Marshall Memo 320

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
January 25, 2010

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"A carpenter at the end of the day can actually see what he has built, a doctor can observe a patient responding to treatment, but a teacher oftentimes has to go along for months with relatively few noticeable results."

Thompson, quoted in item #1

"These young children needed help with reading and mathematics, but they also needed much more in their lives. They needed imagination and self-confidence. So we sang, happily and frequently. We recited, clapped, danced, and wiggled. We explored sounds and ideas. We discussed issues and concerns. We drew pictures and made up songs and stories, injecting into the grimness of many of their lives small pockets of joy. I could feel the love growing between us."

A first-year teacher, quoted in item #1

"If children cannot form letters – or cannot form them with reasonable legibility and speed – they cannot translate the language in their minds into written text. Struggling with handwriting can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy in which students avoid writing, come to think of themselves as not being able to write, and fall further and further behind their peers."

Steve Graham (see item #2)

1. What Qualities Predict a Teacher's Success with Students?

In this *Journal of Positive Psychology* article, professors Angela Lee Duckworth, Patrick Quinn, and Martin Seligman report on their study of 390 novice Teach for America teachers working in high-poverty schools. The researchers analyzed the impact of certain personality traits – grit, life satisfaction, and optimistic explanatory style – on how much students learned.

For starters, Duckworth, Quinn, and Seligman offer a critique of conventional methods of identifying which teacher traits lead to better student results:

• "Common knowledge" about good teaching – Defining teacher effectiveness by ratings from supervisors, observers, or students is flawed because these ratings don't always correspond to how much students learn. "Rather," say the authors, "ratings may reflect what raters believe good teaching looks like or, even farther off the mark, halo effects of unrelated positive personality attributes." Extraverted, assertive, and socially attractive teachers generally get higher ratings but don't necessarily get better results with students. "Indeed," the authors continue, "it appears that performance ratings may be contaminated by perceptions of teacher personality and that the identified traits merely correspond to raters' intuitions about what effective teaching looks like."

• Selection bias – Teachers are not randomly assigned to schools, say the authors. "Rather, teachers with the strongest qualifications disproportionately take better-paying jobs in higher-performing districts." In a 1996 study, Sanders and Rivers found that African-American students are twice as likely to be assigned to the most ineffective teachers. "If schools with high-achieving students choose teachers with positive traits, observed associations between student performance and these traits will be spuriously inflated."

The study measured three personality traits that the researchers hypothesized might have an impact on student learning results:

- *Grit* – perseverance and passion for long-term goals – has been correlated with cadets' survival at West Point and being a finalist in the National Spelling Bee. "'Gritty' individuals tend to work harder than equally able peers," write the authors, "and they remain committed to their chosen pursuits longer."
- *Life satisfaction* – contentment with one's current life situation – has been correlated with work performance in a number of professions. The researchers hypothesized that "Children may be drawn to and engaged by teachers who are higher in life satisfaction, whose energy and positive attitude can shift the set-point of mood for the entire classroom."
- *Optimistic explanatory style* – "When confronted with adversity," say Duckworth, Quinn, and Seligman, "optimists are less likely to reduce effort, more likely to perceive contingencies between their own actions and outcomes, and more likely to

maintain a subjective sense of well-being." This is especially important in under-resourced schools, where, says Thompson (1991) "results are so intangible and unobservable. A carpenter at the end of the day can actually see what he has built, a doctor can observe a patient responding to treatment, but a teacher oftentimes has to go along for months with relatively few noticeable results."

The TFA teachers were higher than other teachers on all of these traits, but careful analysis of their students' learning results showed which made the most difference: grit and life satisfaction.

Grit is the most obvious, since tenacity and focus on long-term goals are essential to making a difference in a challenging classroom. Life satisfaction, which emerged as the strongest predictor of student success, is a little harder to explain. The researchers believe that it's powerful because teachers with greater life satisfaction have zest and enthusiasm that engages students. The words of one first-year teacher capture this better than statistical tables: "These young children needed help with reading and mathematics, but they also needed much more in their lives. They needed imagination and self-confidence. So we sang, happily and frequently. We recited, clapped, danced, and wiggled. We explored sounds and ideas. We discussed issues and concerns. We drew pictures and made up songs and stories, injecting into the grimness of many of their lives small pockets of joy. I could feel the love growing between us."

Duckworth, Quinn, and Seligman draw two conclusions from their study. First, principals and others who select teachers should pay more attention to grit, personal satisfaction, and optimism than credentials. Second, these traits are susceptible to intervention, so professional development in schools should focus on trying to move them in a positive direction. Citing several studies, the authors conclude, "Given the crucial role played by teachers in the lives and learning of children, the possibility of improving their capabilities seems worth testing."

"Positive Predictors of Teacher Effectiveness" by Angela Lee Duckworth, Patrick Quinn, and Martin Seligman in *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, November 2009 (Vol. 4, #6, p. 540-547), no e-link (many thanks to Doug Reeves for drawing this article to my attention)

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2. Good Handwriting – Right from the Start

In this detailed and helpful *American Educator* article, Vanderbilt professor Steve Graham argues that early instruction in handwriting, done right, improves not only how legibly students write but also how well and how much they write. Conversely, not learning good handwriting is a serious hindrance to young students' ability to express themselves on paper – and their overall school achievement. "If children cannot form letters – or cannot form them with reasonable legibility and speed – they cannot translate the language in their minds into written text," says Graham. "Struggling with handwriting can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy in which students avoid writing, come to think of themselves as not being able to write, and fall further and further behind their peers. Just as young readers must learn to decode fluently so

they can focus on comprehension, young writers must develop fluent, legible handwriting… so they can focus on generating and organizing ideas."

At what age do students reach the tipping point where they no longer have to focus on every detail and their handwriting becomes fluent and automatic? Researchers aren't sure, but they know that the longer it takes, the more difficult it is for students to shift from a linear one-thing-after-another style of writing (because they are concentrating so much on the mechanics of handwriting) to a more reflective mode in which they're thinking about the topic, the needs of the reader, and the best way to organize thoughts. This is why effective early handwriting instruction is so important.

During the elementary years, an achievement gap widens between children who are proficient at handwriting and those who aren't. Nationally about 12 percent of students produce writing that's difficult to read; as many as 44 percent of urban elementary students are in this category, and boys are also overrepresented. Students with poor handwriting tend to avoid writing and believe that they can't write. When students are pressured to write more quickly or take notes in class, legibility gets worse. This hurts achievement – it's difficult to study for a test when you can't read your own notes – and also triggers unconscious judgments among adults. Studies have shown that when teachers are asked to grade an identical essay written several times with a range of handwriting proficiency, they give neatly written essays higher marks.

The good news is that handwriting can be taught to all students, both through formal instruction in the early grades (see below) and through teacher example, ongoing feedback and correction, and skillful use of teachable moments. Early intervention with students with illegible handwriting can make an immediate and lasting difference. This doesn't have to take a lot of classroom time, says Graham. From kindergarten to grade 3, short lessons totaling 50-100 minutes a week should produce mastery. It's a good idea to spread out the practice sessions rather than using "massed practice" in which students write the same letter over and over again in a single session. It's more effective to have students practice a letter under the teacher's direction, evaluate the results (students circling their two best-formed letters), and then review and briefly practice the letter in subsequent sessions as needed. The payoff of this kind of systematic, spaced practice is significant, not just in better handwriting but also in the amount of writing students do, their sentence-writing skill, and the quality of their writing.

Many teachers are already doing a good job teaching handwriting, but a significant number aren't, and in their classes, the gap widens. For first-grade teachers in the latter category, Graham and a colleague have written a free online program, which is available at http://www.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/casl.xml "The basic goal of handwriting instruction is to help students develop legible writing that can be produced quickly and with little conscious attention," he says. The program helps students quickly and easily name the letters of the alphabet, match each name to its appropriate letter, and write letters when named. One activity asks students to write which letter comes after a series of five letters (___c, d, e, f., g, __) and then the letter that comes before them.

The next step is being able to quickly and accurately write letters. Studies show that the best way to teach this is to show students a model of the letter marked with numbered arrows that show the nature, order, and direction of the strokes needed to write the letter, and then have students reproduce the letter from memory. An ineffective strategy is asking students to verbalize the steps for forming a letter; this doesn't work because it uses up too much of children's working memory.

What kind of script should students be taught? Most schools teach manuscript in kindergarten and grade 1 and then introduce cursive in grade 2 or 3, with some schools teaching slanted manuscript letters (the D'Nealian alphabet) as an alternative to cursive. There is a lively debate on which sequence and script is best, and research hasn't provided a definitive answer. Graham recommends starting with manuscript letters in kindergarten for the following reasons:

- Most children enter kindergarten and first grade having been taught manuscript letters by their parents and preschools, and it's jarring for them to have to switch.
- Manuscript letters are easier to learn than cursive letters.
- Students can write just as quickly using manuscript as they can with cursive, once they master it.
- Learning manuscript writing in the primary grades may facilitate reading development because the material students are reading is in manuscript, not cursive.

As students learn to write, they develop their own style and improvise ways of writing more efficiently – for example, using slightly more curved lines, eliminating clockwise movements, combining letters from different scripts, and eliminating or changing some of the connecting strokes. Graham says it's a bad idea for teachers to try to keep these students in lockstep – "[T]eachers who insist on a strict adherence to a particular model," he says, "are likely to frustrate not only themselves, but their students as well."

Studies have shown that a small number of letters cause a disproportionate number of handwriting problems: lower-case q, j, z, u, n, and k account for 48% of the omissions, miscues, and illegible attempts in grade 1-3, and q, z, u, a, and j are most often written illegibly. Teachers should pay special attention to these demons.

What about pencil grip? Graham says it's important for children to learn a comfortable grip from the very beginning – it's difficult to change once they have settled on a particular way of holding a pencil. "A child who has a two-fingered death-grip on the tip of the pencil is likely to complain of fatigue or discomfort when asked to write for a sustained period of time," he says, and recommends the tripod method – the pencil is between the thumb and index finger, resting on the distal phalanx of the middle finger. But no matter how children are taught initially, half to three-quarters will modify their grip in some way – most often with no adverse affect on legibility.

And paper position? For right-handers using manuscript, Graham recommends that the paper be squarely in front of them with the left side at about the center of their body. For right-handers using cursive, the paper should be rotated about 45 degrees counterclockwise. Left-

handers should rotate their papers somewhat clockwise and hold the pencil about one and a half inches from the tip. Left-handers who position the paper like right-handers are likely to develop an inverted grip, which can cut down their speed and legibility.

How fast is fast enough with handwriting? Speed develops gradually as students get lots of practice writing connected text. Graham and his colleagues have studied this and recommend that students who score below the norms listed below are candidates for extra help and lots of writing time:

Mean number of letters written per minute:

	Girls	**Boys**	Special attention needed if __ words below the mean:
Grade 1	21	17	7
Grade 2	36	32	13
Grade 3	50	45	14
Grade 4	66	61	20
Grade 5	75	71	20
Grade 6	91	78	20
Grade 7	109	91	20
Grade 8	118	112	20
Grade 9	121	114	20

One especially good way to increase speed is having students copy a text, get a baseline number of letters copied legibly in three minutes, and then try to improve their rate, tracking the data.

Finally, there's the issue of legibility. Graham says that students should know that there are some situations where less-than-perfect handwriting is fine – rough drafts, for example. But they have to know the situations that demand neat writing – final drafts, homework – and have to be able to take their writing up a notch for those occasions. Graham and his colleagues have compiled the following checklist of best practices:

• *Teach students how to write each letter:*
- Show them how it is formed.
- Describe how it is similar to and different from other letters.
- Use visual cues, such as numbered arrows, as a guide to letter formation.
- Have students practice tracing, copying, and writing the letter from memory.
- Keep instructional sessions short, with frequent reviews and practice.
- Ask students to identify or circle their best-formed letters and words.
- Encourage students to correct or rewrite poorly-formed letters.
- Monitor practice to ensure that letters are formed correctly.
- Reinforce successful efforts and provide corrective feedback as needed.

• *Help develop more fluent handwriting:*
- Give plenty of opportunities to write.
- Eliminate habits that interfere with and reduce fluency.
- Have students copy a short passage several times, trying to write it a little faster each time.

• *Promote handwriting development:*
  - Make sure each child develops a comfortable and efficient pencil grip.
  - Encourage children to sit in an upright position, leaning slightly forward.
  - Show them how to position their paper.
  - Teach children to identify and name the letters of the alphabet.
  - Teach them how to write both upper case and lower case letters.
  - Allot 50 -100 minutes a week to handwriting instruction in grades 1-4.
  - Give students plenty of opportunities to use different kinds of writing instruments and paper.
  - Ask children to set goals for improving specific aspects of their handwriting.
  - Help left-handed children implement appropriate procedures for pencil grip and paper positioning.
  - Monitor students' handwriting, paying special attention to their instructional needs in letter formation, spacing, slant, alignment, size, and line quality.
  - Encourage students to make all final drafts of papers neat and legible.
  - Maintain a balanced perspective on the role of handwriting in learning to write.
  - Use graphic displays and exemplar papers to show students' progress in handwriting.
• *Help students who are having difficulty:*
  - Organize the class so you can give additional handwriting instruction to those in need.
  - Coordinate handwriting instruction with the occupational therapist and other providers.
  - Place special emphasis on teaching reversals and other difficult letters, including a, j, k, n, q, u, and z.
  - Ensure that students master one style of handwriting before a second is introduced.
  - Help students develop a positive attitude about handwriting.
  - Talk with parents about the handwriting program and solicit advice.

"Want to Improve Children's Writing? Don't Neglect Handwriting" by Steve Graham in *American Educator*, Winter 2009-2010 (Vol. 33, #4, p. 20-27, 40)
http://www.aft.org/pdfs/americaneducator/ae_winter09.pdf#page=22

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3. Using iPods to Help Students Learn Literary Analysis

How can middle-school teachers engage students steeped in electronic media? ask Maryland middle-school educators Debra Bauleke and Kathleen Herrmann in this *Middle School Journal* article. By strategically using iPods and MP3 players in the classroom, they say. The article describes how eighth-grade teachers at their school taught the difficult language-arts concept of *theme* using devices that students love.

Four honors classes participated in the experiment after reading *The Outsiders*, S.E. Hinton's story about social status, street gangs, building bridges between rich and poor, the unfairness of life, and the search for identity. Students chose a popular song with conceptual links to the book, transcribed the lyrics, and analyzed links to one of the book's themes. Teachers got the principal's and parents' permission to make an exception to the school's rule

against electronics in the classroom and established ground rules to deal with inappropriate song lyrics (the teacher would select the song if that happened). Students without music players chose songs from the school's server.

Teachers then modeled the process using an unfamiliar song and did a "think aloud" session walking through the steps of choosing the song, matching it to a particular scene in *The Outsiders*, and analyzing the links. At this point, students thought they were ready to get going, but the teachers insisted on one more piece of "sweat equity" – students needed to demonstrate through classroom discussion that they understood literary elements and analysis. They spent time going over characterization, setting, events, point of view, tone, irony, and imagery and how they come together in an unfolding story. Students also learned about poetic and literary devices and how to annotate a song and connect it to literature. And they evaluated selected scenes from the book that showed rising action, the introduction of new characters, climax, and falling action, picking two that related to their song.

Finally students dove into the project, answering a number of prompts as they worked in the school's media center and used online resources. Here were the questions:

- Analyze the lyrics. Why did the lyricist write this song?
- Review the scene. What do you think the author meant when she wrote this scene?
- Describe what theme ties the song and the scene together. Don't just write the name of the theme; explain your answer by citing text from the scene and the song and tie them together.
- Did you discover any literary or poetic devices? If so, give examples and discuss why they are important. Explain what they mean and how they connect the two pieces of writing.
- How does the song complement the scene?

Teachers were struck by how quiet and intent students were. "Each student brought something they liked to this project," say Bauleke and Herrmann. "…All the students were prepared to work. They accepted the rules and proved to be very good about following them."

The following class period, students presented their work, displaying the lyrics and playing their song in the background. The audience was highly attentive and the principal dropped in to listen. Both during the presentation class and subsequently, teachers noticed a higher quality of work, especially on brief constructed responses. Students were much quicker at identifying themes, more adept at analyzing them – and had fun doing it. The project was a resounding success, and teachers are planning to repeat it with other students and in other subject areas.

"Teaching the 'iBored'" by Debra Bauleke and Kathleen Herrmann in *Middle School Journal*, January 2010 (Vol. 41, #3, p. 33-38), e-link for subscribers only; the authors can be reached at debra.bauleke@fcps.org and kathye.herrmann@fcps.org.

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4. Targeted Instruction to Help ELLs Succeed in Content-Area Classes

In this *Middle School Journal* article, University of Utah/Salt Lake City doctoral candidates Naomi Watkins and Kristen Lindahl pose a series of questions aimed at helping teachers get ELLs to participate in literacy activities with English-speaking classmates and develop the language skills they need to understand the content:

- *Background knowledge* – What background knowledge do students have, and what do they need? Ideas:
    - Give students time to think-pair-share before working independently;
    - Incorporate references and connections to native-language culture and language.
- *Motivation* – What can help students try hard when reading challenging texts? Ideas:
    - Allow students to decide which questions to answer;
    - Group students based on their interests;
    - Include references and connections to native-language culture and language.
- *Reading comprehension* – What reading abilities do students have? What parts of texts will pose the biggest challenges? What skill gaps do students have that need to be filled? How can instruction be modified and scaffolded to increase students' success? Ideas:
    - Allow students to make drawings as responses;
    - Chunk longer readings;
    - Draw attention to text structure and text features;
    - Present question stems when summarizing;
    - Rephrase complicated language;
    - Supplement text with explanatory visuals;
    - Supply graphic organizers to organize textual information;
    - Use flexible grouping by readiness and native language;
    - Use multiple and varied text options;
    - Boldface or underline key words.
- *Vocabulary* – What words do students need to know to understand the text, access content knowledge, and complete assignments? Ideas:
    - Post word banks and word walls;
    - Rephrase complicated language;
    - Allow responses in the native language.
- *Oral fluency* – How can ELLs build fluency discussing content? Ideas:
    - Place students with partners to read;
    - Present question or sentence stems;
    - Provide pictures for students to arrange and retell the text.
- *The writing process* – How can students who are not proficient English writers respond to texts? Ideas:
    - Let students respond orally instead of in writing;
    - Offer Cloze note-taking activities;
    - Present process steps for challenging tasks such as summarizing;
    - Present question and sentence stems;

- Supply graphic organizers to organize textual information and encourage students to create their own.

Using a seventh-grade social studies unit on the ancient Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta as an example, Watkins and Lindahl then give suggestions for effective practices that might be implemented before, during, and after reading

• *Before reading* – Students respond to this prompt in their journals: *If you had a time machine and were able to visit the future, what would you tell the people about daily life in our city? What do people do for work? Where do they shop? What do they do in their free time? What other things about life in our city would you tell people living in the future?* Students are then asked to think about their purpose for reading: How does life in their city compare to life in ancient Greece? How was life similar and different in Athens than in Sparta? Think-pair-sharing and having ELLs use their native country rather than "our city" would make this even more vivid for them and give them practice using academic English and validate their culture and knowledge.

• *During reading* – Students work in pairs, taking turns being the "reader" and the "coach." Both read the first paragraph silently, then the reader summarizes the paragraph aloud and the coach asks clarifying questions. They reverse roles on the second paragraph, and so on. When finished with the passage, both students cooperatively summarize the main idea of the text, with particular reference to the purpose-setting questions. For ELLs, oral reading may be stressful, so Watkins and Lindahl recommend taking special care with how students are paired – it could be ELLs working with ELLs or ELLs paired with native English speakers. For summarizing, a particularly challenging task, ELLs might need prompts and question frames to help students zero in on the main content. For unfamiliar vocabulary, a word bank would be helpful.

• *After reading* – Students complete a three-circle Venn diagram comparing life in their own city, Sparta, and Athens and share their product with the class. To support ELLs in this activity, a vocabulary word wall would be especially helpful. The teacher might also add a fourth circle to the Venn diagram for the characteristics of ELLs' native city or country. ELLs might need extra assistance with vocabulary and fluency for their oral presentations to classmates.

While these practices take extra time to prepare and implement, Watkins and Lindahl believe they reduce teacher and student frustration and benefit all students, not just ELLs.

"Targeting Content Area Instruction to Meet the Needs of Adolescent English Language Learners" by Naomi Watkins and Kristen Lindahl in *Middle School Journal*, January 2010 (Vol. 41, #3, p. 23-32), e-link for subscribers only; Watkins is at naomiwatkins@gmail.com and Lindahl at Kristin.schaub@utah.edu.

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5. Why Do So Many Students Hit the Wall in College Calculus?

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* opinion piece, Macalester College math professor David Bressoud argues that the phenomenal growth of AP Calculus-taking in

American high schools is not the good-news story it appears to be. "Each year," he says, "hundreds of thousands of our best first-year college students are precluded from careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics because they fail to advance beyond AP calculus." Here are some statistics:

- 160,000 students scored 3 or higher on AP Calculus in 2005.
- Many more took International Baccalaureate Calculus that year.
- But only 104,000 students enrolled in Calculus II in college in the Fall of 2005.
- This was a 20% drop in Calculus II enrollment in all colleges from 1995.

There's a lot of finger-pointing going on. College math professors blame ineffective math teaching in high schools and pushing unprepared students into calculus. High-school educators blame outdated pedagogy in college classrooms – lectures and a failure to engage students in active learning.

But the problem may actually lie in a curriculum misalignment between high-school and college calculus. High-school Calculus AB is supposed to correspond to college Calculus I, which was originally designed as an overview, covering most of the common techniques and applications of differentiation and integration, with Calculus II revisiting those topics in greater depth. But Calculus I has evolved into a more difficult course in most colleges, delving into more theoretical and sophisticated treatment of differential calculus. Most AP Calculus courses focus on algorithms and procedures rather than understanding. As a result, most students are no longer prepared to be successful in Calculus II in college (except for a few very high-achieving students in elite high schools). Even students who retake Calculus I in college "get slammed mid-semester when the level of sophistication required turns out to be higher than expected," says Bressoud. "Few of those students recover to complete the course or continue studies in mathematics."

What is to be done? Bressoud believes that high schools and colleges need to make changes, and suggests the following:

• *Gather information about what happens to students who take high-school calculus*. Are they successful in college calculus? How many re-take Calculus I, and how do they do? How many never take another calculus course – and why? How important is taking calculus in high school to math success in college?

• *Establish and enforce guidelines for high-school programs offering calculus*. "[C]alculus offered in high school must be designed to facilitate success in college mathematics for all students who take it, rather than creating obstacles for all but the very best," says Bressoud.

• *Re-examine first-year college mathematics*. Colleges should design courses for students who studied calculus in high school but aren't yet ready for college-level calculus – "a course that acknowledges and builds on what they have learned while preparing them for further mathematics," says Bressoud. "Some students take calculus in high school with the intention of avoiding mathematics in college. Departments of mathematics need courses that entice, engage, and encourage those students… [T]here is no reason why statistics, linear algebra, geometry, or discrete mathematics cannot be used instead of calculus as a bridge to

higher-level mathematics… We need engaging, intellectually satisfying courses that will inspire students to continue their study of mathematics."

"The Rocky Transition from High-School Calculus" by David Bressoud in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Jan. 22, 2010 (Vol. LVI, #19, p. A80), no e-link

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6. Short Items:

a. Another Rosling masterpiece – In this TED lecture with extraordinary animated PowerPoint graphics, Hans Rosling compares the health and wealth of China, India, Japan, the U.K., and the United States starting in 1858 and projects when the East will overtake the West. Must viewing!
http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_asia_s_rise_how_and_when.html
Recorded November 2009

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b. Foreign language video clips – This website, sponsored by the ViewPoints Project of the Five Colleges of Ohio Consortium, has clips of native speakers discussing their family, daily life, and culture: http://www.ohio5.org/Conv.html
"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, January 2010 (Vol. 5, #1, p. 60)

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c. Exploring French art – Décod'Art guides students through a gallery of French art, explaining, comparing, and analyzing the works, with a quiz at the end:
http://www.curiosphere.tv/decodart/home.html

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, January 2010 (Vol. 5, #1, p. 60)

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d. Spanish language practice online – This site has vocabulary exercises – thematic, lexical problems, crosswords, and a hangman game, as well as listening exercises with news reports, cultural videos, movie trailers, songs, ad messages, and information campaigns:
http://www.ver-taal.com

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, January 2010 (Vol. 5, #1, p. 61)

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e. Teaching medieval Islam – This Kidipede website has ideas for projects about historic Islam, including clothes, food, polo, archery, and chess:
http://www.historyforkids.org/crafts/islam.htm

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, January 2010 (Vol. 5, #1, p. 61)

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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).

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- How to change access e-mail or password

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Catalyst Chicago
Chronicle of Higher Education
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
New York Times
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
The Atlantic Monthly
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools/The Learning Principal