

# Marshall Memo 817

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education  
December 30, 2019

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## Quotes of the Week

“What do I think I know, and what might I be missing? How does my cultural lens give me insight, and how does it limit my understanding?”

Sarah Young on questions instructional coaches should ask themselves (see item #1)

“I’ve come to realize that when we ask superficial questions, we get superficial information back from what students know.”

Robert Kaplinsky (see item #11)

“Education isn’t about filling a bucket but about gaining a tool belt, and economics and statistics offer terrific tools that for the rest of your life will help you analyze problems in more rigorous ways.”

Nicholas Kristof (see item #6)

“Leaders need many qualities, but underlying them all is good judgment. Those with ambition but no judgment run out of money. Those with charisma but no judgment lead their followers in the wrong direction. Those with passion but no judgment hurl themselves down the wrong paths. Those with drive but no judgment get up very early to do the wrong things.”

Andrew Likierman (see item #2)

“Although passion about objectives and values is a wonderful leadership quality that can inspire followers to greater efforts, it can also affect how you process information, learn from experience, and select advisors.”

Andrew Likierman (*ibid.*)

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## 1. Supporting Teachers in a Culturally Responsive Manner

In this *Learning Forward* article, consultant/instructional coach Sarah Young defines culturally responsive coaching: it addresses differences between the coach, the teacher, and students; the role of social identity; and the social-political context in which the teacher is working. Key questions for an instructional coach using this approach: *What do I think I know, and what might I be missing? How does my cultural lens give me insight, and how does it limit my understanding?* Young goes on to describe two coaching interactions in which her cultural lens was particularly important:

- Sally was a young, white, novice teacher working in a racially diverse urban school. She asked Young for advice on how to handle several students who were calling out and disrupting her lessons. Young observed her class and noticed that the three students who were calling out without raising their hands were African-American boys, and their comments were actually relevant and on topic.

Here's what Young said to Sally: "As a white observer of students of color, I always ask myself what I think I know, and what I might be missing. I know that having grown up in a segregated, white, middle-class community can affect my interpretations. I have a lot of influences that prime me to see loud, spontaneous behavior in kids of color as disruptive or threatening, where I might see the same behavior in white kids as merely exuberant. In this case, I have to ask myself, are the comments intending to disrupt, or could this be a learning strategy? The data I recorded show the call-outs relate to what you're teaching."

The teacher nodded thoughtfully but wondered why the boys were calling out. "Why can't they wait for me to call on them like the other students do?" Young replied that in these students' community, an audience might be expected to interact out loud as people learned: "I'm curious to see how the boys' exuberance to respond might be channeled into a different sort of participation structure where call-outs are welcomed and encouraged, and you still feel in charge as a teacher."

"What do you think that would look like?" the teacher asked, looking perplexed yet open. "Now," thought Young, "Sally and I had an entry point to a culturally responsive coaching conversation."

- Ted was an African-American teacher 20 years older than Young, and she had been assigned to coach him in an alternative high school. Observing his class, she saw that he related well to students, but his curriculum consisted entirely of rote worksheets and students seemed disengaged and weren't learning very much. "Ted's school was one where most students had been pushed out of mainstream settings," says Young. "I felt some urgency to see

them engaged with curriculum that supported critical thinking and drew on their rich life experiences.”

Trained in the California Writing Project, Young was confident she had the solution and taught a demonstration lesson showing how much better students could perform. They were more engaged, but Ted was “surprisingly distracted” during the demo lesson, missed subsequent coaching appointments, brushed off her offer to teach another lesson, and finally, after she called him at home on a Sunday, asked his principal to be assigned a different coach.

Young was ready to write Ted off as a resistant teacher, but her supervisor insisted that she try to work things out with him. When they met, Young apologized for calling on Sunday (“I’m used to teachers working on Sundays. Including me.”), and he asked, “Do you want to understand?” She replied, “Yes. I may need help to understand.” He chuckled: “True. You haven’t tried very hard.” This threw her, since she thought *he* was the one not trying very hard.

Ted said he had a “big life” outside of school, and Sundays were important. “Oh yes, you must have church on Sundays,” said Young. “Don’t put me in a box, little lady,” Ted replied. “Black people don’t do any one thing the same. Do you want to ‘figure me out,’ or do you want to understand?” Ted explained that he had a radio show. “It’s a mix of my faith, Baha’i, and my own experiences and spiritual path. On Sunday afternoon, I meet with other black Baha’is.”

Ted handed Young a pamphlet he’d written about using principles of the Baha’i faith to reach out to teenage black boys. Skimming it, Young saw that it was clearly organized, thought-provoking, and had a distinctive writer’s voice. “You’re a writer?” she stammered. “Why didn’t you mention that when I talked about teaching the kids writing?” “You didn’t ask,” he replied.

“Did Ted think I assumed he couldn’t have had professional writing experience because he was black?” thought Young. “And, most difficult to ask myself, was it in any way true that that was my assumption? I hadn’t checked his prior knowledge, even though that’s a basic practice in preparing teachers to use any new strategy. Had I even considered the possibility that he would know as much about writing as I did? Would I have asked different questions of a white person 20 years my senior?”

Young recovered her composure and asked why, given his writing skills, Ted was using rote worksheets with his high-school students. “I was trying to do well with what they gave me to use,” he replied. “That’s what I thought the job was.” For the first time Young understood, and could see the trap Ted was in, feeling unable to connect the two parts of his life.

“Do you ever share any of your journalistic work with your students?” she asked. “No,” Ted replied, smiling and looking directly at her. “Do you think I should?” Young paused, realizing that it was the first time in months of working with Ted that he’d asked for her opinion on any teaching strategy. “Absolutely!” she said. “I think the students would love it.” Ted nodded and jotted notes. “I breathed out a deep sigh,” Young reflects. “It was only now that we had begun a culturally responsive conversation and could begin the work of mentoring.”

“Culturally Responsive Coaching Is More Than Just Good Coaching” by Sarah Young in *Learning Forward*, December 13, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2Qvv8YB>; Young can be reached at [Sarah@sarahyoungconsulting.com](mailto:Sarah@sarahyoungconsulting.com).

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## 2. Good Judgment Produces Good Decisions

In this *Harvard Business Review* article, Andrew Likierman (London Business School) defines judgment as “the ability to combine personal qualities with relevant knowledge and experience to form opinions and make decisions.” Through research and interviews with leaders in a variety of fields, Likierman distilled six elements of good judgment: learning, trust, experience, detachment, options, and delivery. Here is his advice on how to fine-tune each one:

- *Learning: Listen attentively, read critically.* “Many leaders rush to bad judgments because they unconsciously filter the information they receive or are not sufficiently critical of what they hear or read,” says Likierman. Being a good listener and questioner is a key skill, tuning in to body language and what’s *not* said. Maintaining a healthy skepticism when reading the deluge of information we receive is also essential. Savvy leaders are aware of their biases, read texts they might not agree with, and ask subordinates to curate briefing material to a manageable length.

- *Trust: Seek diversity, not validation.* “Cultivate sources of trusted advice,” says Likierman: “people who will tell you what you need to know rather than what you want to hear... Someone who disagrees with you could provide the challenge you need.”

- *Experience: Make it relevant but not narrow.* Likierman advises leaders to broaden their professional portfolios and not make decisions based on experiences in just one area. He also suggests reviewing bad decisions from the past. “This is tough,” he says, “and it’s tempting to rewrite history, which is why it can be helpful to share your conclusions with a coach or colleagues, who might take a different view of the same experience. Try also to recruit a smart friend who can be a neutral critic.”

- *Detachment: Identify and challenge biases.* “Although passion about objectives and values is a wonderful leadership quality that can inspire followers to greater efforts,” says Likierman, “it can also affect how you process information, learn from experience, and select advisors.” Research has identified a number of cognitive biases, among them overconfidence, confirmation bias, and risk aversion. One way to achieve some detachment is role-playing with colleagues, which provides a safe space for dissenting views to surface. Another is appointing a devil’s advocate to put forward worst-case scenarios, implicitly acknowledging that mistakes will be made and anticipating them.

- *Options: Broaden the solution set offered.* Leaders are often presented only two possible courses of action, one of which is clearly bad, and feel boxed in. In truth there are almost always other options, including not making a decision right now, and leaders need to push for the broadest possible array of possible actions, including radical solutions that might be viable – or might bring to light less-radical but effective courses of action.

- *Delivery: Factor in the feasibility of execution.* “When reviewing projects,” says Likierman, “smart leaders think carefully about the risks of implementation and press for

clarification from a project's advocates. This is as important for small decisions as it is for big ones." One approach is to do a "pre-mortem" in which the team thinks through what might cause an idea to fail.

"Leaders need many qualities," Likierman concludes, "but underlying them all is good judgment. Those with ambition but no judgment run out of money. Those with charisma but no judgment lead their followers in the wrong direction. Those with passion but no judgment hurl themselves down the wrong paths. Those with drive but no judgment get up very early to do the wrong things. Sheer luck and factors beyond your control may determine your eventual success, but good judgment will stack the cards in your favor."

"The Elements of Good Judgment: How to Improve Your Decision-Making" by Andrew Likierman in *Harvard Business Review*, January/February 2020 (Vol. 98, #1, pp. 102-111), <https://hbr.org/2020/01/the-elements-of-good-judgment>; Likierman can be reached at [alikierman@london.edu](mailto:alikierman@london.edu).

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### **3. Accurate Teaching of Climate Change**

In this article in *American Educator*, Daniel Shepardson and Andrew Hirsch (Purdue University) say that good teaching of climate change in U.S. secondary schools is a high priority for tomorrow's citizens and leaders. Researchers have identified misconceptions and gaps in students' knowledge and understanding in this area. To address these, the authors believe teachers need to focus on five topics:

- *Distinguishing weather, climate, and climate change* – Weather is the short-term (hours, days, weeks) atmospheric situation: temperature, precipitation, humidity, wind, clouds, visibility, and air pressure. Climate is the smoothed-out description of weather variations over 30 years or longer, allowing predictions of certain types of weather events and patterns. Climate change operates over an even longer time-span, describing, for example, the century-long rise in average worldwide surface and ocean temperatures. One key concept in this topic is that individual weather events like a catastrophic hurricane can't necessarily be attributed to climate change.

- *Climate systems* – There are five interacting components of a region's climate system: atmosphere, oceans, land, vegetation, and ice. A climate-literate person understands the natural interactions among them, and how humans can affect and be affected by them. Students can grasp these dynamics by drawing diagrams and tracing the impact of change in one area – for example, greenhouse gases – on others.

- *The greenhouse effect* – This is difficult to teach because most people hold one of several incorrect mental models of the greenhouse effect. The best way to address these misconceptions is to teach about the planet's "energy budget," of which the greenhouse effect is one component (the absorption, reflection, and radiation of the sun's energy); recent human activity throws this natural process out of balance. Shepardson and Hirsch caution against using everyday language like "trapping heat" and "light or heat bouncing," and physical models like closed jars warming up when exposed to sunlight, which they believe encourage

misconceptions about how the greenhouse effect really works.

- *Energy use and carbon emission* – The key concept here is how the eons-long cycling of carbon dioxide (among atmosphere, vegetation, water, and land) has been changed by humans burning stored fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas) since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. This has greatly increased the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, leading to global warming and other effects. Students need to understand the role they play as individuals, and the possible impact of governmental actions across the planet.

- *The climate change "debate"* – “Unfortunately,” say Shepardson and Hirsch, “climate change doubters and deniers provide challenges to educators who teach about climate change, influencing how teachers present climate change in ways that compromise the scientific accuracy of their lessons.” Some well-intentioned teachers address the subject in three inappropriate ways:

- Teaching scientists’ and skeptics’ perspective on climate change.
- Engaging students in debating climate change.
- Encouraging students to come to their own conclusions about the cause of global warming and climate change.

“These approaches,” say Shepardson and Hirsch, “promote doubt and denial about climate change and suggest that it is a scientific controversy, which it is not. They also contradict the scientific community and the climate data and give credibility to science skeptics and their nonscientific data. Given the scientific consensus on the causes of global warming and climate change, teachers should teach the scientifically accepted perspective on global warming and climate change – not debate it. The debate and controversy lie in the social, economic, and political approaches to mitigating and adapting to global warming and climate change.”

“Teaching Climate Change: What Educators Should Know and Can Do” by Daniel Shepardson and Andrew Hirsch in *American Educator*, Winter 2019-2020 (Vol. 43, #4, pp. 4-13, 40), <https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/ae-winter2019-2020.pdf>; the authors can be reached at [dshep@purdue.edu](mailto:dshep@purdue.edu) and [hirsch@purdue.edu](mailto:hirsch@purdue.edu).

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#### **4. Spotting and Fixing ELLs’ Learning Challenges in Real Time**

(Originally titled “Seven High-Leverage Formative Assessment Moves to Support ELLs”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Brent Duckor (San José State University and Validity Partners) and Carrie Holmberg (Validity Partners) say that seven types of formative assessment provide vital minute-by-minute information as teachers help English language learners make sense of the curriculum and master academic English:

- *Priming* – A teacher might say, “Write down your thoughts, even if they feel unfinished,” or “I bet someone could build on this – who wants to try?” or “Let’s see what we can learn from Jessinia’s question; every perspective is important.” Prompts like these invite all students to participate and help build a bridge from ELLs’ conversational to academic English.

• *Posing “stretch” questions* – When a teacher’s queries can be answered with a simple Yes or No, students don’t show their thinking or give the teacher important information on their level of understanding. Higher-level questions get students to articulate their thinking, and even with Yes/No questions, all students can be asked to write silently, then share with a partner, while the teacher walks around looking at responses.

• *Pausing* – “Even more than many other students,” say Duckor and Holmberg, “ELLs need processing time to ‘transfer files’ from short-term to long-term memory.” Teachers should wait for several seconds after asking a question, have students turn and talk, and post statements like these on the wall: *Good answers take time*, and *We all need time to be heard*.

• *Probing* – “It is critical that ELLs in particular have the opportunity to rethink, revise, and reconsider ways of talking and writing ‘science’ or ‘history’ or ‘math’ in the company of others,” say Duckor and Holmberg. Some possible prompts:

- *So an assumption you’re making is... Is that how you see it?*
- *How do you know? ... Can you explain it? What is your evidence?*
- *So what if you change that variable? ... What do you think will happen?*
- *How are these facts related to one another?*
- *What does this mean to you? ... Is it working for you now?*

Probing can also take the form of asking students to elaborate on “first-draft” answers and using word webs, journal entries, and sentence frames to get students extending their thinking and trying out ideas on classmates.

• *Bouncing* – “Too often, teachers only hear from their most active and verbal students during class (often native English speakers),” say Duckor and Holmberg. Better to get a fair sampling of responses from the whole class and immediately correct errors and misconceptions in what students say or write.

• *Tagging* – Writing students’ responses on the board makes their thinking visible, values all students’ contributions, models the use of academic language, and helps move the lesson forward. ELLs might work with a native English speaker, jot down ideas, and the partner then goes up and writes their ideas on the board.

• *Binning* – There’s a tendency to mentally sort students’ responses and work into a limited number of “bins” – *correct, incorrect, misconception, off topic*. Duckor and Holmberg urge teachers to see students’ efforts on a continuum of bins from novice to mastery. They suggest simplifying rubrics into a compact “progress guide” and tracking students’ work over time, looking for patterns and key points where a scaffold or intervention can be helpful. Here’s one column in a progress guide for a project, with additional columns to note the percent of students currently mastering each step and to list next steps and student requests:

- Weighs evidence
- Adds some evidence
- Takes a position
- Restates the prompt.

The key, say the authors, is seeing “in a student’s provisional responses the beginnings of more sophisticated ways of thinking about the topic.”

“Seven High-Leverage Formative Assessment Moves to Support ELLs” by Brent Duckor and Carrie Holmberg in *Educational Leadership*, December 2019/January 2020 (Vol. 77, #4, pp. 46-52), available at <https://bit.ly/35d4iJP> for ASCD members and for purchase; the authors can be reached at [bduckor@validitypartners.com](mailto:bduckor@validitypartners.com) and [cholmberg@validitypartners.com](mailto:cholmberg@validitypartners.com).

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## **5. Onboarding a New Student Who Knows No English**

(Originally titled “Better Planning for Newcomer Students”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, North Carolina ELL instructional coach Rebecca Olsen (Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, NC) shares the steps she and her colleagues use to welcome immigrant students who enter school not speaking English:

Immediately:

- Front-office staff greet and welcome the family, determine the home language, locate translators, and assist in completing the registration process, including contact information.

Day One:

- Front-office staff share the student’s contact information with staff members who will be working with the student.
- The guidance counselor gives a tour of the building, pointing out water fountains, bathrooms, core classrooms, and the main office; introduces teachers and schedule; and makes sure the student has necessary school supplies.
- The ESL teacher ensures the student can navigate between classes.
- The classroom teacher assigns student ambassador(s) and ensures the student has a way to communicate basic needs and can navigate the lunch line.
- Student ambassadors welcome the student to the classroom.

The assistant principal makes sure that transportation is assigned, communicates to the bus driver the student’s language limitations and needs, and ensures the student can get on/off the correct bus and bus stop.

Week 1:

- The ESL teacher begins teaching survival language skills.

Weeks 1-2:

- Student ambassadors research the student’s language and culture and share about it with classmates.

Weeks 1-4:

- A student ambassador shadows the student throughout the day as an assigned helper (alternating ambassadors).

Weeks 2-3:

- The guidance counselor gathers relevant records.

Weeks 1-12:

- The ESL teacher monitors the student’s language growth and adjustment.

“Better Planning for Newcomer Students” by Rebecca Olsen in *Educational Leadership*, December 2019/January 2020 (Vol. 77, #4, pp. 74-76), available at <https://bit.ly/2MEhSQk>; Olsen can be reached at [rebeccal.ashby@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccal.ashby@gmail.com).

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## 6. Life Advice for High-School and College Kids

In this *New York Times* column, Nicholas Kristof shares four things he believes students should consider if they want lives with meaning and deep success:

- *Study economics and statistics rather than calculus.* “Education isn’t about filling a bucket but about gaining a tool belt,” says Kristof, “and economics and statistics offer terrific tools that for the rest of your life will help you analyze problems in more rigorous ways.” Even philosophers and playwrights, he believes, “should have present value and standard deviations in their citizen tool belts.”

- *Connect to a cause larger than yourself.* Kristof dislikes the hackneyed advice to spend the first third of one’s life studying, the second making money, and the remainder giving back. “If you dropped dead of a heart attack at 50,” he says, “you’d be gnashing your teeth for all eternity.” Better to take on a cause when you’re young – ideally something involving the less fortunate.

- *Love.* “The most important decision you will make is not the university you attend, nor your major, not even your first job,” says Kristof. “It’s who you marry or settle down with... Learning to manage a relationship may take practice, so get started and cuddle!”

- *Escape your comfort zone.* Education is incomplete, in fact, a failure, “if it exposes you only to people like yourself and doesn’t prepare you to engage with other cultures,” says Kristof. And he advises against traveling only to places that mirror your own culture, including English-speaking countries. He recommends spending a gap year, volunteering, or studying abroad in countries like Colombia, China, Senegal, Oman, India, or Ghana – or working with disadvantaged students in the U.S.

“The Four Secrets of Success” by Nicholas Kristof in *The New York Times*, December 8, 2019, <https://nyti.ms/2ZAOqQt>

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## 7. A Hands-On Experiment on the Spread of Classroom Germs

In this article in *Today*, Scott Stump reports that two Idaho teachers were tired of nagging their elementary students to wash their hands. Surely the number of sick days people took were a direct result of the germs being spread around the classroom. The teachers, Dayna Robertson and Jaralee Metcalf, decided to make it into a science project. They put five different pieces of white bread in ziplock bags after having each one handled in a different way:

- Touched by students with unwashed hands;
- Touched by students whose hands were cleaned by a hand sanitizer;
- Touched by students’ hands just rubbed on a classroom Chromebook;

- Touched by students' hands just washed with soap and warm water;
- Touched by a teacher's gloved hands.

The ziplock bags were sealed (so classroom air wouldn't get in) and tacked to a bulletin board. A month later, the results were dramatic (see the photos in the link below):

- The Chromebook-touched bread was almost completely black with mold and disintegrating;
- The bread touched by dirty hands was almost as bad;
- The bread touched by hand-sanitized hands wasn't much better;
- The bread touched by washed hands was white;
- So was the one touched by gloved hands.

Students' reactions: *Ewwwwww, gross!* Hand washing improved dramatically, and students and their families realized that hand sanitizers weren't an effective alternative.

One of the teachers posted a description of the experiment on Facebook, and it's been shared more than 60,000 times.

"Gross! School Experiment Shows Students the Effects of Not Washing Their Hands" by Scott Stump in *Today*, December 17, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2F2TJi6>

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## **8. Supporting ELLs As They Make Sense of Content**

(Originally titled "Let's Think About This")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Bryan Goodwin and Bradley Rentz share the consensus from recent research on the best ways to help English language learners as they engage in subject-specific content.

- *Build a solid foundation of first-language reading.* Reading proficiency in students' first language transfers to English and boosts comprehension.
- *Use visuals.* ELLs benefit when new concepts, processes, and ideas are presented in graphic form or in hands-on activities.
- *Teach essential words directly.* Pre-teaching vocabulary at Tier 2 (academic language like *compare, infer, synthesize*) and Tier 3 (subject-specific words like *sum, stomata, oligarchy*) builds background knowledge and gives students "handles" to make sense of instruction. Videos are an effective vocabulary-building method.
- *Use peer-supported learning.* Students benefit when they are strategically paired with classmates to summarize new learning, compare and contrast concepts, ask questions, and engage in reciprocal teaching.
- *Use inquiry-based learning.* Projects, working with peers, and engaging in expository writing are helpful, especially in science.
- *Combine techniques.* Mixing and matching the above approaches can be effective, especially in social studies.

“Let’s Think About This” by Bryan Goodwin and Bradley Rentz in *Educational Leadership*, December 2019/January 2020 (Vol. 77, #4, pp. 82-82), available at <https://bit.ly/2FdjKLR>; Goodwin can be reached at [bgoodwin@mcrcel.org](mailto:bgoodwin@mcrcel.org).

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## 9. Key Questions When Tackling a Moral Dilemma

In this *Harvard Business Review* article on building an ethical career, Maryam Kouchaki (Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University) and Isaac Smith (Brigham Young University, Marriott School of Business) suggest the following queries when faced with a difficult ethical decision:

- Would you be comfortable having this choice, and your reasoning behind it, published on the front page of your local newspaper?
- Would you be comfortable having your decision serve as a precedent for all people facing a similar situation?
- Would you like the person you saw in the mirror after making this decision? Is that the person you truly want to be?

“Building an Ethical Career” by Maryam Kouchaki and Isaac Smith in *Harvard Business Review*, January/February 2020 (Vol. 98, #1, pp. 135-139), <https://hbr.org/2020/01/building-an-ethical-career>; Kouchaki can be reached at [m-kouchaki@kellogg.northwestern.edu](mailto:m-kouchaki@kellogg.northwestern.edu), Smith at [isaac.smith@byu.edu](mailto:isaac.smith@byu.edu).

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## 10. Middle-Grade and Picture Books by Black Authors and Illustrators

In this *School Library Journal* article, Desiree Thomas recommends these books by African-American and African authors:

### Picture books:

- *The Undefeated* by Kwame Alexander, illustrated by Kadir Nelson (HMH/Versify, 2019), grade 3 and up – Courageous black people who struggled to hold a seat at the table for future generations.
- *Crown: Ode to a Fresh Cut* by Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Gordon James (Agate/Bolden, 2017), Preschool-grade 2 – The barber shop as a safe haven and antidote to negative portrayals of black men.
- *Hair Love* by Matthew Cherry, illustrated by Vashti Harrison (Penguin/Kokila, 2019), preschool to grade 3 – A father learns to style his daughter’s hair; the book is also a tribute to the African-American family.

### Middle grades:

- *New Kid* by Jerry Craft (HarperCollins/Harper, 2019), grade 4-7 – An African-American boy attends a predominantly white private school.
- *A Good Kind of Trouble* by Lisa Moore Ramée (HarperCollins/Balzer, 2019), grade 4-8 – A girl is a self-confessed “goodie-two-shoes” but also wants to fight injustices she sees around her.

- *Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes (Little, Brown, 2018), grade 4-6 – A Chicago seventh grader is killed by a white police officer who mistakes his toy gun for a real one; as a ghost, the boy witnesses the painful aftermath of his death and meets Emmett Till, who was murdered in 1955.
- *Genesis Begins Again* by Alicia Williams (Atheneum/Caitlyn, 2019), grade 5-8 – A young black girl experiences the toxic effects of ostracism by her peers.

“Black Is Beautiful: Reshaping the African-American Narrative” by Desiree Thomas in *School Library Journal*, December 2019 (Vol. 65, #11, pp. 60-61), no link available

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## 11. Thought-Provoking Math Problems

“I’ve come to realize that when we ask superficial questions, we get superficial information back from what students know,” says Robert Kaplinsky in this *Edutopia* article. Encouraging teachers to promote deeper thinking, he includes a link to The Open Middle website <https://www.openmiddle.com>, which has a plethora of open-ended math problems from kindergarten through calculus, including counting, geometry, measurement and data, numbers and operations, algebraic thinking, statistics and probability, functions and vectors, linear models, and more. Here’s a sample fourth-grade question: You have \$1.00 in change in your pocket. You have 15 coins. What coins do you have? (source: Andrew Gael).

“Getting to the Heart of What Students Know in Math” by Robert Kaplinsky in *Edutopia*, December 26, 2019, <https://www.edutopia.org/article/getting-heart-what-students-know-math>

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# About the Marshall Memo

## ***Mission and focus:***

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and other educators very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 50 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, writer, and consultant 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). Every week there's a podcast and HTML version as well.

## ***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.

## ***Website:***

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- The current issue (in Word and PDF)
- All back issues (Word and PDF) and podcasts
- An easily searchable archive of all articles so far
- The "classic" articles from all 14+ years

## ***Core list of publications covered***

Those read this week are underlined.

All Things PLC  
American Educational Research Journal  
American Educator  
American Journal of Education  
American School Board Journal  
AMLE Magazine  
ASCA School Counselor  
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  
Language Arts  
Literacy Today (formerly Reading Today)  
Mathematics Teacher  
Middle School Journal  
Peabody Journal of Education  
Phi Delta Kappan  
Principal  
Principal Leadership  
Reading Research Quarterly  
Responsive Classroom Newsletter  
Rethinking Schools  
Review of Educational Research  
School Administrator  
School Library Journal  
Social Education  
Social Studies and the Young Learner  
Teachers College Record  
Teaching Children Mathematics  
Teaching Exceptional Children  
The Atlantic  
The Chronicle of Higher Education  
The Education Gadfly  
The Journal of the Learning Sciences  
The Language Educator  
The Learning Professional (formerly Journal of Staff Development)  
The New York Times  
The New Yorker  
The Reading Teacher  
Theory Into Practice  
Time Magazine