Marshall Memo 204

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
October 8, 2007

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"What is missing in assessment practice in this country is the recognition that, to be valuable for instructional planning, assessment needs to be a moving picture – a video stream rather than a periodic snapshot."

Margaret Heritage (see item #1)

"In the real world, mutual reliance is commonplace, since workers routinely function in units with supervisors, peers, and subordinates. Absorbing this lesson is one of the keys to growing up and getting ahead."

Hugh Price (see item #5)

"Experimental studies have repeatedly found no correlation between time spent at school and levels of achievement."

Lawrence Baines, quoting research studies (see item #3)

"Calling a bad job on a paper a 'great first draft' doesn't do anyone any good. I think we've learned that. If I'm feeling stupid and worthless and you tell me I'm smart, that makes you stupid in my eyes."

Jane Bluestein, former teacher and administrator (*Middle Ground*, Oct. 2007, p. 8)

"Cheating could be seen as a rational choice in a culture of warped values."

Alfie Kohn (see item #8)

1. Formative Assessments as an Integral Part of Teaching

In this important article in *Kappan*, Margaret Heritage of the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) gives a comprehensive run-down on formative (a.k.a. dipstick, in-the-moment) assessments. Heritage bemoans the fact that most schools aren't using assessments for instruction; instead, she says, tests are being used "solely for summarizing what students have learned and for ranking students and schools… and classroom teachers identify assessment as something external to their everyday practice." Specifically:

- Annual state tests provide too little information and it arrives too late for planning instruction;
- Interim/benchmark tests, usually given 3-4 times a year, "cover too long a period of instruction and provide too little detail for effective use in ongoing instructional planning. At best, they function more as snapshots of student progress and as predictors of student performance on end-of-year, statewide tests" – what Dylan Wiliam and Marnie Thompson have called "early-warning summative" tools that are not particularly helpful in the classroom.

To make matters worse, says Heritage, teachers don't control the timing and content of either type of test and haven't had much training in the use of data.

"What is missing in assessment practice in this country," says Heritage, "is the recognition that, to be valuable for instructional planning, assessment needs to be a moving picture – a video stream rather than a periodic snapshot. If assessment is used to inform effective instruction, then that assessment is quickly rendered out of date. Student learning will have progressed and will need to be assessed again so that instruction can be planned to extend the students' new growth."

Formative assessments fill the bill, says Heritage. They provide the information teachers need "to identify a student's current level of learning and to adapt lessons to help the student reach the desired learning goal." What's more, students can be actively involved in the assessment, goal-setting, and improvement process. There are three kinds of formative assessment:

- On the fly – For example, during a science lesson, the teacher notices that some students have a misconception about a concept being discussed and conducts an impromptu mini-lesson to clear up the confusion.

- Planned – The teacher decides beforehand to check for understanding at several points during the lesson.
- Curriculum-embedded – For example, the teacher walks around looking at students' science notebooks or mathematical calculations to see if they grasp what is being taught.

Heritage believes there are four core elements in formative assessments when they are done right in the classroom:

• *Identifying the gap* – Formative assessments highlight the difference between what students have learned so far and the lesson or unit objectives, giving teachers the information they need to adapt instruction, scaffold students' learning, and close the gap. Ideally, the gap is at the Goldilocks, "just right" level – what Vygotsky called the zone of proximal development. This is the distance between what a student can do independently and what can be accomplished with help from an adult or a more expert peer.

• *Feedback* – Formative assessments allow teachers to give students clear, descriptive, criterion-based feedback on where they are in the learning progression, how their understanding differs from the desired goal, and how they can move forward. Clear, helpful feedback improves students' motivation and sense of efficacy, both of which powerfully affect learning.

• *Student involvement* – Ideally, students are active partners in the formative assessment process, learning how to self-assess, understanding their current learning status, setting goals, and deciding what they need to move forward.

• *Learning progressions* – To be helpful to teachers and students, formative assessments must be linked to subgoals that mark progress toward the ultimate learning goal. Many state standards don't clearly define end-of-the-year goals, let alone subgoals, so clarifying the steps of learning is a key prerequisite for doing formative assessments well.

Heritage goes on to list four kinds of expertise that teachers need if they are to use formative assessment well: (a) domain knowledge (the concepts, knowledge, and skills students need to know); (b) pedagogical content knowledge (the different models of teaching appropriate to a particular subject); (c) knowledge of their students' previous learning (from sophisticated pre-assessments of knowledge, skills, and attitudes); and (d) knowledge about assessment (a repertoire of formative assessments they can use to tap into students' current levels of understanding). Teachers also need to be able to:

• Create the right conditions. The climate in the classroom must be trusting, accepting of individual differences, and supportive of self- and peer assessment.

• Help students learn how assess their own work and that of their peers. Students need to acquire the right tools and insights to honestly evaluate their own learning and give constructive feedback to their peers. From saying, "It wasn't clear to me when…" or "I didn't understand your point about…", students can progress to a detailed analysis of their peers' performance compared to specific criteria.

• Interpreting evidence. "Teachers' skills in drawing inferences from students' responses are crucial to the effectiveness of formative assessment," says Heritage. "No matter

what the assessment strategy – observation, dialogue, asking for a demonstration or a written response – teachers must examine students' responses from the perspective of what they show about their conceptions, misconceptions, skills, and knowledge."

• Matching instruction to the gap. This is tricky, since "if the next instructional steps to close the gap are too hard for the student, frustration will almost certainly result, and if they are too easy, boredom and disaffection are potential outcomes." Teachers need to skillfully tailor their follow-up to formative assessments to hit students' "sweet spot."

"Formative Assessment: What Do Teachers Need to Know and Do?" by Margaret Heritage in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2007 (Vol. 89, #2, p. 140-145), no e-link available. The footnotes of this article provide an excellent bibliography on formative assessment.

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2. How Finland's Schools Work to Prevent Student Failure

What is Finland doing right in its schools? asks Berkeley professor Norton Grubb in this intriguing *Kappan* article. With lower levels of spending than American schools, Finland has been successful over the last 30 years in reducing the inequalities with which students enter kindergarten – whereas the corresponding gaps of entering U.S. students increase each year, *doubling* by the end of high school. American schools produce high levels of inequality, whereas Finland's schools, at least through 9th grade, have reduced inequality and produced the highest student achievement in the world.

The explanation, says Grubb, is "a multilayered approach that responds quickly to any signs that students are falling behind." Here are Finland's five "lines of attack," all operating in the context of a consistent national curriculum:

• *Teachers* – The clear mandate is that each classroom teacher is responsible for recognizing when any student is failing to master any particular competence – for example, letter combinations, number facts, or concepts in social studies or history. "Identifying students who have fallen behind their peers or who are not keeping up with the standards of the national curriculum therefore does not wait till an annual exam or even a diagnostic exam given at the end of a unit," says Grubb. "Correction is virtually instantaneous." Teachers work with struggling students one-on-one or in small groups before school, during class time while all students are doing small-group or individual work, during lunch, or after school.

• *The teacher's assistant* – These paraprofessional-level educators "push in" and work closely with struggling students, individually and in small groups, usually during class time and always with the curriculum that the rest of the class is doing and in direct consultation with the regular teacher.

• *Special-needs teachers* – These teachers, who work with students diagnosed with learning disabilities, also work with regular-education students who are falling behind. They focus one-on-one and in small groups on students who have not been caught by the first two safety nets.

• *The multidisciplinary team* – For students whose progress is still not adequate, a team consisting of the teacher, the special-needs teacher, the school's counselor, a social worker

from the department of social services, and representatives of the local health, mental health, and housing agencies (if necessary) focuses on the child's needs. If the problem goes beyond the capability of the school, extra resources are brought in. "One of the underlying ideas," explains Grubb, " is that if nonschool problems can be solved by other professionals, then teachers are free to concentrate on instruction."

The key differences with most American remediation efforts are that Finland's intervention is immediate, consistent across all grades, focused on success with the regular classroom curriculum, involves a minimum of pull-out, and doesn't rely on a "grab bag of after-school programs and tutoring efforts, randomly distributed by grade levels and subjects."

Grubb describes several other features of Finland's schools that support these core features: classes are small (16-20 students), schools are small (rarely more than 300), teachers often "loop" with their students for 2-6 years, and there is very little turnover in staff and students from year to year. All these factors help with the early identification of learning problems and the four-tier intervention that nips student confusion and failure in the bud. In addition, teachers are highly trained and well respected in the society – indeed, teaching is a more prestigious profession than information technology, medicine, or business. And the Finnish social and mental-health infrastructure takes responsibility for problems that might interfere with students' success in school.

Several of these features cannot be replicated in U.S. schools, Grubb concedes, but he believes we have a lot to learn from Finland's aggressive, consistent, four-tier policy of early intervention.

"Dynamic Inequality and Intervention: Lessons from a Small Country" by Norton Grubb in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2007 (Vol. 89, #2, p. 105-114), no e-link available

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3. Less is More? Four Ideas for American Schools

In this provocative *Kappan* article, University of Toledo professor Lawrence Baines argues that American schools won't get better by lengthening the school year, assigning more homework, hooking up more computers, and giving more tests. Countries that are outscoring us on international tests have not taken this approach, indicating that other factors are at work in getting higher student achievement:

• *Time spent in school* – American students actually spend more time in school each year than their counterparts in most other countries:

- U.S. average – 1,100 hours
- Western Europe, Mexico, Korea, Japan, Singapore average – 701 hours
- Finland – 600 hours

"Experimental studies have repeatedly found no correlation between time spent at school and levels of achievement," says Baines. A great deal of time in American schools, he says, is wasted on non-teaching tasks, organizing paperwork, discipline, and busywork. A far more efficient schedule is the one used by the most prestigious private secondary schools, which

schedule two 90-minute classes a week for each major subject, with one additional class each week for advising and one-on-one tutoring.

• *Homework* – Secondary-school math teachers in the U.S. assign an average 140 minutes of homework a week, compared to 120 minutes a week in Korea. Despite this, Korean students outscore U.S. students, 584 to 502, on the TIMSS. The reason, says Baines, is that American teachers tend to assign textbook homework in which students are neither interested nor engaged. "In examining homework policies around the world," he writes, "researchers have concluded, 'The relationships between national patterns of homework and national achievement suggests that… more homework may actually undermine national achievement.' Many bleary-eyed American students would wholeheartedly agree."

• *Use of technology* – Baines doubts that the billions of dollars spent on computers in schools have had any more impact than previous generations of "breakthrough" technology, including overhead projectors, movies, radios, and tape recorders. Because of restrictions that schools have placed on computers, he says, "computers have taken on the role formerly occupied by a multi-volume set of encyclopedias – a storehouse of concise, neatly categorized information used once or twice per year for research projects." And as for giving students laptops, Baines says there is no evidence that this improves achievement.

What makes a difference, he says, is the number and quality of books to which students have access. "Unfortunately," he writes, "in most American schools today, books are handled as if they were artifacts from a museum." Students are often forbidden to take textbooks home, students can take only one book out of the school library at a time, and schools invest far less in books and other print materials. The opposite is true in schools in most OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries.

• *Testing* – In recent years, says Baines, American policymakers have acted on the belief that high-stakes testing would close the racial/economic achievement gap, but this hasn't happened. Other countries, meanwhile, have pursued a broader strategy aimed at reducing poverty and providing social support for disadvantaged children. "A kid can try to hug a test," notes Baines sardonically, "but the test will never hug back."

"Perhaps it is time to learn from the world," he concludes, "to stop thinking in terms of more and more, and consider what might be achieved by doing less."

"Learning from the World: Achieving More By Doing Less" by Lawrence Baines in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2007 (Vol. 89, #2, p. 98-100), no e-link available

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4. Helping Middle-School Students Get Organized

In this *Teacher Magazine* article, Massachusetts 6th-grade teacher Laurie Wasserman, who is National Board Certified and works with special-needs children in self-contained and mainstream classes, says the one characteristic most common among middle-school students is that they are *disorganized*. Moving from the structured, self-contained world of the elementary school, where many tasks are done for them, middle-school students suddenly have to keep

track of assignments from four or five teachers, change classes every 45 minutes – and remember their locker combinations. "Kids will be kids," says Wasserman. "It's hard sometimes to realize that students don't deliberately misplace papers, forget pencils, or lose track of assignments. They just don't have our experience or habits of mind. It's our job to teach them the tools and strategies for getting organized and feeling successful." Here are Wasserman's suggestions:

• *Agenda books* – Buying every student a calendar/assignment book (they sell for around $5.00) and making a routine of having students get out their agenda books at the beginning or end of every class and writing homework and other assignments (with the teacher strolling around to check to see that students are writing in the correct day) can bring order out of confusion and teach life-long skills. If the school can't afford agenda books, teachers can always Xerox their own assignment reminder sheets, perhaps distributing packets one week at a time.

• *Team homework* – Wasserman writes all regular-education teachers' homework assignments on her board so her special-needs students can keep track in case they forgot to write them down.

• *Schoolnotes.com* – This free Internet site allows teachers to post assignments online so students and parents, using computers at home, in a library, or at work, can quickly find out what the homework is. The site is at http://www.schoolnotes.com - just type in the school's Zip code and go to the teacher's name.

• *Giving a grade for preparation* – Wasserman's students get a separate grade for coming to class prepared. If students have to make an extra locker trip or don't have something they're supposed to have, she deducts a point from their grade. She finds that this tough policy, if announced up front, get students' attention and changes behavior.

• *Pencil ransom* – If students have to borrow a pencil from Wasserman (her expectation is that they come to class with writing tools), she demands a sneaker as collateral. Even the most absent-minded or larcenous student won't leave the classroom without checking back with the teacher and coughing up the pencil.

• *Catch-up papers for absent students* – Wasserman asks student helpers who are passing out worksheets and other handouts to write the name of each absent student on the paper and put it in an accordion file in the "absent-student crate". This box also contains three-ring binders with all class assignments and handouts in each subject up to that point in the year. When students return from an absence, Wasserman directs them to the crate so they can catch up on the work they missed. "Basically, I'm modeling good organization for my kids," she says.

• *An I.O.U. board* – Wasserman has an area on her board where she writes the names of students who owe her assignments and what they need to hand in. In her special-needs classes, she also writes any assignments that students owe mainstream teachers.

• *Work-in-progress pocket folders* – Wasserman buys all students a pocket folder; the left pocket is for "to do" work, the right pocket for completed work. Once assignments are completely done, students hand them in or put them in finished-work binders or notebooks.

"Teaching Secrets: Organizing Middle Schoolers" by Laurie Wasserman in *Teacher Magazine* (online), Oct. 3, 2007, available after free registration at:
http://www.teachermagazine.org/tm/articles/2007/10/03/06tin_wasserman_web.h19.html.

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5. Using Insights from the Military to Improve Student Achievement

In this thoughtful *Education Week* commentary, Hugh Price of the Brookings Institution bemoans the failure of U.S. schools with many students and suggests that several characteristics of the military – and quasi-military schools – might be worth emulating. Specifically:

• *Belonging* – Being part of positive youth groups can "boost self-confidence and curb risky behaviors," says Price.

• *Teamwork* – "In the real world," he contends, "mutual reliance is commonplace, since workers routinely function in units with supervisors, peers, and subordinates. Absorbing this lesson is one of the keys to growing up and getting ahead."

• *Motivation and self-discipline* – The military specializes in overcoming poor motivation, which is key to turning around low achievement.

• *Valuing and believing in students* – Struggling students "yearn for adults who genuinely value them and believe they can be successful," says Price.

• *Educating the whole person* – This means stressing seven other goals in addition to academic excellence: leadership and followership, responsible citizenship, service to the community, life coping skills, job skills, physical fitness, and health and human hygiene.

• *Boosting literacy* – By focusing on mastering the content and learning demands of relevant tasks, says Price, the military has developed a formula for improving general literacy.

• *Rewards and recognition* – The mistake in many schools, writes Price, is recognizing only top achievers, leading struggling students to conclude that rewards are hopelessly out of reach. The military has long made a practice of ceremonies and rituals that affirm contributions and accomplishments, from "monumental to modest."

• *Safety and security* – "This enables educators to teach and students to learn without fear of disruption or danger," concludes Price.

"Demilitarizing What the Pentagon Knows About Educating Young People" by Hugh Price in *Education Week*, Oct. 3, 2007 (Vol. 27, #6, p. 13)
http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/10/03/06price.h27.html

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6. Single-Sex Classrooms in South Carolina

This Associated Press article in *Teacher Magazine* reports on South Carolina's experiments with all-boy and all-girl classrooms, which are now permissible under federal guidelines if a school can provide research evidence that they will improve student achievement, expand the diversity of courses, or meet students' individual needs. About 70

South Carolina schools are piloting the initiative, and the state aims to have single-gender classes as an option in all schools within five years.

The theory is that raging hormones, self-doubt, and peer pressure make coeducational classes a less favorable learning environment for middle-school students. Here are some of the ways in which teachers are differentiating instruction in single-sex classes:

• In all-boy classes, some teachers are using microphones because boys don't hear as well as girls, while teachers in all-girl classes find themselves talking more softly because girls sometimes take yelling more personally than boys.

• In all-boy classes, teachers incorporate movement to deal with boys' shorter attention spans, for example, tossing a ball to a student when he's chosen to answer a question.

• A teacher in one all-boy class has students get down on the floor with a large vinyl chart and use skateboard parts and measuring tape to learn pre-algebra concepts. A teacher in an all-girl class has students interview each other about who is shy and who has dogs at home and then turn the survey results into fractions, decimals, and percents – with soft classical music playing in the background.

• One all-boy teacher assigns action novels, while an all-girl teacher has students evaluate cosmetics for science projects.

Some students and parents speak highly of single-gender classrooms, saying that girls feel more confident and boys can focus better. But South Carolina's experiment has encountered some push-back. Kim Gandy, president of the National Organization for Women, believes that segregating boys and girls can lead boys to come away with sexist ideas about male superiority, and worries about students being boxed into learning in one particular way. "There are ways to appeal to interests and learning styles and abilities without lumping people based on gender, which is not a good measure of anything," says Gandy. "At what point is it OK to make judgments of entire groups of human beings based on race or sex?"

"S.C. Spearheads Same-Sex Education" by The Associated Press in *Teacher Magazine* (online), Oct. 3, 2007, available after free registration at: http://www.teachermagazine.org/tm/articles/2007/10/03/06apsamesex_web.h19.html.

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7. What Makes First-Born Children Smarter?

This *Education Week* article reports on two Norwegian studies published last June, which speculated that first-born children's higher I.Q. scores may be due to the fact that older children often tutor their younger brothers and sisters. "Explaining something to a younger sibling solidifies your knowledge and allows you to grow more extensively," said Robert Zajonc, a Stanford University psychologist. According to Frank Sulloway, a visiting scholar at the University of California at Berkeley, the Norwegian studies make it clear that first-born children's higher I.Q. scores are not biologically driven. Second-born children with an older sibling who died in childhood had I.Q. scores almost the same as first-born children.

"The problem," Sulloway says, "is that we just don't know the mechanism." He speculates about another possible explanation. "The oldest child goes to school first and tries to

do well to please the parents. Since the first one has nailed down the school niche, the younger siblings tend to diversify" – becoming the clown of the family, for example, or the athlete, or the whiner. Clearly more research is needed to figure out exactly what accounts for I.Q. differences among siblings.

Does this research support peer-tutoring programs in schools? Actually, there's already plenty of evidence for their efficacy. More than 30 years of research supports the idea that elementary-school peer tutoring helps both the tutor and the tutee and produces moderate gains compared to regular classroom instruction. Studies have also shown that tutoring has more impact among younger, lower-SES, inner-city, and minority-group children. There is also research suggesting that peer tutoring improves social skills and motivation and reduces students' frustration with school work.

"Peer Tutoring's Potential to Boost IQ Intrigues Educators" by Debra Viadero in *Education Week*, Oct. 3, 2007 (Vol. 27, #6, p. 13)
http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/10/03/06peertutor.h27.html

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8. Alfie Kohn on Ways Schools Foster Cheating

In this article in *Kappan*, Alfie Kohn condemns student cheating but suggests that schools may unwittingly increase the likelihood that it will occur. "What the data are telling us," he writes, "is that cheating is best understood as a symptom of problems with the priorities of schools and the practices of educators… Cheating could be seen as a rational choice in a culture of warped values." Here is Kohn's list of ways schools aid and abet cheating:

- When teachers don't have close connections with their students;
- When schools stress individual work and define peer collaboration as cheating;
- When students believe academic tasks are boring, irrelevant, or overwhelming;
- When teachers stress memorization and forbid students to consult reference books and other sources during tests;
- When the emphasis is on performing and being smart rather than on learning and achieving mastery;
- When students believe the ultimate goal of learning is to get good grades. "The goal of acing a test, getting a good mark, making the honor roll, or impressing the teacher," writes Kohn, "is completely different from – indeed, antithetical to – the goal of figuring out what makes some objects float and some sink or why the character in that play we just read is so indecisive."
- When teachers emphasize competition, the worst practice being grading on a curve. "Competition is perhaps the single most toxic ingredient to be found in classrooms," writes Kohn, "and it is also a reliable predictor of cheating… Competition typically has an adverse impact on relationships because each person comes to look at everyone else as obstacles to his or her own success."

"Who's Cheating Whom?" by Alfie Kohn in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2007 (Vol. 89, #2, p. 88-97), no e-link available

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9. Using Skill Sheets to Monitor Students' Writing Progress

In a letter to *Education Week* responding to Gary Mielo's September 12, 2007 article on first-draft writing (summarized in Marshall Memo 201, #6), Colorado teacher Grace Sussman agrees that handing back students' writing with corrections isn't the answer – but she disagrees with Mielo's idea of holding students accountable for a perfect first draft. "What I have found effective as a writing teacher," says Sussman, "is to follow Nancie Atwell's suggestion of creating a skill-sheet inventory for each student. During one-on-one writing conferences with me, each student targets the skills he or she will accomplish in assignments. While reading my students' writing, I check the skill sheet that I keep for each student and reward the accomplishment of those skills. This way, students are not responsible for every aspect of good writing, but for a specific and growing list of writing skills."

"When Teaching Writing, Focus on Skills, Not Product" by Grace Sussman in Letters to the Editor, *Education Week*, Oct. 3, 2007 (Vol. 27, #6, p. 33)

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10. Online Access to Books and Children's Book Illustrations

In this *Kappan* technology column, Royal Van Horn shares a number of websites that give (mostly) free, online access to books:

• Manybooks – http://manybooks.net - This free site allows readers to download books onto a PDA, iPod, or eBook reader. There are currently 18,000 books on the site, from classics like *Moby Dick* to current open-source novels and works of non-fiction. Van Horn raves about the quality of this website, which makes books available in 21 different formats, including PDF, regular and large type, iPod notes, and others. The site also has book reviews and lists by popularity.

• LibriVox – http://www.librivox.org - is powered by volunteers and aims "to make all books in the public domain available, for free, in audio format on the Internet." The site has more than 1,000 volunteers reading books aloud and donating the recordings – for example, *The Three Little Pigs*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *A Christmas Carol*, and all of Mark Twain's books.

• Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic – http://www.rfbd.org - Has more than 30,000 audiobooks available, including current best-sellers like *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Individual students with a letter certifying a visual disability can register for a one-time fee of $65 and an annual renewal fee of $35. A school membership runs $950 a year for access to 100 books.

• Learning Through Listening – http://www.learningthroughlistening.org - gives access to a database of lesson plans and other activities aimed at improving students' listening skills. Some materials require paying for a Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic website, but other

files can be downloaded after free registration, including selections from *A Light in the Attic* by Shel Silverstein. Van Horn says that to access this material, you need QuickTime Pro, and he suggests printing out the installation instructions, which are tricky, and not losing your registration key.

• Jan Brett's main website - http://www.janbrett.com/index.html - Van Horn says this is the best children's website he's come across, with more than 4,000 pages of goodies for elementary teachers and children.

• Mitten Masks page – http://www.janbrett.com/mitten_masks_main.htm. This page has eight illustrations of lovable animals, including an owl and a hedgehog that Van Horn gleefully downloaded for his wife, who teaches first grade.

• Open Directory Project – http://www.dmoz.org/Arts/Illustration/Children%27s. The best site for children's book illustrations, says Van Horn.

"Technology: Online Books and Audiobooks" by Royal Van Horn in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2007 (Vol. 89, #2, p. 154-155), no e-link available

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11. Short Items:

a. Live Google clouds – This add-on to Google Earth will display different views of the cloud cover over any part of the Earth. There's a three-hour delay, so don't use this site to stay out of the way of a tornado, advises Van Horn.
http://www.barnabu.co.uk/live-global-clouds-for-google-earth.

"Tech Briefs" by Royal Van Horn in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2007 (Vol. 89, #2, p. 155), no e-link available

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b. Historical maps online – Another Google Earth add-on features various historical maps superimposed on Google Globe:
http://www.google.com/press/pressrel/earth_awareness.html.

"Tech Briefs" by Royal Van Horn in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2007 (Vol. 89, #2, p. 155), no e-link available

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c. Tomasito's Mother Comes to School – This online bilingual storybook from the Harvard Family Research Project draws on the real experiences of an 8-year-old Latino boy and his family acculturating to the U.S. and has a family guide and discussion questions:
http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrptest/projects/fine/resources/storybook/tomasito.html.

Spotted in "News to Use" in *Middle Ground*, October 2007 (Vol. 11, #2, p. 6)

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d. Teacher resources online – This Verizon Foundation website is a portal to 55,000 K-12 lesson plans and professional development resources, developed in conjunction with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the International Reading Association, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the National Center for Family Literacy, the National Council on Economic Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Geographic Society, ProLiteracy Worldwide, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Amazing resources! http://www.thinkfinity.org

Spotted in "News to Use" in *Middle Ground*, October 2007 (Vol. 11, #2, p. 6-7)

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e. Finding original sources online – This website helps educators and students find original material that's located in archives, libraries, universities, and government websites. It's at:
http://www.awesomestories.com.

Spotted in "News to Use" in *Middle Ground*, October 2007 (Vol. 11, #2, p. 7)

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Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

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

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

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

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

Subscriptions:

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

Website:

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

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

Marshall Memo subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

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

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Atlantic Monthly
Catalyst Chicago
Chronicle of Higher Education
CommonWealth Magazine
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
NASSP Bulletin
New York Times
New Yorker
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
Teacher Magazine (online)
Teachers College Record
TESOL Quarterly
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools