

# Marshall Memo 149

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education  
August 28, 2006

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## Quotes of the Week

“Boredom, after all, is a form of criticism.”

Wendell Phillips, quoted in an *American School Board Journal* article by Gary Lister (September 2006, Vol. 193, #9, p. 72, no e-link available)

“Self-motivation, springing from a need for closure, is more compelling than external motivation, springing from a teacher’s directives.”

Denise Nessel (see item #1)

“Grading is a form of communication. The problem is that it’s a shorthand form of communication used by people who do not agree (or even discuss) what the symbols mean.”

Jonathan Dresner (see item #5)

“Students don’t just *get* grades, they *feel graded*, and only insofar as that is true are grades effective rewards and punishments.”

Jonathan Dresner (*ibid.*)

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## 1. Asking the Right Questions When Teaching Reading (an oldie but goodie)

In this classic article from a 1987 *Kappan*, California-based consultant Denise Nessel describes the standard way that reading is “taught” in many K-12 classrooms: students read a passage and are given a series of comprehension questions to make sure they understood what was read. Teachers usually try to ask questions tapping different levels of comprehension: literal (recalling the explicit), interpretive (grasping the implicit), and evaluative (making judgments).

Nessel says there are two drawbacks to this time-honored script. First, the teacher’s questions “function more like an oral examination than as an occasion for developing understanding.” And second, in a well-intentioned attempt to get students thinking at different levels, teachers ask a lot of unnecessary questions and keep students from thinking creatively and deeply about the passage. Many teachers fall into these two traps, she says, and “the standard question-and-answer routine often detracts from, rather than enhances, thinking and comprehension.”

To make her point, Nessel presents a truncated version of the Brothers Grimm fable, *The Three Spinners*, each segment followed by a standard array of questions, and then models an alternative approach.

*Once upon a time a poor woman lived with her daughter in a stone cottage not far from the queen’s castle. The daughter was lazy and would not spin, and her lack of industry constantly annoyed the mother. One day, the mother lost her patience entirely and came at her daughter with a broomstick. The maiden cried out loudly.*

*The queen happened to be driving by in a golden coach pulled by six white horses. When the queen heard the cries, she ordered her coachman to stop, swept into the house, and demanded to know why the mother was beating her daughter.*

*The woman was ashamed to admit to having such a lazy daughter, so she said, “Oh, your majesty, I cannot keep the girl from spinning! She is always at the wheel, and I cannot afford all the flax that she demands daily!”*

*“Well,” said the queen, “I love the sound of a spinning wheel, and I have a fine supply of flax. Let me take the girl to my castle. She shall live in comfort and shall spin there to her heart’s content.”*

*The mother agreed at once to this plan, and so the maiden returned to the castle with the queen. There, the queen led her to three rooms, each filled to the ceiling with bundles of flax.*

*“Now,” said the queen, “you shall spin this flax for me. When you are finished, you shall have my eldest son for a husband. I know you are poor, but your industry is dowry enough. Would that more were like you, my dear.”*

The usual follow-up at this point would be a series of questions like the following (delivered orally or in a worksheet):

- Why was the mother upset with her daughter? (Literal)
- How did the mother punish the girl? (Literal)
- Why did the queen stop at the poor woman’s house? (Interpretive)
- In what was the queen traveling? (Literal)
- Why did the mother lie to the queen? (Literal)
- Did the mother do the right thing sending her daughter with the queen? (Evaluative)
- How did the girl probably feel when the queen showed her the rooms? (Interpretive)

Questions like these, says Nessel, are really a test, and they elicit student responses within a fairly narrow range. Some thinking is stimulated, but not enough to foster a true exchange of ideas. “Furthermore,” Nessel continues, “because the ‘test’ emphasizes relatively unimportant information, the interaction between the teacher and the students is decidedly hollow.” It doesn’t *matter* how the mother was punishing the girl, how the queen was traveling, or why the queen ordered her coachman to stop. Even the more thought-provoking moral question – whether the mother was right to let her daughter be taken away – is beside the point.

The point – the main idea – is that the girl is in a tight fix, with no help in sight. The best question that a teacher can ask (having paused at this juncture of the story) is: How can the girl get out of this mess? When students are asked this question and required to provide evidence from the story to back up their answers, they are forced to anticipate what will happen next in light of what has already occurred. There isn’t one right answer, and as students work on the possibilities, their thinking and comprehension are deeper than when they are peppered with “comprehension” questions.

Here are some possible answers that cooperative groups of students, building on the clue in the story’s title, might come up with:

- The mother is probably having second thoughts about what she said. After all, she treated the girl harshly by beating her with a broomstick, and she lied to the queen. The mother will sneak three spinsters into the castle to help the girl.

- The girl will tell the queen the truth and beg for help. The queen seems to be a kindly woman; she stopped, on hearing the girls’ cries, and she offered the girl a comfortable life in the castle. So the queen will probably be understanding, but she will want to teach the girl a lesson. The queen will send in three spinsters, all hard taskmasters, and they will make the girl work.

- The girl will find three spinsters in the castle to help her secretly. That way, the work will be done without the queen discovering the girl’s laziness, and she will win the prince.

To come up with these answers, students had to recall specific facts, make inferences, and pass judgments. They did so without answering a litany of questions that required only

isolated bits of thinking. “In the process,” says Nessel, “the students placed information from the story in proper perspective: as raw data that could be used to form hypotheses about how the girl might solve her problem.” Teachers should judge such answers on the quality of reasoning and evidence rather than against the actual story... which students now return to:

*Distraught, the maiden paced back and forth. If she lived to be 100, she could never spin all that flax! Not knowing what else to do, she sat in the window and began to cry.*

*Three strange women were passing by. One had a broad, flat foot; the second had a large lip that hung down over her chin; the third had an enormous thumb. They stopped and called to the maiden, “What ails you, my dear?”*

*The girl explained her problem. The women agreed to help her, on one condition. They said, “Will you promise to invite us to your wedding, introduce us as your cousins, and ask us to sit at your table and share your food?”*

*The maiden agreed gladly, and the odd women came in at once and began to work. The first drew out the flax and worked the treadle with her broad foot. The second moistened the thread with her large, protruding lip. The third twisted the thread with her gigantic thumb and rapped with her fingers on the table. Each time she rapped, there was a heap of beautifully spun flax. And so they worked, deftly threading, licking, and twisting, day after day.*

*When the queen came to the spinning rooms, the maiden hid the women from sight and showed off the finished bundles as if they were her own work. The spinsters continued to work diligently until all the flax was spun. Then they took their leave, saying to the girl, “Do not forget what you promised, child!”*

*When the queen saw the completed work, she began at once to plan for the wedding. The prince rejoiced at the prospect of having such a clever and diligent wife.*

*The queen came one day to discuss the guest list and to ask what names the bride wished to add. The queen had invited noble families, wealthy merchants, and kings and queens from neighboring lands. The maiden thought of how the three women would look amid such elegant company.*

Conventional comprehension questions at this point in the story might include:

- What was odd about how the three women looked? (Literal)
- What did the girl have to promise? (Literal)
- Was the bargain a fair one? (Evaluative)
- Why did the spinsters want to come to the wedding? (Evaluative)
- How did the girl probably feel about having her work done for her? (Interpretive)

- Why did she hide the women from the queen? (Interpretive)
- Whom did the queen invite to the wedding? (Literal)

Again, says Nessel, these questions divert attention from the critical issues: Will the girl invite the spinsters to the wedding? And if she does marry the prince, how will she live up to his expectations for diligent spinning? When groups of students are asked the first question (and required to give evidence from the story to back up their answers), they might come up with answers like these:

- The girl will invite them. She is grateful for their help and will keep her promise.

Besides, people will not dare to question the actions of a princess at her own wedding. She will do the right thing at last, and the story will have a happy ending. That's the way it goes in fairy tales.

- The girl will not invite them. She has already shown herself to be not only lazy, but deceitful. To avoid embarrassment, she will go back on her promise. Since the women finished the spinning very quickly and seemed to use magic, they are probably witches. They will put a spell on the girl – or perhaps put her in a dungeon and make her spin for a long time. The prince will come to save her, and that will be the happy ending.

Each answer is plausible, based on the story so far. To arrive at their answers, students would have had lively debates in their groups, delving deeper into the story, reminding each other of important details, and considering nuances of meaning. “A clear comprehension of story elements made high-level reasoning possible,” says Nessel. “At the same time, the need to reason enhanced the students’ comprehension.” Now for the conclusion of the story, which students are eagerly awaiting:

*“I have three cousins,” said the girl, “who have always been kind to me. May I invite them?”*

*“Certainly, my dear,” said the kindly queen.*

*And so the three strange women came to the wedding, and the girl greeted them warmly, introduced them as her cousins, and had them eat with her at the wedding table.*

*The prince was surprised and wondered how his lovely bride could have such strange-looking relatives. He asked the first how she got such a broad, flat foot. “From treading!” she said.*

*He asked the second how she got such a large, protruding lip. “From licking!” she replied.*

*He asked the third how she got such an enormous thumb. “From twisting!” she said.*

*The prince was appalled. He proclaimed that from then on his beautiful bride should never again touch a spinning wheel. And so the girl escaped from that tiresome work once and for all.*

Clearly, students who creatively answered challenging, open-ended questions, using evidence from the story to back up their hypotheses, were engaged in much more thoughtful

reading and thinking than those who played the Right Answer Game. When students work in cooperative groups on well-framed prediction questions, they don't just listen to and respond to the teacher. "Instead," says Nessel, "they build on one another's ideas and evaluate one another's contributions in terms of the evidence presented in the text. This open exchange of ideas leads not only to better reasoning and comprehension, but also to growing skill in presenting opinions and debating issues."

A prediction approach also stimulates students' curiosity about the outcome of the story and leads them to read eagerly and with purpose. "Self-motivation, springing from a need for closure, is more compelling than external motivation, springing from a teacher's directives," says Nessel.

To use this approach, Nessel has some pointers for teachers: (a) they need a good story or non-fiction passage; (b) they need to identify one or two major turning points and use these as pivots for discussion; (c) during discussions (small- and large-group), the teacher should encourage disagreement, sometimes play the devil's advocate, and push students to use evidence to back up their views; (d) the teacher should be sure not to give away the ending to the story or conclusion of the passage, the goal being to elicit good reasoning, not to lead students in the "right" direction; (e) once the outcome is known, it's time to go back into the text and raise interesting questions that don't pertain to the central point (for example, in *The Three Spinsters*, whether the mother was right to let the queen take her daughter); and (f) this is also an opportunity to study vocabulary and literary devices in the passage.

"A questioning strategy that focuses on prediction," concludes Nessel, "is a powerful tool for developing and enhancing comprehension at all grade levels. This strategy calls forth the rigorous thinking that is often lacking in classrooms today. We should not be satisfied to require less of our students."

"Reading Comprehension: Asking the Right Questions" by Denise Nessel in *Phi Delta Kappan*, February 1987 (Vol. 68, #6, p. 442-445), no e-link available

## **2. Short Classroom Visits – A Powerful Professional Development Tool**

In this article in *Tools for Schools* (a National Staff Development Council periodical), Joan Richardson reports on recent thinking on the value of short classroom visits. Less formal supervision of classrooms, she reports, was inspired by the 1980s corporate idea of "managing by walking around." By the mid-1990s it was well established as a way for principals to get a better understanding of what's really happening in classrooms. In the last five years, says Richardson, informal visits have blossomed because "teachers have become more comfortable opening the doors of their practice and principals more confident and skilled about offering feedback about teaching and learning." It's also become more common for non-administrators – usually instructional coaches and teachers – to come along for informal visits.

What impact can these visits have? According to George Perry, an educational consultant, they are "one of the most powerful tools that educators can use to stimulate conversations around improving teaching and learning."

Leigh Wall, a junior-high principal in Texas, started making informal classroom visits two years ago. She makes about 20 mini-observations a week and finds them very helpful. “They put the focus on learning,” she said. “It’s not about what kids are doing, it’s about what they are learning.” Wall has her assistant principals and department heads visiting classrooms too (although not as frequently as she does), and administrators regularly share impressions of what they see. At one point, teachers asked their administrators to tell them whether they saw effective implementation of Marzano’s nine instructional strategies (something the school had been working on). The observers reported that there wasn’t enough summarizing and note-taking going on, and teachers requested more staff development on how to beef up those strategies. In the coming year, Wall plans to get teachers involved in doing short observations of each others’ classrooms.

The Alabama Reading Initiative, a statewide program to improve literacy teaching, has trained its 1,300 reading coaches in the effective use of informal classroom visits. Novice coaches watch principals conduct visits and debrief with them afterwards, and then make regular visits with the principal (sometimes with the whole literacy team), trying to visit each of their teachers at least once a month. They have found that the most effective visits follow team meetings in which teachers and coaches looked at interim student learning data and identified the problems that struggling students are having. It’s important that the children in question not feel that a visitor is hovering over them; observers should move throughout the room, unobtrusively keeping an eye on the struggling students to see how the lesson is going for them. Follow-up conversations between the coach and teacher can be very helpful, says Georgina Pipes, coordinator of the Alabama coaches. “It’s a safe conversation if you’re talking about a student and his learning.”

Richardson has the following suggestions on short classroom visits, gleaned from several sources:

For principals making mini-observations alone:

- Informal visits depend on trust between teachers and administrators. Teachers have to be reassured up front that information from informal visits is for their use only and will not find its way to other teachers, their personnel file, or their evaluation.
- What the principal is looking for in classrooms should be articulated in advance. This may vary at different times of the year and with different grade levels or teacher teams – for example, cooperative learning in third-grade classrooms.
- Principals should try to do a total of 20 minutes a day of informal classroom visits at least three times a week.
- The principal should visit teachers at different parts of lessons – for example, the beginning of a class, the middle, and the end.
- It’s important that teachers know the protocol: ignore the visitor and carry on with what they are doing, unless the principal specifically asks for their attention. “You cannot observe teachers who are engaged with the observers,” says Carolyn Downey, author of a book on this subject.

- It's a good idea for the principal to move around the room and not get trapped at the door.
- Another strategy is to talk quietly to at least two students, asking them what they are working on and whether it's interesting or important to them.
- Feedback to teachers after visits is important, addressing strengths, questions, and if appropriate, next steps.

For teams making classroom walkthroughs:

- Teams should be small: more than four visitors visiting a classroom at the same time can be overwhelming to teachers and students.
- When a team is visiting classrooms, it's important for the principal to convene the team and clarify the purpose of the walkthroughs up front.
- It's also a good idea to assign roles – for example, one person focusing on student engagement, another on displays of student work, another on the materials students are using.
- Upon entering a classroom, teams may want to quickly introduce themselves to the teacher – a 30-second courtesy conversation so the teacher can acknowledge their presence.
- Frequent visits help reduce the disruption factor; if visitors are in classrooms often, students get used to them and aren't distracted by their presence.
- When a group of observers has visited a number of classrooms, they should caucus and talk about what they have seen. It's a good idea to stick to factual observations and avoid judgments, for example, “Students were working individually” versus “I don't know why students weren't working with partners on this assignment.”

“Snapshots of Learning” by Joan Richardson in *Tools for Schools*, August/September 2006 (Vol. 10, #1, p. 1-3), no e-link available

### **3. College Essays That Work**

In this helpful article in *Newsweek's* annual college issue, Pomona's dean of admissions, Bruce Poch, advises nervous students, educators, and parents on the elements that make a college essay a net plus to the overall application. “When I pick up a file,” he says, I want to know whether the student has siblings or not, who his parents are, where he went to high school. Then I want the essay to help the rest of the application make sense, to humanize all the numbers that flow past. I am looking for insight.”

Poch cautions against over-polishing. “A brilliantly written essay may compel me to look beyond superficial shortcomings in an application,” he writes, “But if no recommendation or grade or test score hints at such writing talent, I may succumb to cynicism and assume the writer had help – maybe too much. In the worst cases, I may find that I have read it before – with name and place changed – on the Internet, in an essay-editing service or in a ‘best essays’ book.

“The most appealing essays take the opportunity to show a voice not rendered homogeneous and pasteurized,” continues Poch. “An essay that is rough around the edges may still be compelling. Good ideas make an impression, even when expressed with bad

punctuation and spelling errors. Energy and excitement can be communicated. I'm not suggesting the 'I came, I saw, I conquered' approach to essay writing, nor the 'I saved the world' angle taken by some students who write about community-service projects. I'm talking about smaller moments that are well captured. Essays don't require the life tragedy that so many seem to think is necessary. Not all admissions offers come out of sympathy!"

Poch tells of one applicant, a jazz trumpeter with a strong interest in astronomy, who wrote that Louis Armstrong (rather than Neil Armstrong) was the first man to set foot on the moon – a classic slip confusing two personal heroes. Pomona offered this student a spot and he went on to graduate and pursue a Ph.D. in astrophysics.

"Admissions officers, even at the most selective institutions, really aren't looking for perfection in 17- and 18-year-olds," says Poch. "We are looking for the human being behind the roster of activities and grades. We are looking for those who can let down their guard just a bit to allow others in. We are looking for people whose egos won't get in the way of learning, students whose investment in ideas and words tells us – in the context of their records – that they are aware of a world beyond their own homes, schools, grades and scores. A picture, they say, is worth a thousand words. To us, an essay that reveals a student's unaltered voice is worth much, much more."

"Don't Be Bland" by Bruce Poch in *Newsweek*, Aug. 21/28, 2006 (Vol. CXLVIII, #8/9, p. 84), no e-link available

#### **4. Sorting Out the Purposes of Grading**

In this online piece first published in January, 2005, University of Hawaii professor Jonathan Dresner shares his views on grading. Although he's writing about the college level, much of this applies to K-12 schools:

- "Grading is a form of communication. The problem is that it's a shorthand form of communication used by people who do not agree (or even discuss) what the symbols mean. Worse, each recipient of these symbolic communications has their own rough idea of what they mean, based on their own experience and anecdotal evidence, and often interpret them much more broadly and personally than they were intended."

- "Students probably feel about grades much the same way that I feel about ballets: the work which goes into producing them is impressive, it's supposed to be for my benefit, but the dancers seem to mean a great deal more than I'm getting. The gestural vocabulary seems arbitrary, the ultimate aims are unclear, and the standards of quality are ineffable."

- "Grading should not be an evaluation of the student's personality, moral character, or attractiveness. I know that a lot of students think it is, and there might indeed be unconscious or subtle shadings, but I also know that a lot of faculty work hard to ensure that their personal feelings or unacknowledged biases do not affect grading."

- Can grades motivate? That depends, says Dresner, on whether students take grades personally. "A 'D' motivates a student to do better only if they care that they got a 'D' instead of a 'C' or 'B'; an 'A' only creates a sense of accomplishment if the student feels a strong

sense of connection to their work *or to the grade as a measure of themselves*. Students don't just *get* grades, they *feel graded*, and only insofar as that is true are grades effective rewards and punishments.”

- The key, concludes Dresner, is for teachers to agree on and consistently apply absolute grading standards for assignments and courses.

“Towards a Unified Theory of Grading” by Jonathan Dresner in *Education News*, Jan. 3, 2005  
[http://www.educationnews.org/General\\_Commentaries/towards-a-unified-theory-of-grad.htm](http://www.educationnews.org/General_Commentaries/towards-a-unified-theory-of-grad.htm)

## 5. Testing: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

The Marshall Memo doesn't usually summarize books, but this chart from a new book on school reform by Jane David and Larry Cuban neatly summarizes the issues of student assessment:

	The Good	The Bad	The Ugly
Teachers	What's on the test leads teachers to teach things they have ignored and to teach students they have ignored.	Teachers don't know what to do so they resort to test prep and attention to students just below standard.	Pressure to increase scores leads to cheating, and teachers ignore struggling students whose scores are unlikely to rise.
Students	Some students try harder when tests are tied to a course grade or promotion	Students don't learn important skills and knowledge.	Students give up and drop out.
Schools	Principals and teachers work together to figure out how to raise student achievement.	Nothing is taught except what is on the test. The curriculum becomes test prep.	Principals and teachers leave low-performing (poor) schools to go to higher-performing (wealthier) schools.
Districts	District leaders pay attention to all the schools and help them improve.	District leaders don't know how to help schools improve.	The state takes over failing schools but doesn't know how to help them improve.

*Cutting Through the Hype: A Taxpayer's Guide to School Reforms* by Jane David and Larry Cuban (Education Week Press, 2006, p. 24)

## 6. Can Computers Grade Student Writing?

Aleeta Johnson, a veteran high-school teacher in Knoxville, Tennessee, was skeptical when she heard six years ago about software packages that claimed to be able to evaluate student writing. “How could a computer grade an essay?” she thought. Kevin Bushweller, an *Education Week*-based writer, was skeptical as well. “It seemed more hype than reality,” he

says in this article in *Teacher Magazine*, and the raging debate among researchers about the accuracy and effectiveness of essay-grading engines didn't make him feel any more confident that computers could do the job. "Plus," he adds, "as a writer and editor, the thought that a machine could replace the craft of evaluating a piece of writing made me cringe a bit. Writing, to me, has always been a quintessentially human experience."

But Aleeta Johnson became a believer and now regularly uses Criterion Online Writing Evaluation, a package produced by Educational Testing Service. She reports that using the software allows her to assign "astronomically" more writing than she did when she was hand-scoring her students' writing. Last year, Johnson and her colleagues in twelve Knoxville high schools, all of whom were using Criterion, registered 8-point gains on the Tennessee persuasive essay writing assessment. One high school that used Criterion in conjunction with a schoolwide writing-across-the-curriculum program gained 19 points.

Criterion is one of a number of essay-grading software packages produced by various companies. Others include:

- Writing Roadmap 2.0 from CB/McGraw-Hill;
- IntelliMetric from Vantage Learning;
- WriteToLearn from Pearson Knowledge Technologies;
- SAGrader by Idea Works Inc.

Each program works differently. Some, including Criterion, assess sentence organization, grammar, usage, and style, but don't evaluate content. Others use artificial intelligence to assess the quality of an essay on a particular topic.

Bushweller notes that all these packages have limitations. "They can't judge the creativity of a writing style or the inventiveness of metaphors and symbolism," he says. "And I remain skeptical that artificial intelligence can effectively differentiate between a good essay and a truly excellent one." Johnson agrees, saying that the software is not a good tool for very sophisticated writers – a budding Shakespeare, for example.

But most students aren't in this league, and Johnson thinks that for 99 percent of her kids, the best treatment is the modern duo of teacher and grading software. Bushweller agrees, noting that the challenge of grading writing from 150 students cries out for some technological assistance.

"Scantroning Shakespeare" by Kevin Bushweller in *Teacher Magazine*, August/September 2006 (Vol. XVIII, #1, p. 47), no e-link available

## **7. Short Items:**

*a. A website that deconstructs standards* – Paste a curriculum standard or set of learning objectives from a unit or lesson plan into this interactive tool and it will highlight the verbs and peg them to levels of Bloom's taxonomy:

<http://www.studenthub.org/verbinator/default.php>. Pretty cool!

Personal communication from Jay McTighe, Aug. 26, 2006

***b. Social studies simulation software*** – A 2004 software package, *Real Lives*, puts middle-school students into the lives of individuals around the world – a factory worker in Brazil or a police officer in Nigeria – and has them make decisions as events unfold – characters get ill or lose their jobs, there is a robbery, a natural disaster occurs, marriages falter. Simulated characters have to make decisions, for example, how to budget, what job to get, whether to have a child, whether to fight human rights abuse or keep quiet. With each event, students learn about the culture, economy, public health system, and other aspects of the countries in which characters live. *Real Lives* won the 2006 Family Learning Software of the Year Award from Computers for Youth, a New York City nonprofit. The software, including a free trial version, is available at <http://www.educationalsimulations.com>. An update of the software is planned for late 2006 or early 2007.

Spotted in *Teacher Magazine*, August/September 2006 (Vol. XVIII, #1, p. 22)

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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](mailto: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 36 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 scores of 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 (with occasional breaks; there were 50 issues in 2004-05).

## ***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:***

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- Focus topics
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- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
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- 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 SmartBrief  
Atlantic Monthly  
Boston Globe  
CommonWealth Magazine  
District Administration  
Ed. Magazine  
EDge  
Education Digest  
Education Gadfly  
Education Next  
Education Update  
Education Week  
Educational Leadership  
Educational Researcher  
Edutopia  
Elementary School Journal  
Harvard Business Review  
Harvard Education Letter  
Harvard Educational Review  
JESPAR  
Jimmy Kilpatrick  
Journal of Staff Development  
Language Learner  
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  
Teachers College Record  
Theory Into Practice  
Times Educational Supplement