

Marshall Memo 684

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

May 1, 2017

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Quotes of the Week

“Failure itself can be either good or bad; it is what we do next that determines whether the experience is positive or negative.”

Raynard Kington (see item #3)

“The good news is that resilience isn’t a fixed personality trait; we’re not born with a set amount of it. Resilience is a muscle we can help kids build.”

Sheryl Sandberg (see item #2)

“I identify the detractors and their concerns, and then I think about how I can take the energy that they might put into resistance and channel it into something positive.”

Hospital executive Madeline Bell (quoted in item #1)

“Every comment and facial expression you make will be read and magnified 10 times by the organization. If you grimace during someone’s presentation because of your bad back, the person making the presentation thinks they’ve been fired.”

Former executive Stephen Kaufman (quoted in *ibid.*)

“I think that teachers ought to be talking to students about future jobs starting in preschool. Students don’t have to stick with a particular idea, but they should have a hypothesis that gives meaning to the academic work they do. I also think kids are fascinated by the work that adults do, and that they should have a lot more short- and long-form nonfiction reading about the work that adults do – about the work that *they* might do when they become adults.”

Matt Greenfield in “Investing to Transform Education” in *District Management Journal*, Spring 2017 (Vol. 21, p. 4-10), <http://bit.ly/2pozcgO>

1. Four Characteristics of High-Performing Leaders

In this *Harvard Business Review* article, Elena Lytkina Botelho, Kim Rosenkoetter Powell, Stephen Kincaid, and Dina Wang (all at ghSmart) draw on a database of 17,000 assessments of business executives to identify the behaviors associated with success in top management jobs. The behaviors sound “deceptively simple,” say the authors. “But the key is to practice them with maniacal consistency, which our work reveals is a great challenge for many leaders.” Indeed, it’s rare for successful leaders to be top performers in all four areas. Question: Are these characteristics also important to success in K-12 leadership?

- *Effective leaders decide with speed and conviction* – The authors found that the most successful executives are decisive, even amidst ambiguity, with incomplete information, and in unfamiliar terrain. Interestingly, some leaders with the highest IQs overthink their decisions, get bogged down trying to make the perfect choice, and end up being overcautious and stalling their organizations. This frustrates colleagues and produces attrition of valuable talent. High-performing leaders “understand that a wrong decision is often better than no decision at all,” say Botelho, Powell, Kincaid, and Wang. They know they can’t wait for perfect information – but they also know there are times when it’s best not to make a decision. That’s why they solicit multiple points of view and poll a small but carefully cultivated and unfailingly candid “kitchen cabinet” of advisors. One leader said, “I ask myself two questions: First, what’s the impact if I get it wrong? And second, how much will it hold other things up if I don’t move on this?”

- *Effective leaders engage for impact*. Once a course of action is decided, the most successful executives work hard to get buy-in from their colleagues and other stakeholders.

Some key behaviors:

- Understanding the needs and motivations of others and deftly working the crowd;
- Communicating effectively with everyone involved;
- Anticipating resistance; “I identify the detractors and their concerns,” says Madeline Bell of Children’s Hospital in Philadelphia, “and then I think about how I can take the energy that they might put into resistance and channel it into something positive. I make it clear to people that they’re important to the process and they’ll be part of a win. But at the end of the day, you have to be clear that you’re making the call and you expect them on board.”
- Being aware of the impact of moods and body language; “Every comment and facial expression you make will be read and magnified 10 times by the organization,” says

Stephen Kaufman, formerly of Arrow Electronics. “If you grimace during someone’s presentation because of your bad back, the person making the presentation thinks they’ve been fired.”

- Instilling confidence that the team will be led to success, even if that means making unpopular moves – in other words, not investing energy in being liked or protecting teams from painful decisions;
- Developing strong conflict resolution skills;
- Giving everyone a voice but not a vote; “Consensus is good, but it’s too slow,” says Christophe Weber of Takeda Pharmaceutical, “and sometimes you end up with the lowest common denominator.” He reaches out broadly to get new perspectives, but is careful not to create the illusion of democracy.

None of this means that leaders should behave like autocrats or become lone wolves, say Botelho, Powell, Kincaid, and Wang. In fact, executives with those characteristics don’t last long in the business world.

• *Effective leaders adapt proactively.* “It’s dealing with situations that are not in the playbook,” said Dominic Barton of McKinsey. “You’d better be ready to adapt.” Interestingly, the most adaptable leaders are those who spend a lot of time thinking about long-term goals and issues. The authors believe this makes them more alert to “early signals” that necessitate a new approach. Adaptable leaders “also recognize that setbacks are an integral part of changing course and treat their mistakes as opportunities to learn and grow.” Those who see setbacks as failure have much less chance of thriving, whereas the most successful executives “would offer unabashedly matter-of-fact accounts of where and why they had come up short and give specific examples of how they tweaked their approach to do better next time. At the heart of this is what Carol Dweck calls the growth mindset.

• *Effective leaders deliver reliably on their commitments.* “Leaders ignore the importance of reliability at their peril,” say Botelho, Powell, Kincaid, and Wang. There are several key elements to this trait:

- Setting realistic goals and aligning expectations to them up front (better to under-promise and over-deliver than vice-versa);
- Surrounding themselves with strong colleagues; the most successful leaders “move decisively to upgrade talent,” say the authors. “They set a high bar and focus on performance relevant to the role rather than personal comfort or loyalty – two criteria that often lead to bad calls.”
- Honing strong organizational and planning skills;
- Using accurate metrics;
- Having clear accountability and multiple channels for monitoring performance;
- Making rapid course corrections when necessary.

What about integrity and work ethic? As obvious as these might seem for successful leadership, and as important it is to screen for them, these two characteristics “will not help you separate the best from the rest,” say Botelho, Powell, Kincaid, and Wang. “Consider that

100% of low-performing CEOs in our sample scored high on integrity, and 97% scored high on work ethic.”

The bottom line of this study, conclude the authors, is that “leadership success is not a function of unalterable traits or unattainable pedigree. Nor is there anything exotic about the key ingredients: decisiveness, the ability to engage stakeholders, adaptability, and reliability.” And there’s no “perfect mix” of the four characteristics. But they are at the heart of successful leadership.

“What Sets Successful CEOs Apart” by Elena Lytkina Botelho, Kim Rosenkoetter Powell, Stephen Kincaid, and Dina Wang in *Harvard Business Review*, May-June 2017 (Vol. 95, #3, p. 70-77), <https://hbr.org/2017/05/what-sets-successful-ceos-apart>

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2. Building the Resilience Muscle in Young People

In this *New York Times* article, Sheryl Sandberg (Facebook chief operating officer) describes the sudden death of her husband while they were on vacation two years ago and the unimaginable task of telling her children, then 10 and 7 years old, when she got home. Somehow she did it, and in the months that followed, Sandberg began a series of conversations with psychologist Adam Grant (Wharton School). They ended up writing a book together about dealing with adversity and building resilience.

“The good news,” she says, “is that resilience isn’t a fixed personality trait; we’re not born with a set amount of it. Resilience is a muscle we can help kids build.” This is an important fact for the millions of U.S. children who are homeless, live in poverty, suffer from a serious illness, are abused or neglected, experience a grievous loss, or have a parent in jail. “We know that the trauma from experiences like these can last a lifetime,” says Sandberg; “extreme harm and deprivation can impede a child’s intellectual, social, emotional, and academic progress.” What are the best ways that adults can support traumatized children?

- *Tell them they are loved and are not alone.* This was the first piece of advice Sandberg got from a friend: tell your children this over and over again.

- *Show them that they matter.* This is the question children ask as they grow up: Do I make a difference to others? Do other people notice me, care about me, and rely on me? When young people think they don’t matter, they’re more likely to engage in self-destructive and antisocial activities, or simply withdraw.

- *Companion.* Parents and other adults can make a difference simply by walking alongside troubled children and listening with undivided attention, forming warm relationships, communicating openly, and using effective discipline.

- *List coping mechanisms.* Sandberg sat with her children and wrote down some “family rules” to remind them of how they would cope with their loss:

- It’s okay to be sad and take a break from any activity and cry.
- It’s okay to be happy and laugh.
- It’s okay to be angry and jealous of friends and relatives who still have fathers.
- It’s okay to say to anyone that we do not want to talk about it now.

- It's okay to ask for help.

They used colored markers to write these on a poster that still hangs in their hall two years later.

- *Establish positive rituals.* Sandberg continued a family dinnertime practice of each person sharing the best and worst moments of the day – the things that made them sad and those that made them grateful.

- *Embrace family history.* Having a sense of their roots builds children's sense of mattering, of being connected to something larger than themselves. This includes knowing where their parents and grandparents grew up, what their childhoods were like, and how the family fared in good times and bad. "Studies show that giving all members of the family a chance to tell their version builds self-esteem, particularly for girls," says Sandberg. "And making sure to integrate different perspectives into a coherent story builds a sense of control, particularly for boys."

- *Keep memories alive.* Sandberg asked friends and family members to make videos of memories of her husband. At one point, her daughter said, "I'm forgetting Daddy because I haven't seen him for so long," and they watched one of the videos. This was painful, but there's evidence that remembering a loved one who has been lost builds mental health – even physical health – over time.

"How to Build Resilient Kids, Even After a Loss" by Sheryl Sandberg in *The New York Times*, April 24, 2017, <http://nyti.ms/2oDLRsB>; Sandberg's book, with Adam Grant, is *Option B: Facing Adversity, Building Resilience, and Finding Joy* (Knopf, 2017)

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3. Academic Failure As a Potential Turning Point

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Raynard Kington (president of Grinnell College) says the most important event of his academic life was failing a test in 10th grade. He had entered an advanced college-prep program in Baltimore confident he could handle the work, but on his first algebra test, he got a 50. "I went home with tears running down my face," says Kington. His failure was especially galling because he believed the teacher expected him (and the other African-American student in the class) to fail. But his parents rallied behind him and he got to work, practicing problems every night in an algebra book his mother bought in a local bookstore. With a lot of hard work, spurred on by their desire to prove the teacher wrong, Kington ended up near the top of the class.

"That experience changed my view of myself," he says. "I found that I could be successful when I focused and studied. I don't know if I could have excelled academically later if I had not had that first painful failure to motivate me... Failure itself can be either good or bad; it is what we do next that determines whether the experience is positive or negative."

This insight has led Kington to build in ways to prevent Grinnell students' inevitable failures from killing motivation and learning. He talks to students about how they dealt with early academic failures and pushes them to take risks and venture beyond their comfort zones. Each semester, he writes personal e-mails to students who made the biggest gains in their

GPA. “While 20 e-mails do not change a culture,” he says, “I hope that these students get the message that the college believes in helping them learn, including learning how to recover from an academic stumble.” In this vein, he’s launched several other initiatives:

- *Using faculty reports to identify students in trouble* – At mid-semester, all instructors report on first-year students in three categories: solid performance, marginal performance, and at risk of failure. This allows for intervention before students get poor grades that become part of their records.

- *Using GPA data to identify students who are faltering* – Kington and his colleagues have learned that a small drop in a student’s GPA, even within the A-B range, is often an early-warning sign that a student may drop out for academic or non-academic reasons. Advisors immediately reach out to learn what’s going on and support these students.

- *Intervening with students who do poorly first semester* – These students, many of whom may not have the family support Kington enjoyed, start their second semester working with faculty advisers and mentors in weekend retreats and weekly group meetings focused on study skills, academic tutoring, shared calendars of major assignments, and group study. The focus is on how to turn themselves around academically. “As I know well from personal experience,” says Kington, “the times that are the most instructive in life often begin with a failure.”

“Creative Ways to Help Students Recover from Failure” by Raynard Kington in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 28, 2017 (Vol. LXIII, #34, p. 44), available to subscribers at <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Creative-Ways-to-Help-Students/239862>

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4. Daniel Goleman Deconstructs Emotional Intelligence

“Emotional intelligence, a different way of being smart, is a key to high performance at all levels, particularly for outstanding leadership,” says Daniel Goleman in this article in *More Than Sound*. “Emotional intelligence is the capacity to recognize our own feelings and those of others, and to manage emotions effectively in ourselves and our relationships.” Research by Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and colleagues has identified the following competencies:

- *Emotional self-awareness:*

- The ability to understand our own emotions and their effects on our performance

- *Self-management:*

- Emotional self-control – The ability to keep disruptive emotions and impulses in check and maintain our effectiveness under stressful or hostile conditions;

- Achievement orientation – Striving to meet or exceed a standard of excellence; looking for ways to do things better, set challenging goals, and take calculated risks;

- Positive outlook – The ability to see the good in people, situations, and events, and persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks;

- Adaptability – Flexibility in handling change, juggling multiple demands, and modifying ideas or approaches when needed.

- *Social awareness:*

- Empathy – The ability to sense others’ feelings and perspectives, taking an active interest in their concerns, and picking up cues about what others feel and think;
- Organizational awareness – The ability to read a group’s emotional currents and power relationships, identifying influencers, networks, and organizational dynamics.
- *Relationship management*:
 - Influence – The ability to have a positive impact on others, persuading or convincing them in order to gain their support;
 - Coach and mentor – The ability to foster the long-term learning or development of others by giving feedback, guidance, and support;
 - Conflict management – The ability to help others through emotional or tense situations, tactfully bringing disagreements into the open and finding solutions all can endorse;
 - Inspirational leadership – The ability to inspire and guide individuals and groups towards a meaningful vision of excellence, and to bring out the best in others;
 - Teamwork – The ability to work with others towards a shared goal; participating actively, sharing responsibility and rewards, and contributing to the capability of the team.

These competencies, says Goleman, aren’t just innate – they can be developed through introspection, feedback from others, and effective effort.

“Emotional and Social Intelligence Leadership Competencies: An Overview” by Daniel Goleman in *More Than Sound*, April 2017, <http://morethansound.net/emotional-social-intelligence-leadership-competencies/#.WQcqfVKZPLF>

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5. The ABCs of Effective Mentoring

“The kind of mentoring beginning teachers experience during their first few years of teaching can make or break their desire to remain in teaching and their potential to impact student learning,” say Randi Stanulis and Julie Bell (Michigan State University) in this article in *Kappa Delta Pi Record*. But it’s not enough for novice teachers to get advice and emotional support that helps them survive. “This unfocused approach... according to the results of a large-scale mentoring study, does not improve teacher effectiveness,” say Stanulis and Bell. Just as unhelpful is a flood of advice on teaching techniques than overwhelms rookies and makes them feel inadequate.

The alternative, say the authors, is mentor-to-teacher support that is attentive, targeted, and embodies effective coaching:

- *Attentive* – Novice teachers “often dread or dismiss their mentors’ advice,” say Stanulis and Bell. The key to effective support is listening and responding to the beginning teacher’s immediate concerns and questions while also learning their values and long-term goals. It’s easy for beginning teachers to become overwhelmed and disillusioned dealing with disruptive students, lesson planning, paperwork demands, and communicating with parents. Mentors need to settle rookies down, help them understand school and classroom dynamics, focus on one or two strategies that will make a difference, and build trust that will support the

more complex work that lies ahead. They recommend starting early conversations with two questions:

- *What is an example of something you feel proud of this week? Why?*
- *What is an example of something you struggled with this week? Why?*

Follow-up should include problem-solving and a clear timeline for next steps: e-mail, phone call, copying resources, and getting answers to the teacher's questions.

In the first classroom observation, Stanulis and Bell believe mentors should make a point of noticing what's going well and reinforce those elements, even if the teaching approach is not one that the mentor personally uses. The exception is a situation where the classroom is unsafe, in which case a more direct approach is needed.

- *Targeted* – “Although helping the mentee ‘put out fires’ may seem like a simple way to be an attentive mentor,” say the authors, “what the novice ultimately needs is... defining, selecting, and sticking with a targeted approach to improvement.” Mentors should avoid overwhelming new teachers with short-term fixes and mutually decide on a specific area for improvement conducive to an early win and aligned with an important long-term goal.

An example: a teacher sets a long-term goal of building a strong classroom community where students will take risks and push each others' thinking. The mentor affirms this and helps identify a short-term goal: building positive student relationships, starting with understanding students as individual learners. In the first week of school, the teacher has students interview one another and introduce their partners to the class. Thus, students get to know their classmates, build listening and oral presentation skills, and learn that their voices are valued – all of which gets the class off to a good start, gives the teacher valuable formative information, and reduces potential discipline problems.

Although classroom management is often an urgent challenge for new teachers, Stanulis and Bell caution against making this the primary goal. That's because discipline problems are often a symptom of other instructional shortcomings: failing to give clear directions, set and consistently reinforce expectations, engage students, and pace lessons in ways that keep students on task. Better for the mentor to help the teacher define a broader long-term goal and then take concrete steps to get there. Here's a possible sequence of mentor-to-mentee questions:

- The big picture: *We will work together to help you develop as an effective teacher.*
- The target: *What area of your teaching do you want to target for improvement?*
- Outcomes: *How will your target have instructional consequences for your students?*
- Specifics: *What is the first step (and the next step) toward success in reaching your target?*
- Support: *How can I help you hit the target?*

“For growth to happen in teacher learning,” say Stanulis and Bell, “mentors need to consistently collect and analyze data through observing and debriefing, co-planning, and modeling what this target can look like in practice.”

- *Coaching* – The trap to avoid is being a “buddy” and enabling little more than survival. The diagnosis, goal-setting, and scaffolding outlined above are far more effective.

Having established those, doing classroom observations and face-to-face debriefing are critical to helping novices improve. As one mentor put it, “I need to see what they’re doing so that we can talk about that.” Mentors who have a full teaching schedule will often need to get coverage to do observations – or use videos to see their mentees in action.

Observing lessons, the key look-fors are teacher questioning and checking for understanding, pacing, student participation, and how the teacher responds to students. Debriefing after an observation, the focus should be on pinpointing the target goal and noting progress from previous observations. Mentors should ask open-ended questions that “leave space for beginning teachers to show their understanding or confusion,” say Stanulis and Bell. “This information helps mentors scaffold and adjust their mentoring.” In addition, mentors can model techniques, co-plan units and lessons, and analyze student work, always making their thinking transparent to the teacher – for instance, “When I teach this lesson, I always give several examples because...” Sometimes quick hallway conversations are a way of staying in touch and sharing quick tips between observations and debriefs.

“Beginning Teachers Improve with Attentive and Targeted Mentoring” by Randi Stanulis and Julie Bell in *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, April-June 2017 (Vol. 53, #2, p. 59-65), available for purchase at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00228958.2017.1299543>; the authors can be reached at randis@msu.edu and belljuli@msu.edu.

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6. Accommodations, Modifications, and Interventions

In this article in *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, Greg Conderman, Lisa Liberty, and Stephanie DeSpain (Northern Illinois University) say that well-intentioned educators are sometimes unclear about the distinction between accommodations, modifications, and interventions and how they are used to meet students’ needs. They note some common problems:

- Over-accommodating students;
- For high-stakes testing, not preparing accommodation materials in advance;
- Identifying interventions that are really accommodations;
- Believing that accommodations necessarily lower standards for students.

Here are the authors’ definitions:

• *Accommodations* – “Accommodations are small changes in how teachers present content or how the student demonstrates knowledge,” say Conderman, Liberty, and DeSpain. “Accommodations do not alter learning outcomes for students, and they do not teach students new skills, but rather they provide students access to the curriculum or assessments. In other words, accommodations even the playing field and offset or correct for the disability.” They come in several flavors:

- Presentation accommodations – Helping students access material by presenting it in a format that accommodates their disability – for example, large print or digital text;
- Response accommodation – Allowing students to demonstrate knowledge or skill in a different way – for example, typing or dictating responses;

- Setting accommodations – Providing an alternative location or equipment for completing an assignment or assessment – for example, having a student work alone to avoid distractions;
- Timing and scheduling accommodations – Stretching the time allowed to complete an assignment or assessment, or breaking the time into small segments with breaks.

A key consideration with accommodations is that the intellectual difficulty of the task doesn't change, only the way it's handled with the student. Thus, it's inappropriate to allow accommodations when what's being assessed is fluency or rate, or to give clues to answers through voice intonation, allow peers to read test items to a student, or not provide adequate supervision in an alternative setting. It's also important to work with students so that accommodations can be tapered off over time when possible by teaching the skills involved in being successful in regular settings.

- *Modifications* – These involve substantial adjustments in the difficulty level of the content being learned (to below or above grade-level expectations) because of a student's disability. "Because modifications often lower standards, they should be used sparingly, especially for students who take state or district assessments," say Conderman, Liberty, and DeSpain. "Students with disabilities should receive a different curriculum than students without disabilities only when it is unrealistic for them to benefit from the general education curriculum." Students who are above level might get above-grade-level acceleration or enrichment activities. In any case, teachers should prepare a menu of instructional activities and assessments to ensure that students with disabilities get meaningful support that's not just cobbled together on the fly. Some possible modifications:

- Changing the task from recall to recognition;
- Allowing students to answer only main idea questions;
- Including fewer options in multiple-choice questions;
- Testing only big ideas;
- Testing students above or below grade level.

Teachers should decide on modifications as early in a curriculum unit as possible, use the smallest modification needed to help students work toward their goals, communicate modifications to parents, and ensure that the modification is associated with the same skill area or instructional topic.

The distinction between accommodations and modifications is important. For example, if the outcome of a unit is for students to write an essay, allowing the student to type rather than hand-write the final assessment is an accommodation, but allowing the student to dictate answers is a modification.

- *Interventions* – These are the "how to" of supporting students to reach their learning goals – for example, providing clear and explicit instruction; modeling a new skill; teaching metacognitive skills and appropriate social behaviors; providing enough practice time; giving feedback; organizing peer tutoring; and providing frequent review. Some key considerations: Implementing interventions with fidelity; allowing enough time for an intervention to work; reflecting on the effectiveness of an intervention for future reference; and, when possible,

getting students involved in collecting data on what's working and what isn't, graphing their individual progress toward their learning goals.

Here's an example of the three layers – accommodation, modification, and intervention – for a class learning to write a persuasive essay with at least three reasons for a position:

- Accommodation: Allow the use of a thesaurus; allow the use of adaptive devices such as pencil grips, special pen holders, erasable pen, color-coded lined paper; allowing extra time.
- Modification: Allow outlining instead of writing; provide multiple-choice questions or fill-in-the-blanks; change the number of reasons required.
- Interventions: Teach a mnemonic to remember the components of a persuasive essay; have students use a writer's notebook; model brainstorming to break the "idea" logjam; have students self-monitor and graph results to increase writing fluency.

"Understanding Accommodations, Modifications, and Interventions" by Greg Conderman, Lisa Liberty, and Stephanie DeSpain in *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, April-June 2017 (Vol. 53, #2, p. 70-75), available for purchase at <http://bit.ly/2qoMisW>; the authors can be reached at gconderman@niu.edu, lliberty@niu.edu, and sdespain@niu.edu.

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7. Professional Development: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

In this *Education Week* feature, readers tweeted their worst and best experiences with professional development:

The worst PD:

- Once got PD on how to use the new soap dispensers in the bathroom.
- Presenter hands out printout of PowerPoint and then proceeds to read us the PowerPoint... All. Day. Long.
- Motivational speaker made us stand and sing all the verses to Kenny Rogers's "You Picked a Fine Time to Leave Me, Lucille."
- A full-district PD where the speaker had us respond to hand signals with claps, etc. like trained animals. Offensive.

The best PD:

- Practicing strategies on students, getting immediate feedback, trying again.
- Best PD mirrors best classroom practices: differentiated, challenging, interactive, student-centered, inquiry-based.
- No substitute for having to watch/analyze myself on video. It makes you self-examine much more authentically.
- The best PD gives teachers something that they can walk away with and immediately use in the classroom.

"#BestPD, #WorstPD" in *Education Week*, April 26, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2pPU2XR>

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8. Online Tools to Scaffold Work for Struggling Readers and Writers

In this *Edutopia* article, Todd Finley suggests ways to address the challenge of a wide range of achievement levels by differentiating, providing choice, baking assessments into every lesson, and providing scaffolding for reading and writing. Here are some tech tools for the last item:

- Rewordify <https://rewordify.com> - A text compactor that simplifies and shortens readings;
- Newsela <https://newsela.com> - Articles on current topics can be adjusted to five different Lexile levels by sliding a bar on the right, includes comprehension questions;
- Tween Tribune from the Smithsonian <http://www.tweentribune.com> - Similar to Newsela, adjustable to four Lexile levels, with audio versions for additional support;
- Comprehension Bookmarks <http://www.ccsos.us/Downloads/Reading%20Processes.pdf> for readers who are struggling with a complex text;
- For academic writing, here's a word bank of transitions: <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Transitions.html>; an essay structure graphic: http://images.slideplayer.com/18/5709021/slides/slide_8.jpg; and sentence frames http://www.ouhsd.k12.ca.us/wp-content/uploads/docs/migrant_el-17.pdf.

“Teaching a Class with Big Ability Differences” by Todd Finley in *Edutopia*, April 13, 2017, <https://www.edutopia.org/article/teaching-class-big-ability-differences-todd-finley>

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*If you have feedback or suggestions,
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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 45 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 60 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are 50 issues a year).

Subscriptions:

Individual subscriptions are \$50 for a year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and how to pay by check, credit card, or purchase order.

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- An archive of all articles so far, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- A collection of "classic" articles from all issues

Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

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