use different points of view to deepen thinking about the ideas in your story. Organize scenes to create momentum in the plot, smoothly transitioning between narrators and events. Conclude with a new understanding of the big idea. Read your writing aloud, hearing how it works. Spot errors in sentence structure and eliminate them.

"Educators guide students toward independence," say Gallagher and Kittle, "when they focus their teaching on the deliberate progression of skills, coupled with an expectation that students will make their own decisions about the organization of their writing." Why start with narrative? "[B]ecause students have stories to tell and we value these stories. When students' voices are heard, they more readily engage in the hard work. This is not task-oriented writing, where students dutifully answer a mandated prompt. We seek their individual voices and come to know them as they write several stories in this unit. Students build confidence as writers because they have the opportunity to revisit and to practice the same skills over time."

"Giving Students the Right Kind of Writing Practice" by Kelly Gallagher and Penny Kittle in *Educational Leadership*, April 2018 (Vol. 75, #7, p. 14-20), https://bit.ly/2qBtAAa; the authors can be reached at kellygallagher@cox.net and pennykittle@me.com. They are the co-authors of *180 Days: Two Teachers and the Quest to Engage and Empower Adolescents* (Heinemann, 2018)

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5. What Works Best for Home-School Communication?

In this article in *Education Week*, Benjamin Herold reports on a 2016-17 survey by Project Tomorrow and Blackboard, Inc. on the ways families prefer schools to communicate with them. The study of 514,000 K-12 parents, students, and educators found that parents strongly prefer to get school information *pushed* to them versus having to find it online. "Given the time pressures faced by most parents," says Julie Evans of Project Tomorrow, "this is not surprising. What is surprising is the disconnect we see between what parents and administrators say are the best communication tools." Some survey findings:

- One-third of parents weren't satisfied with teacher-to-home communication.
- A quarter of parents weren't satisfied with district-to-home communication.
- Parents overwhelmingly preferred e-mail for teacher and district communication.
- Parents prized timeliness and personalization, especially for communication about their children's academic progress.
- Just 16 percent said Facebook was an effective way to communicate school and district information, whereas 78 percent of district communication officers preferred Facebook.
- Nearly half of parents wanted school and district information texted directly to them.
- Only 19 percent wanted to go online to get information.

- Parents of elementary-school students were generally more satisfied with communications from their children's teachers than secondary parents.
- Elementary parents also liked face-to-face meetings and hand-written notes, as compared to parents of older students.
- At the time of this study, Twitter was emerging as a social media tool, but was still less widely used than Facebook.

"Districts Turn to Social Media, But Parents Prefer E-Mails, Calls, and Texts" by Benjamin Herold in *Education Week*, March 6, 2018, http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/DigitalEducation/2018/03/districts_parents_social_media_email.html; the full report, "Trends in Community Engagement: Text, Twitter, E-mail, Call – New Expectations for School-to-Home Communications," is available at http://bbbb.blackboard.com/community-engagement-report.

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6. Teachers Who Bully Students

"Although there is scant empirical research examining bullying by professional educators," say Alan McEvoy and Molly Smith (Northern Michigan University) in this article in *Teaching Tolerance*, "anecdotal evidence abounds. Teachers who bully students often have a reputation within the school system. Colleagues who are bystanders often are aware of problematic conduct, but little is known about exactly what they observe, how often they observe it, how school administrators respond, or how bullying by teachers affects school climate."

McEvoy, Smith, and colleagues at Northern Michigan University conducted an online survey of 1,067 educators, defining teacher bullying as "a pattern of conduct, rooted in a power differential, that threatens, harms, humiliates, induces fear, or causes students substantial emotional distress." "Our conclusion," say McEvoy and Smith, "is that significant numbers of students – both bystanders and targets – experience bullying microaggressions by some teachers as a commonplace aspect of school life… Most educators are appalled when confronted with a colleague who is mean and abusive toward students. Yet they feel powerless to act or are otherwise frustrated into silence by bureaucratic indifference."

How many teachers engage in bullying behavior? Most survey respondents said less than 10 percent, a few (14 percent) said none, and one in five said more than 10 percent. Almost two-thirds of respondents said that teachers who bully students also bully their colleagues. These estimates of the prevalence of adult bullying line up with previous research. "Yet even these few can do enormous damage to students and to a school's instructional mission," say McEvoy and Smith.

Who are the targets of adult bullying? The survey found they are most often students who misbehave, lack motivation, or have characteristics that are not valued by the school. The bullies' self-justification may be that these students need to be disciplined or motivated to perform, and that not stepping up to misbehavior is a sign of weakness. It may also be a sign of frustration: these teachers may lash out because some students don't apply themselves and

respond to instruction. Sometimes one student is singled out for behavior that many students are exhibiting; the scapegoats tend to be low-achieving students, students with poor attendance, students of color ("the usual suspects," said one respondent), or LGBTQ students. Cultural differences are often a marker of the bullying dynamic.

What is the role of bystanders when adult bullying happens? Two-thirds of those who responded to the survey were unclear on where to report problematic behavior – or whether they should report it at all. This left the field wide open to different responses: speaking personally to the teacher, reporting to an administrator, gossiping about it to a colleague, or doing nothing. "This suggests there is a compelling need for schools to establish protocols to guide bystanders when they observe such behavior," say McEvoy and Smith. "The absence of guidelines for reporting unprofessional conduct is a recipe for inaction."

The problem is that very few schools include adult bullying in their policy statements, which focus on student-to-student bullying. The survey found that in schools that had explicit language about adult bullying, and provided professional development on the topic, more educators said bullying never happened. It's also helpful if there are defined channels for speaking up. "It may be that discussing problematic conduct by colleagues is outside the comfort zone of many educators," say McEvoy and Smith. "This is where administrative leadership providing ongoing in-service training is essential."

"Statistically Speaking" by Alan McEvoy and Molly Smith in *Teaching Tolerance*, Spring 2018 (Vol. 58), https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2018/statistically-speaking, spotted in *Education Digest*, April 2018 (Vol. 83, #8, p. 9-15); McEvoy is at amcevoy@nmu.edu.

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7. Self-Management 101

"There is no such thing as time management," says Dan Rockwell in this *Leadership Freak* article. "Time can't be managed. It simply is. Nothing you do changes time. Time management is really self-management. Everyone who has trouble managing time is really struggling with self-management." Some common problems:

- Out of compassion and kindness, you let others run your schedule. "Everyone who commits to respond to others must navigate tensions between controlling your own schedule and being responsive," says Rockwell.
- You lack clarity and commitment to the vision, mission, and core work.
- You don't know how to best use your time.

Rockwell's suggestion: Block out open times in your calendar and make clear to colleagues that those blocks can't be infringed on except for emergencies. Schedule appointments in busy times. "Protected time is sacred," he says. "It's your time to get real work done."

"The #1 Thing That Most Improved My Productivity" by Dan Rockwell in *Leadership Freak*, April 11, 2018, https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/04/11/the-1-thing-that-most-improved-my-productivity. Rockwell can be reached at dan@leadershipfreak.com.

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8. Self-Management 102

"Pressure to put more in your cup, when your cup already overflows, stresses you out and drains your energy," says Dan Rockwell in this *Leadership Freak* article. He believes there are only three ways to get more done:

- Work smarter. Shorten the time it takes to do your work through mastery, systems, and software.
- Eliminate less meaningful work. Pour out of the cup work that's less mission-critical.
- Give work away. Have competent colleagues take something out of your cup.

Under *work smarter*, Rockwell recommends a system popularized by time management guru David Allen: make a list and prioritize as you make it:

- Write things in three columns: what must be done today, what you'll do tomorrow, and beyond.
- With each *today* item, always include *the next action needed*. "Uncertainty drains your energy and wastes time," says Rockwell. "The purpose of recording the next action step is to free your mind and lower your stress."
- If you're not sure of the next step, the action step might be, "Ask Betty for suggestions on what to do next."
- Rest. "The purpose of rest is restoration so you can work," says Rockwell. "Hard work makes life meaningful. A life of all leisure is boring. But the cycle of constantly working harder destroys us."

"There Are Only Three Ways to Get More Done" by Dan Rockwell in *Leadership Freak*, April 12, 2018, https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/04/12/there-are-only-three-ways-to-get-more-done; Rockwell can be reached at dan@leadershipfreak.com.

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9. Short Item:

Students writing a novel in a month – The National Novel Writing Month (Nanowrimo to its fans) gives educators access to lesson plans, discussion boards, bookmarks, and motivational tips for student writers of all ages. There are suggestions on creating characters, imagining settings, crafting plots, and more at https://nanowrimo.org.

Spotted in "Advisory" in *Educational Leadership*, April 2018 (Vol. 75, #7, p. 9)

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If you have feedback or suggestions,
***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 other educators very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 48 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, writer, and consultant lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 60 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). Every week there's a podcast and HTMI version as well.

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Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

All Things PLC
American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
District Management Journal
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Next
Education Update
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
English Journal
Essential Teacher
Exceptional Children
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Language Arts
Literacy Today
Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School
Middle School Journal
Peabody Journal of Education
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Reading Research Quarterly
Responsive Classroom Newsletter
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
School Administrator
School Library Journal
Social Education
Social Studies and the Young Learner
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
Teaching Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Education Gadfly
The Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Professional (formerly Journal of Staff Development)
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time Magazine