# Marshall Memo 268

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
January 12, 2009

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1. How can we help students remember more?
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## Quotes of the Week

"Young adolescents are enthusiastic and eager, angry and anxious, shy, outgoing, depressed, frustrated, proud, stressed, confident, scared – all in the same day."

Center for Collaborative Education, Boston (quoted in "Children At Risk, Children of Hope" by Lawrence Hardy in *American School Board Journal*, January 2009, p. 14)

"Good mathematics instruction is hard, but it isn't quantum physics."

Steven Leinwand (see item #3)

"How can one expect instruction to focus on conceptual understanding, or communicating one's thinking or reasoning through a complex problem, when tests hold students accountable for only low-level skills and multiple-choice answers?"

Steven Leinwand (*ibid*.)

"Far too often, teachers revert to how they were taught, not how their effective colleagues are teaching. Common problems are often solved individually rather than collaboratively. Successful enterprises don't tolerate such conditions."

Steven Leinwand (*ibid*.)

"Recess is when all the trouble starts: the teasing, the fights, the bullying, the injuries, the referrals."

A principal (see item #6)

## 1. How Can We Help Students Remember More?

In this helpful column in *American Educator*, University of Virginia cognitive scientist Daniel Willingham explores the research on how students can commit things to memory, how they can avoid forgetting, and how they can tell when they've studied enough. These principles, he says, apply to student learning in elementary and secondary schools – and also to adults. Here are his findings and suggestions:

• *How can students commit facts and skills to memory?* The key to remembering is *thinking about* what you want to remember, says Willingham. Memory is the "residue of thought, meaning that the more you think about something, the more likely it is that you'll remember it." This has immediate implications for the best way for students to study. It's not enough to tell students to think about what they're studying, and just re-reading notes and highlighting them isn't that effective. It can even be detrimental if it creates the illusion that you know the material because you've "studied" it.

What's helpful is giving students a specific task that will force them to think about meaning as they study, for example, asking "Why" after every sentence or paragraph or segment they read. One study showed that students who did this remembered significantly more than students who read the same material without asking Why. Another strategy is for students to write down the main ideas of a chapter and identify how the author elaborates on these points, drawing a diagram of the main and subordinate ideas. A third approach is for students to write an outline for a chapter and then see if they can write a *different* outline, organizing the same material another way.

Willingham notes that SQ3R, a widely touted study method, seems to embody the think-about-it strategy: Survey what you will read, generate Questions as you survey, Read to answer your questions, Recite the important information as you read, and Review when you've finished. Unfortunately, SQ3R doesn't work that well; the reason, he says, is that it's difficult to do well (framing good questions is the hardest part). Mnemonics, on the other hand, can be quite effective because they give us something to think about – cues to our memories. These are especially helpful when memorizing material that doesn't have much intrinsic meaning.

• *How can students avoid forgetting what's been committed to memory?* The key to accessing memories is *cues* or hooks that help retrieve what we've stored in our brains. Without cues, memories are inaccessible, seemingly lost. With the right cues, even distant memories can be retrieved intact. So to minimize forgetting, students need to create distinctive

and memorable hooks as they store material. One strategy is distinctive mnemonics to "tag" memories. Here are some examples:

- Pegwords – These are useful for memorizing lists of unrelated items. For example, remembering that the number one item on the list will be associated with "bun", the number two item with "shoe", the number three item with "tree", etc., and then creating a visual image of each item with its position word.
- Method of loci – Also useful for memorizing unrelated items, you take a mental walk down a familiar route and associate each item to be remembered with a location on the route.
- Acronym – Creating an acronym using the first letter of each item to be remembered, for example, HOMES for remembering the Great Lakes: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior.
- Acrostic – Creating an easy-to-remember sentence in which the first letter of each word provides a cue to the item to be remembered, for example, "Every Good Boy Does Fine" to remember the order of notes on the treble clef.
- Music or rhymes – Setting the material to be remembered to a familiar tune, for example, the alphabet song, or "Thirty days has September…"
- Mnemonic associations – For example, remembering that the word *principal* ends in *pal* because she is your *pal*, or remembering that *grammar* ends in *ar* by remembering not to *mar* your work with bad grammar.
- Keyword – Useful for memorizing foreign vocabulary: finding an English word that is close in sound to the foreign vocabulary word and creating a visual image that connects the two, for example, remembering championes, the Spanish word for mushrooms, by creating a visual image of a boxing champion in the ring, arms aloft, wearing large mushrooms instead of boxing gloves.

Another memory-retention strategy is distributed studying – not cramming in one session, but studying at several different, spread-out times. A third strategy is over-learning; since we tend to overestimate how much we'll remember and underestimate how much we'll forget, it makes sense to study about 20 percent longer than seems necessary. Another strategy is to test yourself as you go along, replicating the conditions under which you'll actually be tested. Finally, an excellent way to remember is to explain the material to another person – ideally someone who can ask thoughtful follow-up questions.

• *How can students be certain they have actually committed something to memory?*

Most people, children and adults, think they remember more than they actually do. This means that students don't study as much as they need to. One study showed that students allocated only 68 percent of the time they needed to master material. Thus, for students to study more effectively, says Willingham, they need to find ways to assess what they know more realistically.

Willingham concludes by puncturing several myths about memory: (a) Subliminal learning and memorizing while asleep are ineffective, he says; (b) Hypnosis doesn't make memory any more accurate; (c) Herbal supplements or pharmaceuticals, despite tantalizing

claims and a small number of suggestive findings, don't improve memory; and (d) Memory doesn't depend solely on the modality in which we learn new material; there's a widely shared belief that we remember 10 percent of what we read, 20 percent of what we hear, 30 percent of what we see, 50 percent of what we see and hear, 70 percent of what we discuss with others, and 95 percent of what we teach others. Willingham says that this sequence roughly corresponds to one of his key memory principles – how much we think about something we are trying to remember – but there are notable exceptions and this is not a hard-and-fast rule.

"Ask the Cognitive Scientist: What Will Improve a Student's Memory?" by Daniel Willingham in *American Educator*, Winter 2008-09 (Vol. 32, #4, p. 17-25, 44), available at http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/winter08_09/willingham.pdf . If you have a question you'd like Willingham to address in a future column, you can submit it to amered@aft.org.

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## 2. Explicit Teaching of Spelling in the Elementary Grades

In this detailed and thorough article in *American Educator*, literacy experts Malatesha Joshi, Rebecca Treiman, Suzanne Carreker, and Louisa Moats urge elementary schools to give more emphasis to spelling and link it and reading and writing instruction, versus teaching spelling as an isolated skill. "Good spelling is critical for literacy," they say.

The authors have found that most teachers teach spelling by whole-word memorization – using flashcards, having students write words 5-10 times, or closing their eyes and imagining each word. This approach comes from the belief (first voiced in the 1920s) that the relationship between sounds and letters is so unpredictable in English that memorization is the best way to learn spelling. This belief is still widely held, but it's not true, say the authors. More recent studies (and also the granddaddy of spelling, Noah Webster) say that visual memory is not the best way to learn to spell. English spelling, it turns out, isn't nearly as crazy as some think:

- The spellings of nearly 50 percent of words are predictable once basic sound-letter correspondences have been taught.
- Another 34 percent of words are predictable except for one sound (e.g., knit, boat, two).
- Using word origins and meanings, another 12 percent of words are predictable.
- This leaves only about 4 percent of English words that are truly irregular and need to be memorized.

"Spelling is a linguistic task that requires knowledge of sounds and letter patterns," say the authors. "Unlike poor spellers, who fail to make such connections, good spellers develop insights into how words are spelled based on sound-letter correspondences, meaningful parts of words (like the root *bio* and the suffix *logy*) and word origins and history." Studies have shown that the linguistic approach to spelling is significantly more effective, and not just for words that students study – for new words as well.

The authors are critical of the indirect approach to teaching spelling used in many Writers' Workshop classrooms and are concerned that if spelling is not taught systematically, students' writing will suffer. "A consistent research finding," they say, "is that poor spelling, in

addition to causing the writer frustration and embarrassment, adversely affects composition and transmission of ideas. On the whole, students who spell poorly write fewer words and write compositions of lower quality. Writers who struggle to remember spelling often limit themselves to words they can spell, losing expressive power. In addition, non-automatic spelling drains attention needed for the conceptual challenges of planning, generating ideas, formulating sentences, and monitoring one's progress."

Proficient spelling is also closely tied to reading proficiency. "Good spellers are almost always good readers," say the authors. "…If we do learn to spell a word, the mental representation of all the letters in that word is fully specified in memory, and recall is likely to be fluent and accurate… The correlation between spelling and reading comprehension is high because both depend on a common denominator: proficiency with language."

How should spelling be assessed? The authors advocate a diagnostic approach, highlighting the specific spelling errors students make rather than just marking words wrong. For example, students who repeatedly confuse /b/ and /p/ may have difficulty hearing the difference in the sounds (the position of the tongue, teeth, and lips are the same, but one sound is voiced while the other is unvoiced). The teacher might have these students hold their fingers over their vocal cords while saying both sounds to distinguish between them.

Do computer spell-checkers make spelling instruction unnecessary? No, say the authors. Spell checkers are best for catching typos made by reasonably good spellers, and cannot compensate for poor spelling. For example, a spell-checker would miss the errors in *Your sure glad to no* and wouldn't pick up on incorrect use of *meet* for *meat*, *week* for *weak,* and *them* for *then*. Studies have shown that spell checkers catch as few as 25 percent of errors in elementary-school students. Explicit teaching of spelling still matters!

To become good spellers, the authors say, students need to be systematically taught three types of information in the elementary grades:

• *Word origin and history* – For example, a number of words with Anglo-Saxon origins have a silent letter that was once pronounced – knee, gnat, ghost, wrist. Mimicking the original pronunciation can help students remember these. Some words are unusual because they came from historical figures, such as *caesarean* from Julius Caesar; *silhouette* from Etienne de Silhouette, a French finance minister known for shady deals; *leotard* from Jules Leotard, a 19th-century French aerialist; *pasteurize* from Louis Pasteur, the French chemist and microbiologist; *galvanize* from Luigi Galvani, an Italian physician and physicist; and *maverick* from Sam Maverick, a Texas rancher who refused to brand his cattle. Knowing Greek origins helps students remember that /f/ sounds tend to be spelled *ph* (photosynthesis and philodendron) and the /k/ sound is often spelled *ch*, as in *chlorophyll* and *chemistry*. In words with French origins, on the other hand, the /sh/ sound is often made with a *ch*, as in *champagne* and *chandelier*.

• *Syllable patterns and meaningful parts of words* – Once students have learned about two types of syllables – open syllables, like *he* and *go*, and closed syllables, like *cat* and *ball*, they can predict whether they will need to double the consonant in the middle of a word (e.g., *rabbit* versus *label*). Of course there are exceptions – *cabin*, *robin*, *lemon*, and *camel* – but they are much less frequent than words that follow the rabbit rule.

Knowledge of prefixes and suffixes is also very helpful in spelling, especially when linked to knowledge of word origins. For example, Old English words add –er (*worker*, *carpenter*, *farmer*, *grocer*, *baker*, *brewer*, and *butcher*) while words of Latin origin add –or (*actor*, *professor*, *educator*, *aviator*, *director*, and *counselor*). Similarly, Old English words add –able (*passable*, *laughable*, *breakable*, *agreeable*, and *punishable*) while Latin words add –ible (*edible*, *audible*, *credible*, *visible*, and *inedible*).

• *Letter patterns* – Knowing specific patterns is very helpful for spelling. For example, *q* is almost always followed by *u* and then another vowel (*queen*, *quail*), with the only exceptions being words from foreign countries (*Iraq*, *Qatar*); words don't end in *v* (hence *love*, *give*, *live*) unless they come from another language (*Kiev*); the letters *k*, *j, v*, *x*, and *y* almost never double up; and words don't begin with identical consonants, with *llama* being a rare exception because of its Spanish origins. There are also rules that students can remember, such as: /k/ in initial or medial position can be spelled with *c* or *k*; before *a*, *o*, *u*, or any consonant, a *c* is used, while *k* is used before e, *i*, or *y*. There are exceptions – *kangaroo*, *skunk*, and *skate* – but these can be remembered through mnemonic sentences like, The *kangaroo* and the *skunk* like to *skate*.

"Clearly, there is a great deal for students to learn," say the authors, "but it is manageable when spread over several years… Students should be taught about the lawfulness of spelling, even while irregularities are acknowledged. Students can be encouraged to recognize, learn, and use the patterns of English spelling through systematic, explicit instruction and activities. Such instruction requires careful planning, but is much more effective than memorizing words in a rote fashion." Here are their recommendations for each of the elementary grades:

• Kindergarten – Activities to heighten students' awareness of the sounds that make up our language, with lots of writing to help students connect speaking and writing; counting the number of syllables in words; listening for a particular sound in words; counting the number of sounds in words by saying the word slowly; being able to name letters on a chart as the teacher points to each letter, and quickly give the sounds of letters with one frequent sound (b, d, f).

• First grade – Learning Anglo-Saxon words with regular consonant and vowel sound-letter correspondences; learning to spell one-syllable words with one-to-one correspondences such as the short vowels and /b/, /d/, /f/, /g/, /h/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /p/, /s/, and /t/; learning a few common patterns for sounds that have more than one spelling, such as that the /k/ sound before a, o, u, or any consonant is spelled c (*cap, cot, cub, class, club*) and before e, i, or y is spelled k (*kept, kiss, skit*); learning other patterns, including the fact that when a long vowel sound in the initial or medial position is followed by one consonant sound, e is added to the end of the word (*name, these, five, rope, cube*), and the "floss rule" – that after a short vowel, a final /f/ is spelled ff, final /l/ is spelled ll, and final /s/ is spelled ss (*stiff, well, grass*). Students also learn some common exceptions: *if, this, us, thus, yes, bus,* and *his*.

• Second grade – Students are ready for more complex Anglo-Saxon letter patterns and common inflectional endings, and should learn to spell one-syllable words with patterns like:

- Final /k/ after a short vowel in a one-syllable word is spelled ck (back, peck, sick);

- Final /k/ after a consonant or two vowels is spelled k (milk, desk, book);
- Final /ch/ after a short vowel in a one-syllable word is spelled tch (catch, pitch);
- Final /j/ after a short vowel in a one-syllable word is spelled dge and ge after a long vowel, a consonant, or two vowels (badge, fudge, age, hinge, scrooge);
- Initial and medial /au/ is usually spelled ou and final /au is spelled ow (out, found, cow, how).

Students also learn words with inflectional endings such as -ing and -ed, which may require doubling or dropping a letter (hopping, running, stopped, bagged, beginning, occurred). When a suffix that begins with a vowel is added to words that end in a final e, the final e is dropped (hoping, naming, saved, joked).

• Third grade – Students learn multisyllabic words, the unstressed vowel schwa (*sofa*, *alone*), and the most common prefixes and suffixes. They also learn more complicated patterns such as using c for both the final /k/ after a short vowel in a word with more than one syllable (*public, lilac, fantastic*) and for the medial /s/ in a multisyllabic word after a vowel and before e, i, or y (*grocery, recess, recite*). Students also learn words with common suffixes that may require changing a letter (e.g., changing y to i when a suffix that does not begin with i is added to a word that ends in a consonant and a final y (*happiness, babies, plentiful*).

• Fourth grade – Latin-based prefixes, suffixes, and roots are introduced: *television* (vis), *auditorium* (audi), *conductor* (duc), *transportation* (port), *spectacular* (spect).

• Fifth grade – Greek combining forms are introduced: *photography* (photo), *symphony* (phono), *biology* (logy), *philosophy* (philo), *telescope* (tele), and *thermodynamic* (thermo).

Are there commercial spelling programs that embody the systematic approach advocated in this article? In a sidebar to the article (page 14-15), the editors of *American Educator* recommend two programs: *Primary Spelling by Pattern* for early elementary students and *Spellography* for upper elementary, both published by Sopris West.

"How Words Cast Their Spell" by Malatesha Joshi, Rebecca Treiman, Suzanne Carreker, and Louisa Moats in *American Educator*, Winter 2008-09 (Vol. 32, #4, p. 6-16, 42-43), available at http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/winter08_09/joshi.pdf

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## 3. A Strategy for Improving Math Instruction

In this *Education Week* commentary article, researcher Steven Leinwand heaps criticism on U.S. math teaching and says "it's time to turn to the real basics of what we expect students to learn, how we convey that, how we measure student learning, and how we support teachers and reduce their isolation." Here are his specific suggestions:

• Get broad acceptance for a "strongly recommended" set of world-class national math standards to guarantee coherence, focus, and alignment.

• *De facto* national standards would lead textbook publishers to reduce redundancy, present material that each grade level could manage, add depth, and balance procedural and conceptual understanding.

• Provide training in classroom methods that only a few teachers use now, including: constantly asking "Why" to promote reasoning and justification; using daily cumulative review; valuing different ways to reach solutions to problems; and using real-world applications and questions to create language-rich math classrooms. "Good mathematics instruction is hard," says Leinwand, "but it isn't quantum physics."

• Provide teachers with "compassionate, collegial, and yet candid coaching and supervision, guided by a compelling vision of high-quality mathematics instruction."

• Broaden the scope of assessments. "How can one expect instruction to focus on conceptual understanding, or communicating one's thinking or reasoning through a complex problem, when tests hold students accountable for only low-level skills and multiple-choice answers?" asks Leinwand. "Accountability isn't the problem. The problem rests with the instruments being used to hold the system accountable." Pointing to Singapore's assessments as a model, he advocates national assessments at grades 4, 8, and 10 with problem-oriented, constructed-response items. "Establishing a set of high-stakes, high-quality, annually-released national assessments will drive improvement, reduce the current hodge-podge of state assessments, and move the United States toward a rational alignment between what is taught and what is tested."

• Reduce teachers' isolation. "Far too often," says Leinwand, "teachers revert to how they were taught, not how their effective colleagues are teaching. Common problems are often solved individually rather than collaboratively. Successful enterprises don't tolerate such conditions." This means scheduling common meeting time and supporting meaningful sharing and interaction among teachers, including viewing videotapes of each others' teaching and discussing student results.

"Moving Mathematics Out of Mediocrity" by Steven Leinwand in *Education Week*, Jan. 7, 2009 (Vol. 28, #16, p. 32-33)
http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/01/07/16leinwand.h28.html

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## 4. A Freshman Advisory Program in a New York High School

In this *American School Board Journal* article, Westmoreland (NY) school administrator Christopher Hill describes how his district's 400-student high school launched a ninth-grade advisory program. They asked former students who had been successful despite the odds, "What made you stick it out when others just like you quit?" In every case, kids said it was an important connection with the school, usually a relationship with an adult – the band director, a coach, the librarian, or a particular teacher.

Second, school leaders looked at transcripts and noticed that students who made it despite outside barriers had a smooth freshman year. "Almost without exception," says Hill, "the students who dropped out had academic difficulties in the ninth grade."

With two clear goals – giving freshmen a successful year and forging meaningful connections between each student and at least one adult – the school created its ninth-grade "seminar." Two teachers took a lead role, consulting with a nearby school with a similar

program, compiling a binder with possible activities and discussion topics, and organizing a one-day training session for 15 teacher volunteers.

As the 2007-08 year began, freshmen began to meet every other day with an adult advisor in groups of 6-10. Students and teachers were uncertain at first, but soon fell into a comfortable routine of discussing a wide range of issues – peer conflict, time management, coping with frustration, and more. Seminar teachers held regular debriefing sessions and shared ideas, and the program picked up momentum. Relationships with advisors grew closer, and at the end of the first semester, the school had fewer freshmen on the failure list than ever.

As the year continued, the program immersed freshmen in other activities: a ropes course to learn the value of teamwork, a tour of a college campus, and an academic competition called the "Amazing Race." Each seminar also engaged in community service, including reading to kindergarten students once a month, washing local fire trucks, planting flowers around the campus, and repainting a map of the U.S. on a school playground.

After just a year, the program was declared an unqualified success. Freshman discipline referrals dropped 200 percent, absenteeism fell almost 44 percent, retentions were down 50 percent (only 3 students didn't make it to 10th grade), and in an end-of-year survey, almost three-quarters of freshmen said they felt they could turn to at least one adult if they had a problem. Teachers remarked on how "nice" the ninth graders seemed, and the number of freshmen who visited the nurse declined significantly. And the Westmoreland school board approved the ninth-grade seminar as a credit course.

"Making Connections" by Christopher Hill in *American School Board Journal*, January 2009 (Vol. 196, #1, p. 18-19), no e-link available; Hill can be at chill@westmorelandschool.org.

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## 5. Can Cell Phones Be Instructionally Useful?

In this *Education Week* article, Andrew Trotter reports that some schools are getting students to use their cell phones for instructional purposes. The most common school policy on cell phones is "Turned off and out of sight," aimed at preventing students from using cell phones to cheat, disrupt classes, bully, communicate with adults outside the school, and take photos of teachers and peers to share inappropriately. But it's occurred to some teachers that these devices, which are in virtually all students' pockets, might be put to good use. Here are some of the ways:

- Making podcasts using Gcast, a free Web-based service that allows anyone to create a page to host podcasts and upload audio files, as well as create more specialized channels and playlists;
- Taking field notes and snapping photos to share with classmates and compile in reports;
- Reporting on family trips to museums and historical sites;
- Organizing one's schedule and homework, including using Soshiku to provide "assignment due" messages to their cell phones (http://www.soshiku.com);
- Using messaging sites at which teachers can assign homework and give quizzes;

- Serving as "clickers" for responding to classroom questions and surveys by using Polleverywhere.com, which lets anyone post a poll or multiple-choice questionnaire that others can respond to using cell phone texting.

"Indeed," writes Trotter, "more educators are concluding that cellphones may be the only realistic way their schools can offer the 1-to-1 computing experiences that better-funded schools provide with laptops." For example, in a Kansas high school a Spanish teacher created a channel that allowed her students to call from outside of school and record themselves reading Spanish poetry, a French teacher had students make podcasts about recipes for French dishes, and an English teacher had her students use their cell phones to interview someone who had experienced war.

One resource is the recently published book, *Toys to Tools: Connecting Student Cell Phones to Education* by Liz Kolb (International Society for Technology in Education, 2008). Kolb lists 100 educational uses of cell phones, but also cautions on going overboard. For example, classroom activities shouldn't require the use of more sophisticated "smart-phones" that only some students can afford. But Kolb says that once smart-phones become more affordable and widely used, students will be "walking around with 24/7 connection to the world that they can use for research purposes, publishing purposes, and connecting purposes."

"Students Turn Their Cellphones On for Classroom Lessons" by Andrew Trotter in *Education Week*, Jan. 7, 2009 (Vol. 28, #16, p. 10-11)
http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/01/07/16cellphone.h28.html

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## 6. Less Mayhem and More Learning at Recess

In this *Washington Post* article, education pundit Jay Matthews raises serious concerns about the way recess is handled in many schools. The go-out-and-play-but-don't-kill-anybody approach caused one principal to say, "Recess is when all the trouble starts: the teasing, the fights, the bullying, the injuries, the referrals." It's not that students don't need exercise and fresh air; it's that unstructured and thinly supervised recesses have negative consequences for the rest of the instructional day.

Far better, says Matthews, to have a structured 30-minute exercise program every day along the lines that Sports4Kids organizes in schools [see Marshall Memo 256, article #10 for more information], with teachers playing a central role. "Whether the goal is children playing a team sport to learn teamwork, or knocking 20 seconds off their average time in running the mile, or learning social problem-solving through interactions while playing informally," says Mike Feinberg, one of the founders of the original KIPP school in Houston, "all of those situations need a teacher to set up the activities and/or facilitate the activities – and debrief to help the children process what they have learned when teachable moments on the schoolyard arise."

"Is Recess Necessary?" by Jay Matthews, *Washington Post*, Dec. 26, 2008
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/26/AR2008122600406.html.

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## 7. Virginity Pledges Don't Work

This *Education Week* item reports on a study conducted at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health showing that teenagers who take virginity pledges (promising not to become sexually active until marriage) had sex at the same rate as a matched sample of non-pledgers: half of the teens in both groups became sexually active, and they had about the same number of sexual partners. But there was an important difference: those who took virginity pledges were 10 percent less likely to protect themselves against pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

"Abstinence Education" in *Education Week*, Jan. 7, 2009 (Vol. 28, #16, p. 5); the full report, "Patient Teenagers? A Comparison of the Sexual Behavior of Virginity Pledgers and Matched Nonpledgers" by Janet Elise Rosenbaum, was published in *Pediatrics*, January 2009, http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/123/1/e110

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## 8. Short Items:

***a. Virtual books online*** – Big Bookshelf is a website with more than 300 fiction and non-fiction children's books, including *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud, Why Animals Live in Webs*, and *Adding and Subtracting at the Lake*. The site's website is searchable by name, genre, or age-group, and some books are available in multiple languages. In addition, aspiring writers can create their own children's books for the site. Check it out at http://www.BigUniverse.com.

"A Virtual Children's Bookshelf" in *American Educator*, Winter 2008-09 (Vol. 32, #4, p. 3)

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***b. A unit on baseball and unionism*** – This website has a high-school/college-level curriculum unit, "Hardball and Handshakes", that uses the history of professional baseball to examine employer/employee relationships. It was developed by the American Labor Studies Center at the Baseball Hall of Fame.
http://education.baseballhalloffame.org/experience/thematic_units/labor_history.html.

Spotted in "Why Teach Labor History" by James Green in *American Educator*, Winter 2008-09 (Vol. 32, #4, p. 30-34)
http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/winter08_09/green.pdf

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***c. Child labor curriculum material*** – These websites have photos and other curriculum material on the history of child labor in the U.S.:

- Library of Congress: http://www.memory.loc.gov/learn/community/cc_labor.php.
- Lewis Hine: http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/hine-photos.

Spotted in "Why Teach Labor History" by James Green in *American Educator*, Winter 2008-09 (Vol. 32, #4, p. 30-34)

http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/winter08_09/green.pdf

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***d. David Macaulay's new book on the human body*** – At this website, you can see some of Macaulay's new book, *The Way We Work: Getting to Know the Amazing Human Body* (Houghton Mifflin, 2008): http://www.davidmacaulay.com (click on "Look inside the book").

Spotted in *American Educator*, Winter 2008-09 (Vol. 32, #4, p. 38-41)
http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/winter08_09/macaulay.htm

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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:

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