Marshall Memo 217

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
January 14, 2008

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Ask not what instruction in reading speed can do for reading fluency and reading achievement; ask what instruction in authentic fluency can do for reading speed and achievement."

Timothy Rasinski and Lisa Lenhart (see item #2)

"He was the first teacher in my school career who valued what students had to say, rather than simply the mechanics of saying it. He encouraged us to think first and clean up the errors later. His focus on meaning made the dozens of subsequent trips to the dictionary worthwhile."

Richard Isenberg, retired educator, on William Teunis, his English teacher at Kennedy High School in Montgomery County, MD (*Phi Delta Kappan*, January 2008, p. 387)

"[A]sk a lot of questions of all students and make sure that you ask all students the same number of questions. Ask difficult questions of all students. Stay with them. When students don't answer correctly, draw out what they do know and clarify what they don't know."

Robert Marzano (see item #1)

"Hey, my teacher is serious here."

A student responding to this classroom regimen (*ibid.*)

"You can pretty much bet on a wild ride. It could be up. It could be down. But it's generally going to be extreme and volatile."

Donald Hambrick (see item #6)

"Aggression is a comparatively stable behavioral trait, and young people who still use their fists as an anger management or conflict resolution strategy in middle school or high school are at significant risk for serious problems later. For many of those students, the school environment may be the last best hope."

Jim Larson (see item #3)

1. Robert Marzano on the Art and Science of Good Teaching

In this excellent interview in *Principal Leadership*, researcher/author Robert Marzano talks about the balance between *art* and *science* in classroom teaching. Marzano says he used to believe that teaching could be reduced to a science: "if you do X, Y, and Z, then D is going to happen." But over the years, he's changed his mind. "Research in education can only get us to a certain point with regard to teaching," he says, "and that is to identify the broad areas of effective instruction, where you say that in general, good teachers set goals, and in general, good teachers give feedback, and so on. But that's as far as it can go. The art part of effective teaching is where individual teachers figure out the best ways to use specific strategies in the context of their content area, their students, and their personalities. That's art, in the sense that people have to adapt the research to their specific situations. There's no cookie-cutter approach to teaching, but good teaching does include certain things in general."

So there isn't one right way to teach. The bottom line, says Marzano, is whether students are learning. He believes this liberates a principal or supervisor when it comes to giving feedback to teachers. "[I]nstead of going in with a checklist and looking for specific instructional strategies being used," he says, "that principal would first go in and look to see if kids are learning… And if they're not, then you start looking at what a teacher's particular teaching profile is. What is a teacher doing a good job at, in terms of instructional strategies that the research says should work? And you then look at the areas where a teacher might not be doing such a good job, and say, Well, let's try getting better at these strategies and see if they improve student learning."

But how do we know if students are learning? By looking at teachers' pre- and post-tests and common interim assessments given by teacher teams, says Marzano. These during-the-year learning results should be the jumping-off point for an on-going professional conversation about what's working and what's not working in classrooms.

Marzano suggests that teachers reflect on their classroom effectiveness by asking themselves these ten questions (which form the core of his new book, *The Art and Science of Teaching*, ASCD 2007):

- What will I do today to establish and communicate learning goals, regularly check for understanding, track progress, give students feedback, get them involved in looking at progress, and celebrate success?
- What will I do today to help students effectively interact with new knowledge, including breaking it down into understandable chunks, using a variety of media, anecdotes, and narratives, putting students in groups, getting them making predictions, elaborating and reflecting on the material, and responding in writing?

- What will I do today to help students practice and deepen their understanding of new knowledge?
- What will I do today to help students generate and test hypotheses about new knowledge?
- What will I do today to engage students, including the use of games and simulations, low-stakes competition, physical movement, friendly controversy, unusual information, and opportunities for students to relate new content to their own lives?
- What will I do today to establish or maintain classroom rules and procedures?
- What will I do today to recognize and acknowledge adherence and lack of adherence to classroom rules and procedures?
- What will I do today to establish and maintain effective relationships with students, including a balance between guidance and control and cooperation and concern?
- What will I do today to communicate high expectations to all students, including sensitively eliciting participation from all students and finding the appropriate affective tone for students who are used to having low expectations from adults?
- What will I do to develop effective lessons organized into a cohesive unit, making it clear to students where each lesson fits into the big picture?

These ten attributes of excellent teaching have emerged from decades of research, and Marzano says that effective teachers use many of them in their classrooms – although hardly anyone uses all ten. Marzano does *not* recommend that principals carry clipboards into classrooms to check on whether all ten are being used. Instead, he says principals should find out whether students are learning ("Is gain being exhibited, in terms of their understanding and skill at what's being taught?") and then:

• If students are learning well, ask the teacher what he or she is doing to produce those results, and have them model those strengths for colleagues.

• If students are not making adequate knowledge gains, use the ten questions to start a conversation with the teacher: "Which might be an area that, if you improved, student achievement would go up and student knowledge gain would go up?"

In the past, Marzano has written about the importance of teaching being visual and dramatic, but he's worried that some teachers are spending too much time struggling to add these dimensions to their classrooms. "[A]ll *visual* means is that instead of telling students about something, show them," he says. "Use slides, use the Internet, show it with pictures. *Dramatic* does not necessarily mean it is acted out, although you could do that – it really just means a story." Using stories greatly increases students' retention of information, he says.

Asked about teacher expectations, Marzano says flatly, "the jury is in" – research clearly shows that high expectations are crucial to student success. But he says we need to go beyond believing that all children can learn. He suggests the following steps:

- Identify which students you have higher and lower expectations for (be honest!);
- Identify differences in the way these two categories of students are treated in the classroom (e.g., being asked more questions, being asked easier questions, being given more wait-time when they don't answer correctly);

- Identify specific strategies that can be used for "low-expectation" students.

"One of the most profound things I've seen teachers do is try this out in their classroom," says Marzano. He's found that it produces concrete strategies for making sure that all students are treated the same: "[A]sk a lot of questions of all students and make sure that you ask all students the same number of questions," he says. "Ask difficult questions of all students. Stay with them. When students don't answer correctly, draw out what they do know and clarify what they don't know. Over time, this creates a culture where kids get the message, Hey, my teacher is serious here. Students' expectations become, I give my best thinking and it's OK for me to be wrong."

How can a principal systematically improve teaching and learning in a school where many of these attributes are not present? Marzano suggests these steps:

- Create readiness by having teachers read and discuss professional literature and make that kind of interaction part of the school's culture.
- Develop a common language and model of instruction: What does good teaching look like? What are our values here in terms of good teaching? Marzano says it's important that this be written down: "It doesn't have to be a big book," he says; "it's really just a set of guidelines and principles."
- Devote staff time to systematically applying the common beliefs about instruction; for example, teachers might try specific instructional strategies, informally assess student learning, and see if the strategies worked.
- Have teachers observe other teachers who are producing good student learning results. Marzano says that peer observation is often ineffective because it takes on an evaluative tone. He suggests being very targeted and low-key about teachers observing each other: "With master teachers identified for specific strategies," he says, "a teacher who's not producing the results he or she wants can use the model to improve. A teacher might say, This expectation stuff is kind of interesting, and I don't think I do a good job at that. I really do tend to treat students differently based on my expectations. I understand that, but how do I get better? That's when, on a volunteer basis, a teacher can pair up with a master teacher and see that teacher in action. Using the model as a guide and seeing what the teacher does – that's very powerful. It benefits everyone."
- Measure student learning progress in all classrooms using common interim assessments and pre- and post-tests that use a common metric. "That's the coin of the realm in terms of effective teaching," says Marzano.

This is not easy or quick work, he concludes. "What I just outlined probably takes four or five years, but I've been tinkering with this for quite a long time, and I think it provides great hope for making schools places where we actually help people get better at this very, very complex thing, which I call the art and science of teaching."

"Producing Learning: A Conversation with Robert Marzano" by Jan Umphrey in *Principal Leadership*, January 2008 (Vol. 8, #5, p. 16-20), no free e-link available

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2. Fluency and Speed: A Chicken-and-Egg Question in Literacy

In this thoughtful commentary piece in *Reading Today*, Ohio literacy professors Timothy Rasinski and Lisa Lenhart question the current emphasis on getting children to increase their reading rate. "Although reading speed is strongly correlated with other more commonly accepted measures of reading achievement and comprehension," they write, "reading fast is not fluency."

The authors make their point by plotting the reading rate in the delivery of three influential 20th century speechmakers: Franklin D. Roosevelt in his 1941 declaration of war ("a date that will live in infamy"), John F. Kennedy in his 1961 inaugural address ("Ask not what your country can do for you…"), and Martin Luther King, Jr. in his 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech. Roosevelt's reading rate ranged from 83 to 107 words per minute, Kennedy's from 88 to 120, and King's from 88 to 154 – rates significantly below what one would expect of the average elementary student.

"Roosevelt, Kennedy, and King could have read the passages at a much faster clip," say Rasinski and Lenhart, "but they deliberately chose not to. They knew that a meaningful and fluent rendering of the words could only be made if the text was read in a slower manner in which the prosodic elements of oral language were used to give meaning and emphasis to the text." Fluency, in other words, is all about intonation, volume, emphasis, phrasing, pausing, and adjusting the pace.

"Our point is not to diminish the role of reading rate as a measure of one aspect of reading fluency," write Rasinski and Lenhart. "Certainly fluent readers read with a certain level of speed. Overly slow and halting reading is a marker of disfluent reading and poor comprehension… Rather, we believe true fluency is more than reading fast; it is reading with expression and meaning… Reading rate is a side effect of fluency. Instruction that is aimed at helping students read automatically, expressively, and with meaning will, without any specific instruction, also lead to gains in reading rate.

"Thus, authentic fluency instruction should emphasize students practicing their reading to make meaning through the various prosodic tools at their disposal. In doing so, students will focus on how meaning is constructed and communicated through oral reading and engage in practiced or repeated readings (rehearsal) to make those texts come to life." It's best for students to read speeches, poetry, Readers' Theater scripts, song lyrics, monologues, dialogues, journals, and letters that have a strong sense of voice.

Rasinski and Lenhart sum up with an adaptation of Kennedy's words: "Ask not what instruction in reading speed can do for reading fluency and reading achievement; ask what instruction in authentic fluency can do for reading speed and achievement."

"Explorations of Fluent Readers" by Timothy Rasinski and Lisa Lenhart in *Reading Today*, Dec. 2007/Jan. 2008 (Vol. 25, #3, p. 18), no e-link available.

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3. Suggestions for Managing Angry and Aggressive Students

In this helpful *Principal Leadership* column, University of Wisconsin psychology professor Jim Larson says schools need to move beyond zero-tolerance rules and take a schoolwide approach to dealing with angry and aggressive students. "Keep in mind that most, if not all, of even the most violent students would rather not get into a fight in school," he says. "Students know full well that fighting is a painful endeavor that has serious consequences. When a fight happens, it is often because the students did not have the knowledge or skills to prevent it." Larson says schools must be thoughtful about preventing and dealing with violent behavior. For starters, he defines two broad types of childhood and adolescent aggression, each demanding quite different administrative actions:

- *Proactive* – The student initiates aggression to obtain a goal or outcome and is usually reasoned, unemotional, and focused on the goal (for example, a bully wanting peer approval and victim submission or a gang member seeking status and control).
- *Reactive* – The student responds to perceived threats (which may not be real) and is often highly emotional. "Highly reactive aggressive students tend to misperceive bumps, looks, and other interactions as hostile," says Larson. "In addition, these students often have deficient problem-solving skills… Students who have emotional disabilities or who lack the cognitive ability of their typical peers are at higher risk for displaying reactive aggression, particularly when they are already frustrated by academic and social failure." Asked what they could have done other than being aggressive, these students will typically have no response.

Larson says the best strategy is creating a school environment that decreases the likelihood of aggressive behavior while increasing the opportunities for learning socially desirable conflict resolutions and anger management strategies. There are three layers to a schoolwide approach:

• *Universal supports* – Most students (60-80 percent) are basically cooperative and academically goal-oriented, but the percent in this category depends on how teachers and administrators run the school. "Implementing effective schoolwide and classroom rules, rationally conceived and fairly enforced, will keep this group as large as it can be," says Larson. It also helps if the school is strategic about preventing crowded conditions in hallways, common areas, and cafeterias and keeping the ratio of supervisory staff members as high as possible. It also helps to implement an effective conflict resolution curriculum for all students.

• *Selected supports* – Between 10 and 20 percent of secondary-school students are behaviorally at risk, says Larson, and a subset of these students may become aggressive. "Aggression is a comparatively stable behavioral trait," says Larson, "and young people who still use their fists as an anger management or conflict resolution strategy in middle school or high school are at significant risk for serious problems later. For many of those students, the school environment may be the last best hope." Girls more commonly use relational aggression, says Larson – social exclusion, gossip, and peer rejection – and girls who behave this way in elementary school are more likely to do so in middle and high school. "In

addition," he says, "girls who have been physically or sexually abused at home are at increased risk for physically aggressive behavior both in and out of school." Larson's suggestions:

- Communicate with feeder schools to learn about student patterns and effective interventions and behavioral supports. "The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior," he says. "Aggressive middle-school students become aggressive high-school students with impressive consistency… It is better to have preventive supports in place and reduce or remove them as necessary than to be forced into a reactive position after an incident."
- Use office disciplinary data on the frequency, type, and location of aggressive behaviors, the students involved, and staff referral patterns to guide interventions.
- Provide anger-management skill training for chronic fighters. "Many frustrated administrators make the mistake of believing that the promise of seriously aversive consequences – such as suspension citation, and expulsion – will convince a student to control his or her aggressive behavior," says Larson. "It is important to remember that managing excessive anger requires a set of cognitive and behavioral skills that must be systematically learned over time."

• *Indicated supports* – About 3-5 percent of students have severe, chronic problems with anger and aggression, and they can be a serious drain on administrators' time. Larson suggests:

- Once identified, each of these students should have an up-to-date behavior intervention plan (BIP) describing the scope and substance of classroom and schoolwide positive behavior supports, communicated to all staff members who deal with the student, and updated regularly. "Failure to maintain and follow the BIP deprives the student of entitled support," says Larson, "and can leave the school open to legal problems in the event of a serious incident."
- Make sure teachers are skilled in crisis response – i.e., clearing rooms, contacting support personnel, de-escalation techniques, and safe, effective restraint and transportation procedures. From a sidebar in this article, Larson lists suggestions for dealing with an angry, potentially aggressive student, which he says need to be practiced in staff role-plays:
    - Remove peer spectators to reduce face-saving aggression;
    - "Take a nonthreatening stance with your body at an angle to the student and your empty hands at your side in plain sight. A walkie-talkie can look weapon-like in the hand of a staff member and may seem threatening to an emotionally upset student."
    - Keep a calm demeanor and use a steady, level voice, even when barraged by intense verbal disrespect or threats.
    - Acknowledge the student's emotions – "You're really angry, and I want to understand why."

- Set limits as a way of controlling the interactions, for example, "I want you to sit down before we continue" or "We can talk but only if you stop swearing."
- Provide problem-solving counseling as soon as possible.

"Student Services: Angry and Aggressive Students" by Jim Larson in *Principal Leadership*, January 2008 (Vol. 8, #5, p. 12-15); no free e-link available.

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4. Improving Staff Collegiality by Using the Myers-Briggs

In this article in *Principal Leadership*, educators Jane Kise, Beth Russell, and Carol Shumate argue that when teachers know their colleagues' Myers-Briggs personality types, they can better understand each others' teaching approaches and are more likely to adopt effective practices. "Usually when teachers observe each other," write the authors, "they think either, 'I could never master that. His students are so lucky!' or 'What an awful way to teach. How boring!' It's hard not to judge yourself – or another teacher – without a common framework that removes judgment by focusing on strengths… Type theory lessens the 'culture of silence' that discourages teachers from engaging in deep, reflective conversations… Teachers who use a framework based on personality type theory think of their colleagues as resources."

Here is the authors' summary of the four Myers-Briggs personality parameters (people fall somewhere along each continuum, and the letters they are nearest make up their four-letter personality type – for example, INTJ or ENFP):

- What energizes a person:
  - Extraversion – action and interactions;
  - Introversion – reflection and solitude;
- How a person gathers information:
  - Sensing – through the five senses and past experiences;
  - INtuition – through hunches, connections, and analogies;
- How a person makes decisions:
  - Thinking – through logic and impartial standards;
  - Feeling – through values and their impact on the people involved;
- How a person approaches life:
  - Judging – through planning, with a preference for closure;
  - Perceiving – spontaneously, with a preference for keeping options open.

Here are the benefits that flow from knowing colleagues' personality types, according to Kise, Russell, and Shumate:

• Teachers are more likely to be aware of their own innate preferences and instructional blind spots. This makes them aware of things they do in the classroom that come naturally to them but may not work for some of their students. They are then more likely to see the value of new ideas and adopt best practices from colleagues. Instead of saying, "That might work for sixth graders, but not with my eighth graders," type-savvy teachers might say, "That'd be a stretch for me, but it works, doesn't it?"

• Teachers are more likely to collaborate without feeling criticized. The language of Myers-Briggs allows colleagues to comment on ineffective classroom practices in terms of their match with students' personality types. Nonjudgmental comments provoke less defensiveness.

• Teachers are more able to coach one another by delivering information in ways that match the learning style of the listener. Mismatches between the beliefs and teaching style of the coach and teacher are frequently a hindrance to effective coaching.

• Type-savvy leaders can disarm resistance to new ideas. "Do the same teachers seem to resist every initiative or idea?" ask Kise, Russell, and Shumate. Resistance may spring from not knowing key information or the way the idea was presented. A chart rather than a lecture might make all the difference.

• Type knowledge may allow staff members to constructively question school leaders. Principals often have a different Myers-Briggs personality type from many of their teachers. When both become aware of these differences, it can be helpful to communication. For example, a principal and his science coordinator were Intuitive and Thinking and thought that implementing a new science curriculum was simple and obvious. But teachers, who were Sensing and Feeling, generated two dozen questions. The principal looked at the list and said, "I can't possibly anticipate all of these because my mind simply doesn't work the same way. Please help me by telling me what you need!"

"Helping Teachers Communicate" by Jane Kise, Beth Russell, and Carol Shumate in *Principal Leadership*, January 2008 (Vol. 8, #5, p. 33-36); no free e-link available. Kise can be reached at janekise@earthlink.net and Russell at beth.russell@mpls.k12.mn.us.

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5. Teacher Interview Questions Tapping Candidates' Previous *Experiences*

In this *Principal Leadership* article, Berry College (GA) professor Mary Clement continues to give helpful suggestions for behavior-based interview questions [see summaries of three other articles in Marshall Memos 29, 87, and 186]. This list of questions is sorted by teaching skills:

• Knowledge of subject matter:

- Describe an activity or project that your students have done that was successful and explain why it was successful.
- Describe a topic that is considered hard to teach in your field and a lesson you have used that students enjoyed on this topic.

• Knowledge of human development and learning:

- Describe an activity or lesson that was successful with an age group that you have taught, then explain why this same lesson would not work with older or younger students.
- Describe how you have integrated a social skill into an academic lesson.

• Individualized instruction:
  - Describe a lesson that you have taught that combined auditory, visual, or kinesthetic teaching strategies.
  - Describe modifications that you have made to an assignment or test so that a student could master the material successfully despite having an exceptionality.
• Multiple instructional strategies:
  - Describe a lesson in which you used higher-order questions to challenge students.
  - Describe an activity that you have implemented where students "do" something with material from a textbook other than just answer questions.
• Classroom motivation and management:
  - How do you set up a classroom routine to facilitate students' time on task?
  - How has your classroom management plan improved the behavior of an individual student?
• Communication skills:
  - How have you used technology or other visuals to enhance a lesson?
  - How can you tell that students hear and understand your directions, lesson input, and questions?
• Instructional planning skills:
  - Describe a state or national standard in your subject field and how you planned a lesson to meet that standard.
  - Talk about your long-term planning. How do you plan a unit, keeping national, state, and district goals in mind?
• Assessment of student learning:
  - Describe a grading scale that works well for one subject in your grade area.
  - Besides written tests, how have you assessed student work?
• Partnerships:
  - Describe positive parent involvement or community involvement programs that you have worked with or observed.
  - Describe a successful way to communicate with parents, colleagues, or administrators.

"Past Is Prologue" by Mary Clement in *Principal Leadership*, January 2008 (Vol. 8, #5, p. 44-48); no free e-link available; the author can be reached at drmaryclem@comcast.net.

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6. Do High-Ego Leaders Produce Better Results?

In this *Wharton Leadership Digest* article, Iowa-based business researcher Mark Hanna says that business executives tend to fall into two psychological types [Is this true of school leaders too?]:

- Mini-Me – Self-effacing team leaders who work hard behind the scenes, reach out to others for input, build consensus when possible, and see the world in terms of "we." Their organizations are cautious and incremental and emphasize excellence in

execution. This is the type of executive described as successful in *Good to Great* by Jim Collins et al.

- Maxi-Me – Bold, colorful, individualistic, and risk-taking leaders with outsized self-images who are preoccupied with having their self-views continuously reinforced and see the world in terms of "me." Their organizations are innovative and fast-moving, sometimes with dizzying changes in direction.

How do these two very different leadership styles affect organizational outcomes?

In an article in the September 2007 *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Pennsylvania State researchers Arijit Chatterjee and Donald Hambrick addressed this question. Drawing on the work of R. Emmons (1987), they rated business leaders on the degree to which they displayed four underlying components of narcissism:

- Exploitativeness/entitlement: I insist on getting the respect due to me.
- Leadership/authority: I like to be the center of attention.
- Superiority/arrogance: I am better than others.
- Self-absorption/self-admiration: I am preoccupied with how extraordinary and special I am.

Chatterjee and Hambrick found that organizations led by executives who scored high on these measures of narcissism were more strategically grandiose, had more dynamic strategies, and acquired other companies more frequently. Their organizations had dramatic fluctuations in performance – big wins and big losses. In a newspaper interview, Hambrick described what it was like to work in their companies: "You can pretty much bet on a wild ride. It could be up. It could be down. But it's generally going to be extreme and volatile."

The bottom line: companies with narcissistic leaders did no better and no worse than those led by non-narcissistic leaders.

"Masters of the Universe: Narcissism in the CEO Suite" by Mark Hanna in *Wharton Leadership Digest*, January 2008 (Vol. 12, #3); http://leadership.wharton.upenn.edu/digest/index.shtml; the author can be reached at markhanna@mchsi.com.

7. Kids Pick Their Own Newbury Award Winners

In this article in *Reading Today*, author Margriet Ruurs describes a mock Newbury Award program in the Beaverton, Oregon schools. Every June, interested elementary teachers meet and recommend titles for their colleagues to read over the summer, drawing on *Booklist* and other reviews of new books. During the vacation, teachers and librarians e-mail about their impressions of the books, and at the end of the summer, they select 12 titles. One member of the group prepares a slide show on the books, and Beaverton teachers and librarians show it to interested students, who then vote on their six favorite titles. Each school purchases multiple copies of its top six favorite titles and usually one copy of the other six books on the list.

Students in grades 4 and 5 (in some schools, just 5) are then allowed to sign up for the Newbury Reading Club, and they read the books from September through January, discussing them on a blog and holding weekly discussion groups. Librarians and teachers guide the

groups, getting students to focus on Newbury selection criteria and the books' plot, characters, dialogue, and other qualities. Students get a clear sense of how hard it is to judge a book critically. In January, schools hold a mock Newbury vote, accompanied by pizza or dessert; some schools have a second ballot for an overall favorite title. Students then eagerly await the actual Newbury decision.

In the years the program has run, Beaverton students haven't always chosen the same book as the official committee. "While they were always interested in the book that won," said Barbara Gutzler, a library media specialist, "they felt their favorite was just as good. As one boy said, 'The committee chose the grown-up winner. I think we chose the kids' winner.'"

"'Mock' Newbury a Win-Win for Young Readers" by Margriet Ruurs in *Reading Today*, Dec. 2007/Jan. 2008 (Vol. 25, #3, p. 31), no e-link available

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8. Short Items:

a. Twenty great children's books – In this *Reading Today* feature, two children's literature experts pick their favorite books of the year:

Richardson's List (in reverse order, with the best last):

- *Someday* by Alison McGhee, illustrated by Peter Reynolds (all ages)
- *Toy Boat* by Randall de Seve, illustrated by Loren Long (ages 4-8)
- *Jesse Owens: Fastest Man Alive* by Carol Weatherford, illustrated by Eric Velasquez (ages 7 and up)
- *The Perfect Nest* by Catherine Friend, illustrated by John Manders (ages 4 and up)
- *Twisted* by Laurie Halse Anderson (ages 15 and up)
- *Reaching for the Sun* by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer (ages 10 and up)
- *Orange Pear Apple Bear* by Emily Gravett (ages 1-4)
- *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick (ages 9 and up)
- *Spanking Shakespeare* by Jake Wizner (ages 16 and up)
- *The Wednesday Wars* by Gary Schmidt (ages 11 and up) "A true joy to read," says Richardson. "My pick for best of the year."

Lempke's list (same reverse sequence):

- *Here's a Little Poem* by Jane Jolen (ages birth and up)
- *Orange Pear Apple Bear* by Emily Gravett (ages 1-5)
- *A Good Day* by Kevin Henkes (ages 2-5)
- *Today I Will Fly!* By Mo Willems (ages 4-8)
- *Jabberwocky* by Lewis Carroll (ages 7 and up)
- *I Am Not Joey Pigza* by Jack Gantos (ages 10-14)
- *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village* by Laura Amy Schlitz (ages 11-15)
- *Who Was First? Discovering the Americas* by Russell Freedman (ages 10-14)
- *The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain* by Peter Sis (ages 10 and up)

- *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan (ages 10 and up) – "Words can't do justice to this story," says Lempke. "This is a stunning work that defies categorization."

"A Top 10 List Times Two: The Year's Best Books" by David Richardson and Susan Dove Lempke in *Reading Today*, Dec. 2007/Jan. 2008 (Vol. 25, #3, p. 31), no e-link available

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b. Websites featuring real-world math – In this helpful *Kappan* feature, David Fink and Chris Stock, math teachers in West Seneca and Bloomfield (NY), share websites that will help answer the perennial question: "When will we ever use this in real life?"

• http://www.massachusetts.edu/stem/stem%20rhythm%20track.html - In this movie, Ndugu Chancler, accomplished drummer, explains the mathematics of percussion.

• http://score.kings.k12.ca.us/algebra.html - This site presents lesson plans on real-world math (buying a car, roller coaster, etc.) linked to California standards.

• http://library.thinkquest.org/4116 - Activities around simple banking, basic operations in music, and keeping track of vacation expenses.

• http://pbskids.org/democracy/educators - These Democracy Project lesson plans involve students in the math of the electoral process.

• http://math.arizona.edu/~lagatta/class/sp06/m105/FinanceProject.pdf - An extended lesson plan on buying a house.

• http://www.k12science.org/curriculum/popgrowthproj/information.html - Multiple lessons on population growth, using linear, quadratic, and exponential models.

• http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Math/index.html - A U.S. Department of Education elementary-oriented site on everyday math, including grocery shopping and a car trip, using fractions, percentages, probability, and geometry.

• http://www.sbu.gov/mar/marmmath.pdf - Four lessons on savings, home decorating, salaries, and taxes, leading to higher-level thinking,

• http://www.learner.org/interactives/dailymath - Real-life math applications in banking, architecture, cooking, population growth, and gambling.

"Webwatch: Math Class and the Real World" by David Fink and Chris Stock in *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 2008 (Vol. 89, #5, p. 401)

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c. China's meteoric rise in historical perspective – In this *Newsweek* cover story, editor Fareed Zakaria writes, "The scale and pace of growth in China has been staggering, utterly unprecedented in history… In two decades China has experienced the same degree of industrialization, urbanization and social transformation as Europe did in two centuries." In the 19th century, the average European's living standards rose about 50 percent over the course of his or her lifetime. In Asia today (principally China), the average person's living standards are rising by 10,000 percent in one lifetime.

"The Rise of a Fierce Yet Fragile Superpower" by Fareed Zakaria in *Newsweek*, Dec. 31, 2007/ Jan. 7, 2008, p. 38

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