

Marshall Memo 410

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
November 14, 2011

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Quotes of the Week

“Principals should be evaluated by wise and experienced superintendents who regularly oversee the physical and academic climate of their schools. They should be evaluated by attention to the graduation rate and the retention rate of their school. They should be evaluated by their ability to recruit and retain good teachers. If there is high teacher turnover, that’s a trouble sign. Principals should help and support their staff, making sure that teachers have the mentoring they need and opportunities to recharge their intellectual passions. They should be responsible for maintaining a full and balanced curriculum of studies, providing opportunities for all students to engage in the arts, sciences, foreign languages, and other subjects. Their schools should be spotlessly clean, cheerful, and welcoming, while exuding a seriousness of purpose about learning.”

Diane Ravitch in a *Principal* Q&A, November/December 2011 (Vol. 91, #2, p. 10)

“Two interacting forces – the power of tradition and the impulse to try something new – create an ever-growing list of tasks that might not be truly essential to the core work of the school.”

Justin Baeder in “Adjusting to the New Normal” in *Principal*, November/December 2011 (Vol. 91, #2, p. 16-19), no e-link for non-members

“People understand me so poorly that they don’t even understand my complaint about them not understanding me.”

19th-century Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard quoted in “Positive Behavior Support for Students with Autism” by Janet Fisher in *Principal*, November/December 2011 (Vol. 91, #2, p. 32-35), no e-link for non-members

1. What Happened to the “Apps” That Made America Great?

In this provocative *Newsweek* article, Harvard professor Niall Ferguson suggests that six “killer apps” are responsible for Western Civilization’s rise to world dominance in the 19th and 20th centuries:

- Competition – Western nations vied with each other, spurring continuous improvement;
- The scientific revolution – Breakthroughs in mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, and biology accelerated growth;
- The rule of law and representative government – Private-property rights and democratic elections created a safe space for innovation and growth;
- Modern medicine – Advances in germ theory, antibiotics, and anesthesia reduced mortality and illness rates;
- The consumer society – Leaps in productivity interacted with widespread demand for more, better, and cheaper goods;
- The work ethic – A combination of intensive labor and higher savings rates permitted sustained capital accumulation.

“Far more than in Europe,” says Ferguson, “Americans remain instinctively loyal to the killer applications of Western ascendancy, from competition all the way through to the work ethic. They know the country has the right software. They just can’t understand why it’s running so damn slowly.”

Ferguson believes it’s because our previously successful software has been infected by a number of viruses – anticompetitive quasi-monopolies in banking and education; pseudo-sciences and soft subjects that keep many students from engaging in hard sciences; special interests corrupting politics; over-leveraged personal finances; and more. What we need to do, he says, is “download the updates that are running more successfully in other countries, from Finland to New Zealand, from Denmark to Hong Kong, from Singapore to Sweden. And finally we need to reboot our whole system.” If we don’t, he argues, America will decline precipitously, left in the dust by better-run nations around the world.

But Ferguson remains hopeful. “I refuse to believe that Western civilization is like some hopeless old version of Microsoft DOS,” he concludes, “doomed to freeze, then crash. I still cling to the hope that the United States is the Mac to Europe’s PC, and that if one part of the West can successfully update and reboot itself, it’s America.”

“America’s ‘Oh Sh*t’ Moment: Has the U.S. Deleted the Very Things That Made It Great?” by Niall Ferguson in *Newsweek*, Nov. 7 & 14, 2011, no e-link available

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2. Addressing the Rigor Gap in Schools

In this *Kappan* article, Hofstra University professor Bruce Torff asks whether there might be a third explanation for the persistent achievement gap between the haves and have-nots in American schools. Some people blame poverty, injustice, and resources; others blame teachers, lack of accountability, and unions. Torff wonders if our beliefs about teaching and learning might play a role.

“Alas,” he says, “some of our culture’s folk beliefs lead to education practices that don’t seem optimal.” For example, it’s widely believed that critical thinking is only for high-achieving students. Being able to draw one’s own conclusions, rather than memorizing what’s taught, is an important life skill, but many educators believe it’s too challenging for low-achieving students. “A rigor gap emerges in which disadvantaged students are judged to require less-rigorous curriculum than that afforded their more privileged peers,” says Torff. “A self-fulfilling prophecy may result: The disadvantaged receive watered-down lessons that limit students’ academic growth, resulting in additional impoverished curriculum in subsequent lessons; conversely, the advantaged receive challenging lessons that boost students’ academic performance, leading to additional rigorous curriculum down the road.”

Is it true that low-achieving students can’t handle critical thinking? No, says Torff. He points to research showing that these students benefit just as much as high achievers when immersed in a high-critical thinking learning environment. Effective teachers have always delivered the same high level of rigor to all their students.

But most teachers have different beliefs, and these beliefs are resistant to change, both during teacher training and on the job. “Once the inservice years begin,” says Torff, “teachers’ beliefs tend to remain steadfast no matter what kinds of experiences they have, how long they have been teaching, or how much inservice education they attain. As with other elements in folk psychology, beliefs about learning and teaching seem to be etched in stone and difficult to rewrite.”

Torff believes there are six factors at work when teachers opt for a less-rigorous curriculum for their disadvantaged students:

- Students’ level of prior knowledge;
- Students’ level of academic achievement;
- Students’ level of motivation;
- Time constraints;
- Parents’ influence;
- Colleagues’ influence.

“These are the triggers of the rigor gap,” he says. But he believes they can be challenged and changed through the following professional-development activities:

- Conversations, journals, and assignments designed to get teachers to reflect on their existing beliefs. Telling people what to believe doesn’t work, but getting them to think about their own beliefs in light of other evidence just might.
- Detailed analysis of case studies about disadvantaged students being denied access to rigorous curriculum experiences.

- Evaluating programs that get disadvantaged students successfully engaging in critical thinking.

- Involving teachers in writing curriculum that gets all students working at high levels.

“Taking aim at the beliefs underlying the rigor gap, these strategies have potential to help close the achievement gap,” Torff concludes. “Of course, poverty and social injustice are problematic, as are underperforming teachers and lack of accountability. But at least part of the problem lies elsewhere: in our culture’s well-intended but off-target beliefs about appropriate curriculum for disadvantaged students.”

“Teacher Beliefs Shape Learning for All Students” by Bruce Torff in *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2011 (Vol. 93, #3, p. 21-23), <http://www.kappanmagazine.org>; Torff can be reached at bruce.torff@hofstra.edu.

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3. A Minnesota High School Reforms Its Grading Policies

(Originally titled “How Grading Reform Changed Our School”)

In this helpful *Educational Leadership* article, Jeffrey Erickson, assistant principal of a suburban 2,900-student high school, describes the journey he and his colleagues undertook to address problems they had identified with their grading system: inconsistency from class to class; blending attendance, behavior, effort, extra credit, class participation, returning permission slips, contributing canned food to the food drive, and achievement; grading on the curve; and parent pressure for more transparency.

The school’s first move was to articulate a guiding principle: *Grades should reflect only what a student knows and is able to do*. As the faculty studied the issue and engaged in professional sharing and explanations to parents, resistance faded away and policies were changed:

- Grades were split into two categories: formative (which would count for no more than 15 percent) and summative (not less than 85 percent).

- Summative grades were based on at least four common assessments for each course, one of which had to be a performance task.

- Teachers articulated clear learning targets that students could understand and attain.

- Formative assessments informed students of their progress in mastering material that was eventually contained in summative assessments.

- After each summative assessment, teachers did an item analysis, and if a significant number of students missed an item, the teacher omitted it from students’ grades, retaught the concept, and gave another assessment.

- Instead of grading homework on completion, which sometimes produced disparities between homework grades and summative mastery, teachers started giving in-class quizzes on homework content.

- The previous policy on re-takes – *Teach, test, and move on* – was replaced by *Teach, test, and now what?* “The essential question that each teacher should ask after every assessment is, *Now what do I do for the students who didn’t get it?*” says Erickson. “When the

answer is to provide a retake, the most important step is what happens between the first and second test. The purpose of retakes is never for the student to simply show up and hope for the best. Corrective instruction must occur between the test and retest.”

- Behavior, attendance, effort, and attitude were reported to parents in regular report-card conferences. Unexcused absences were dealt with by intervention and consequences within 36 hours, not lowering grades. These changes have produced a 55 percent reduction in unexcused absences, a 66 percent reduction in disciplinary referrals, and a 37 percent reduction in suspensions.

- “We decided that the consequence for not doing the work should be – doing the work,” says Erickson. This takes place during lunch or before school. Teachers phone the parents of struggling students every three weeks. The result has been a 63 percent reduction in *F*s and a 32 percent drop in *D*s. “When an entire faculty implements this consequence and moves away from practices that deflate grades – and hope – an entire culture can be transformed,” he says.

How did this affect student achievement? Erickson reports that ACT composite scores rose from 24.1 to 25.7, the number of students taking AP exams rose from 505 to 661, the number of students participating in the AP Scholars program rose from 160 to 258, and the 10th-grade Minnesota Comprehensive Reading Exam passing rate increased from 85.5 percent to 92.3 percent. In addition, there’s much less stress and uncertainty about grades. The new policies are clear and transparent, and everyone is more relaxed.

“How Grading Reform Changed Our School” by Jeffrey Erickson in *Educational Leadership*, November 2011 (Vol. 69, #3, p. 66-), <http://www.ascd.org>; Erickson can be reached at jeffrey.erickson@minnetonka.k12.mn.us.

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4. Should Practice Work Be Graded?

(Originally titled “No Penalties for Practice”)

In this helpful *Educational Leadership* article, San Diego State University professors Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, and Ian Pumpian describe how a local high school struggled to understand its high failure rate. One teacher noted that some students “may actually understand the content but have compliance issues. We just don’t know any other way to grade.” Another teacher said, “I realized that bringing a pencil to class was not one of the algebra standards.”

The issue turned on whether practice work – assignments that build skills and habits – should count toward grades. Some teachers said it teaches responsibility; others said it was a means to an end. An athletics coach suggested an analogy: “We don’t score practices. We score real games.” This persuaded the staff to see practice as formative. “Much like a coach who observes practice and gives an athlete feedback and instruction, a teacher can use students’ practice work to inform instruction,” explain Fisher, Frey, and Pumpian. “But when practice work is part of the overall grade, students don’t take risks, and teachers don’t get valuable glimpses into their understanding. Instead, students do whatever it takes to submit the work correctly the first time, even if that means copying from a peer.”

So the school devised a system in which grades would reflect content proficiency and mastery and practice is ungraded. Teachers defined *course competencies* (ranging from eight in Algebra to 17 in U.S. History) and then worked backwards to write assessments to measure proficiency. Assessments included traditional multiple-choice/short-answer tests and performance assessments. Among the latter were:

- A 20-page graphic novel retelling the events of the French Revolution;
- A crime story in which the crime is solved using DNA, RNA, and genetics.

The performance tasks were designed to measure deeper understanding in a way that traditional tests couldn't.

The staff used *Understanding by Design* to formulate big ideas and essential questions (such as, *What is beauty? What is beautiful?*) and then decided on practice work that would help students develop the competencies. Students are required to pass all the competencies for each subject 70 percent or higher to earn credit. Lower grades result in an Incomplete; students have two weeks to do extra practice and a re-take on their own, then they get mandatory lunchtime and after-school tutorials (the school lengthened the lunch period to 48 minutes and gave teachers twice-a-week 20-minute tutorial periods).

Students who haven't cleared an Incomplete within nine weeks can't take part in extracurriculars. This has led to close scrutiny of the weekly Incompletes list. "As students approach six or seven weeks on the list," say the authors, "coaches, extracurricular staff members, and peers join the support efforts to ensure that there are participants, players, and audience members at events." The whole system embodies two guiding principles: *Some students need more time and have different learning modalities than others*, and *It's never too late to learn*.

How has this worked out? At first, students did the ungraded class work and homework at about the same rate as before (50 percent completed homework). As the system kicked in, homework completion soared over 90 percent. Asked why they do ungraded homework, students say they have to do it now or do it later and it helps them pass the competencies.

And academic achievement? The GPA average has increased from 2.89 to 3.36, with the biggest gains among students living in poverty (2.26 to 3.12) and students with disabilities (1.30 to 3.02). On state tests, 92 percent of students are passing the 10th-grade test in math and English, and the school is outperforming similar schools by 11 percentage points (in 2010, 45 percent of eleventh graders scored proficient or advanced on the California standards test compared with only 12 percent in 2008). And students who go on to college report that they're in the habit of doing homework, even if it isn't collected.

"No Penalties for Practice" by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, and Ian Pumpian in *Educational Leadership*, November 2011 (Vol. 69, #3, p. 46-51), <http://www.ascd.org>; Fisher can be reached at dfisher@mail.sdsu.edu, Frey at nfrey@mail.sdsu.edu, and Pumpian at ipumpian@mail.sdsu.edu.

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5. Rethinking Homework

(Originally titled “Making Homework Central to Learning”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, University of Missouri/St. Louis professor Cathy Vatterott gives three reasons why teachers grade homework – and a counter-argument to each one:

- *If I don't grade it, they won't do it.* What's happened here, says Vatterott, is that “teachers have oversold grades to students as the indicator of a task's worth.” It's simply not true that only graded tasks are worthy of serious effort – students take notes, do group work, and participate in discussions without needing grades for motivation. “These are expectations, just as, in many other countries, completing homework is an expectation,” says Vatterott. “The belief that the carrot of a grade entices students to complete work is an illusion, one with roots in behaviorism and a negative view of learners. At its core, it negates students' intrinsic drive for mastery and implies that homework is inherently distasteful.”

- *Hard work should be rewarded.* Again, this is a behaviorist approach, and it has the effect of inflating students' overall grades by adding in activities that don't truly reflect learning.

- *Homework grades help students who test poorly.* Struggling students can rack up points for doing homework (whatever the quality) even if they can't demonstrate mastery on summative tests. This argument reveals three problems with many schools' overall grading systems. First, averaging grades makes it more difficult for teachers and students to zero in on learning problems that need to be fixed. Second, including homework grades conflates practice and mastery [see previous article]. And third, depending on homework grades usually means that teachers aren't using other forms of assessment that would more accurately measure students' understanding and proficiency.

What is the alternative? Vatterott believes schools need to shift to seeing homework as a means to learning as the end. “It's not about homework's value for the grade,” she says, “but homework's value for learning. It's not about the student's responsibility for a task, but the student's responsibility for his or her learning.”

What does this look like? In schools that don't grade homework, students are still accountable for doing it – it's marked for correctness, students get specific feedback, and there are consequences for not doing a good job (parent calls, after-school detention to catch up). Many of these schools have separate grades for academic achievement and “responsibility for learning” – the latter includes note-taking, group projects, and homework.

Here are Vatterott's suggestions for rethinking the role of homework in the overall assessment picture:

- *Evaluate each homework assignment to determine whether to grade it.* Some homework assignments should be graded – for example, research papers or portfolios of work.

- *Tie homework to assessments.* One approach is to allow students to use homework assignments and notes during tests. Another is to write at the top of test papers the grade on the test and the number of uncompleted homework assignments.

• *Focus on demonstration of learning, not task completion.* “When homework is graded, teachers spend an inordinate amount of time and effort chasing makeup work,” says Vatterott. “When the focus switches from working to learning, students understand that they can improve their final grade by demonstrating mastery, not through the ‘Hail Mary pass’ of an extra-credit assignment two weeks before the end of the semester.”

“Making Homework Central to Learning” by Cathy Vatterott in *Educational Leadership*, November 2011 (Vol. 69, #3, p. 60-64), <http://www.ascd.org>; Vatterott can be reached at Vatterott@umsl.edu.

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6. Tips for Improving Teacher-Made Tests

(Originally titled “Creating Student-Friendly Tests”)

In this thoughtful *Educational Leadership* article, SUNY/New Paltz professor Spencer Salend describes how a middle-school faculty puzzled over the discrepancy between students’ seeming mastery of material during classes and poor performance on teacher-made unit tests. When they asked students for anonymous comments, here’s some of what they heard:

- “The tests don’t cover many of the things we learned in class.”
- “We spent most of our time learning about one thing, and there was only one question on that topic.”
- “You don’t give us enough space to write our answers.”
- “The directions were confusing.”
- “The questions are like you’re trying to trick us.”
- “It’s hard to remember everything because we had two tests on the same day.”
- “Sometimes I get so nervous and frustrated I give up.”

In other words, the teacher-made tests had some serious deficiencies. “Invalid tests are unfair and of little value in helping teachers assess learning or determine fair grades,” says Salend.

Working with schools like this one, he has developed the following guidelines, strategies, and models for creating tests that are valid, reliable, and student-friendly:

• *Determine the scope and weight of test items.* A test should cover the main topics, concepts, and skills of the curriculum unit, and there should be a manageable number of items in proportion to the importance and difficulty of the content.

• *Use appropriate items.* What makes tests “tricky” is when they assess material in an entirely different way than it’s presented in class. Good test items should match teaching modalities; for example, classroom role-plays, simulations, cooperative learning, and problem-solving are best assessed with essay questions; factual knowledge is best assessed with multiple-choice items.

• *Schedule sanely.* Teachers should coordinate their tests so students aren’t overwhelmed by the content and amount of testing time. In addition, it’s better to give more-frequent tests on a narrower range of content than infrequent tests on large amounts of material.

- *Make tests accessible.* They should have clear, succinct directions, explicit information on how much each item counts, good graphics (e.g., not too many items on a page or words in each line, readable type faces and size, no right-justified formats, and good use of boldfacing), and be readable by all students (e.g., short sentences and familiar language). Salend recommends this website: <http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Documents/pdf/LSI/TAMI.pdf>.

- *Reduce test anxiety.* Teachers can embed phrases like “Take a deep breath” within tests and prompt students to stay focused, calm, and motivated. Giving students choices is also helpful to building engagement and reducing stress.

- *Avoid unfair questions.* Salend says multiple-choice items should provide the context for the answer and any relevant material and terminology, contain only one major point, and distractors should all be viable choices that are shorter than the stem and share common elements. “To eliminate visual confusion, present answer choices vertically, ordered in a logical sequence,” he says. “Highlight keywords in the stem, limit the number of voices to no more than four, and eliminate such choices as *all of the above* and *none of the above*.”

- *Use true-false questions wisely.* Students’ difficulty with this type of item is reduced if each item presents only one important point or relationship, uses declarative statements that are clearly true or false, offers meaningful information and the context for responding, highlights important parts of items, avoids double negatives and tip-off words like *all*, *entirely*, or *never*, spells out True and False as options (versus T and F), and draws on material that has been explicitly taught (versus depending on intuition, common sense, or general knowledge).

- *Make sentence-completion items fair.* The stem should contain enough information to identify the answer, and there should be one clear answer, usually one word or a short phrase; see http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_201111_Salend_Examples.pdf.

- *Make essay questions fair.* Essays demand numerous skills, and teachers can minimize the challenges by giving a focused, well-written prompt, specifying the essay’s length and the criteria that will be used to evaluate it, and giving students enough time to write. It might also be appropriate to allow students to refer to books and notes as they write.

- *Monitor students’ performance and affect.* Well-written tests should produce higher achievement and happier, less-anxious students.

“Creating Student-Friendly Tests” by Spencer Salend in *Educational Leadership*, November 2011 (Vol. 69, #3, p. 52-58), <http://www.ascd.org>; Salend is at salends@newpaltz.edu.

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7. Project-Based Learning Done Right

In this *Middle School Journal* article, Heather Lattimer (University of San Diego) and Robert Riordan (High Tech High Graduate School of Education) suggest the key components of successful project-based learning in middle schools:

- *Academic rigor* – Projects address key learning concepts and standards, or help students develop habits of mind and work associated with academic and professional disciplines.

- *Authenticity* – Projects use a real-world context and address issues that matter to students.
- *Applied learning* – Projects engage students in solving semi-structured problems calling for competencies expected in high-performance work organizations, including teamwork, problem-solving, and communication.
- *Active exploration* – Projects extend beyond the classroom and connect to work internships, field-based investigations, and community exploration.
- *Adult connections* – Projects connect students with adult mentors and coaches from the wider community.
- *Assessment practices* – Projects involve students in regular exhibitions and assessments of their work in light of personal, school, and real-world standards of performance.

“Project-Based Learning Engages Students in Meaningful Work” by Heather Lattimer and Robert Riordan in *Middle School Journal*, November 2011 (Vol. 43, #2, p. 18-23), no e-link available; Lattimer can be reached at hlattimer@sandiego.edu, Riordan at rriordan@hightechhigh.org.

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8. Addressing the “Good Parenting Gap”

In this *Education Gadfly* article, Michael Petrilli acknowledges that schools can make a tremendous difference for low-income children. “That said,” he continues, “it strikes me as highly unlikely that we’re ever going to significantly narrow the achievement gap between rich and poor unless we narrow the ‘good parenting gap’ between rich and poor families, too.” He lists ten family-to-child messages that would increase the chances of kids doing well in school:

- Wait until you’ve graduated from high school and you’re married to have children.
- Stay married.
- Don’t drink or smoke when you’re pregnant.
- Get regular prenatal check-ups.
- Nurse your baby instead of using a bottle.
- Talk and sing to your baby a lot.
- As your child grows, be firm but loving.
- Limit TV watching, especially in the early years.
- Spark your child’s curiosity by taking field trips to parks, museums, nature centers, etc.
- Read, baby, read.

Petrilli says that none of these depend on wealth – but they are much more likely to occur within stable marriages.

“So how do we spark a marriage renaissance,” he asks, “especially for poor and working-class families? Honestly, I don’t have a clue. Some argue for family-friendly tax incentives; others think a religious revival is what’s needed. I would vote for middle schools and high schools that are unafraid to preach a pro-marriage, wait-till-you’re-older-to-have-babies message... Whatever the solutions, let’s at least start talking about the problem. Pat

Moynihan tried to warn us long ago that our national experiment with large-scale single parenthood would turn out badly. He was right, and then some. Let's not wait any longer to do something about it."

"Opinion: We Have a Parenting Problem, Not a Poverty Problem" by Michael Petrilli in *The Education Gadfly*, Nov. 10, 2011 (Vol. 11, #44)

<http://www.edexcellence.net/news-commentary/education-gadfly.html>

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9. A Follow-Up on Atul Gawande's Article on Coaching

In this letter to *The New Yorker* responding to Atul Gawande's recent article on coaching for professionals [see Marshall Memo 405], Virginia Tyack of Richmond (VA) applauds his openness to feedback but points out that a surgeon is part of a surgical team and his article doesn't explore "the shared experience of his team members, all of whom are vitally aware of the progress of surgery."

Tyack recalls being a "lowly" member of hospital teams performing surgery and never being consulted about how things were going – until the hospital was faced with a malpractice lawsuit and she was grilled by the surgeon, hospital administrators, and lawyers about what might have gone wrong. "Perhaps another approach to improving patient outcomes might be routine "post-game" reviews with the entire surgical team," she suggests. "Good outcomes, after all, depend on the continuing development of everyone involved."

So what is the analogy in schools?

"Coaching Cultures" – a letter to *The New Yorker* from Virginia Tyack, Oct. 24, 2011 (p. 3)

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10. History-Changing Events

What events actually changed history? Rufus Fears of the University of Oklahoma teaches a course in which he presents the 36 events he believes changed history. Do you agree? Is anything missing?

- Hammurabi issues a code of law (1750 B.C.)
- Moses and monotheism (1220 B.C.)
- The Enlightenment of the Buddha (526 B.C.)
- Confucius instructs a nation (553-479 B.C.)
- Solon – democracy begins (594 B.C.)
- Marathon – democracy triumphant (490 B.C.)
- Hippocrates takes an oath (430 B.C.)
- Caesar crosses the Rubicon (49 B.C.)
- Jesus – the trial of a teacher (A.D. 36)
- Constantine I wins a battle (A.D. 312)
- Muhammad moves to Medina – the Hegira (A.D. 622)
- Bologna gets a university (1088)
- Dante sees Beatrice (1283)

- Black Death – pandemics and history (1348)
- Columbus finds a new world (1492)
- Michelangelo accepts a commission (1508)
- Erasmus – a book sets Europe ablaze (1516)
- Luther’s new course changes history (1517)
- The defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588)
- The Battle of Vienna (1683)
- The Battle of Lexington (1775)
- General Pickett leads a charge (1863)
- Adam Smith (1776) versus Karl Marx (1867)
- Charles Darwin takes an ocean voyage (1831)
- Louis Pasteur cures a child (1885)
- Two brothers take a flight (1903)
- The Archduke makes a state visit (1914)
- One night in Petrograd (1917)
- The day the stock market crashed (1929)
- Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany (1933)
- Franklin Roosevelt becomes president (1933)
- The atomic bomb is dropped (1945)
- Mao Zedong begins his long march (1934)
- John F. Kennedy is assassinated (1963)
- Dr. King leads a march (1963)
- September 11, 2001

The World Was Never the Same: Events That Changed History by Rufus Fears, published by The Great Courses, <http://www.thegreatcourses.com/4atl>

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11. Website:

a. Young Child Risk Calculator – This website <http://www.nccp.org/tools/risk> from the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University gives a state-by-state breakdown of risk factors faced by children.

“Poverty Facts and Figures” in *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2011 (Vol. 93, #3, p. 24)

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Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

If you have comments or suggestions, if you saw an article or web item in the last week that you think should have been summarized, or if you would like to suggest additional publications that should be covered by the Marshall Memo, please e-mail: kim.marshall48@gmail.com

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 41 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:

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- How to change access e-mail or log-in

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Better Evidence-Based Education
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
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Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
New York Times
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
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Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
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Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
The Atlantic Monthly
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
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