Marshall Memo 438

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
May 28, 2012

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Preventing reading difficulties early in a child's education is a primary goal for educators as well as for society."
Robert Schwartz, Mary Lose, and Maribeth Schmitt (see item #8)

"[I]n many ways, the modern classroom is the quiet kid's worst nightmare."
Robert Coplan (quoted it item #5)

"Procrastination is not always bad. Sometimes the work you put off doing is better left undone. And sometimes the best ideas just come late."
David Perlmutter (see item #4)

"When good teachers stumble they figure out what went wrong, get up, dust themselves off, and teach again with solutions in mind."
David Perlmutter (*ibid*.)

"If you think you can't improve because you're not naturally charismatic, you're wrong."
John Antonakis, Marika Fenley, and Sue Liechti (see item #1)

"Is this the end? Are Robo-Readers destined to inherit the earth?"
Michael Winerip (see item #6)

1. What Does It Take to Be a Charismatic Leader?

In this *Harvard Business Review* article, John Antonakis (University of Lausanne professor), Marika Fenley (leadership consultant), and Sue Liechti (organizational development consultant) ask whether charisma – the ability to communicate a clear, visionary, and inspirational message that captivates and motivates an audience – can be learned. "After all, you can't teach someone to be Winston Churchill," they say.

It's true that some people seem to be born with extraordinary charisma, say Antonakis, Fenley, and Liechti, but they believe there is a set of charismatic leadership tactics (CLTs) that others who are less naturally gifted can acquire if they're willing to make the effort. "Just as athletes rely on hard training and the right game plan to win a competition," they say, "leaders who want to become charismatic must study the CLTs, practice them religiously, and have a good deployment strategy."

Charisma is a combination of what Aristotle called *logos* (powerful and reasoned rhetoric), *ethos* (personal and moral credibility), and *pathos* (rousing followers' emotions and passions). "If a leader can do these three things well, he or she can then tap into the hopes and ideals of followers, give them a sense of purpose, and inspire them to achieve great things," say Antonakis, Fenley, and Liechti. Their research has broken charisma into twelve components, nine of them verbal, three of them non-verbal. There are others – creating a sense of urgency, invoking history, using repetition, talking about sacrifice, and using humor – but the twelve below are the most effective:

• *Metaphors, similes, and analogies* – For example, in his "I Have a Dream" speech, Martin Luther King Jr. likened the Constitution to a "promissory note" and said black Americans had been given a "bad check" that had come back marked "insufficient funds."

• *Stories and anecdotes* – A business manager rallied her troops during the recent economic downturn by telling of her struggle to survive when her team was caught in bad weather climbing the Eiger peak. "We could have died up there," she said, "but working together, we managed to survive."

• *Contrasts* – "Ask not what your country can do for you," said John F. Kennedy in his 1961 inaugural address, "ask what you can do for your country."

• *Rhetorical questions* – A manager asked an underperforming subordinate, "So, where do you want to go from here? Will it be back to your office feeling sorry for yourself? Or do you want to show what you are capable of achieving?"

• *Three-part lists* – A manufacturing company division head said to her staff, "We can turn this around with a three-point strategy: First, we need to look back and see what we did right. Next, we need to see where we went wrong. Then, we need to come up with a plan that will convince the board to give us the resources to get it right the next time." Why three? Most people can remember three things, three gives proof of a pattern, and three gives the impression of completeness.

• *Expressions of moral conviction* – At the end of World War II, Winston Churchill said to his people, "This is your hour. This is not victory of a party or of any class. It's a victory of the great British nation as a whole. We were the first, in this ancient island, to draw the sword against tyranny… There we stood, alone. The lights went out and the bombs came down. But every man, woman, and child in the country had no thought of quitting the struggle… Now we have emerged from one deadly struggle – a terrible foe has been cast on the ground and awaits our judgment and our mercy."

• *Statements that reflect the sentiments of the group* – An IT director said this to his disheartened team: "I know what is going through your minds, because the same thing is going through mine. We all feel disappointed and demotivated. Some of you have told me you have had sleepless nights; others, that there are tensions in the team, even at home because of this. Personally, life to me has become dull and tasteless. I know how hard we have all worked and the bitterness we feel because success just slipped out of our reach. But it's not going to be like this for much longer. I have a plan."

• *Setting high goals* – In 1998, a time when cathode-ray televisions dominated the market, Katsuhiko Machida energized Sharp, his struggling company, by saying, "By 2005, all TVs we sell in Japan will be LCD models."

• *Confidence that the goals can be achieved* – Gandhi, leading his people against British rule, said, "Even if all the United Nations opposes me, even if the whole of India forsakes me, I will say, 'You are wrong. India will wrench with nonviolence her liberty from unwilling hands.' I will go ahead not for India's sake alone but for the sake of the world. Even if my eyes close before there is freedom, nonviolence will not end."

The last three charismatic leadership tactics don't come naturally to everyone, say Antonakis, Fenley, and Liechti, and they're the most culturally sensitive (what works in one country doesn't in another):

• *Animated voice* – Emotions like sadness, happiness, excitement, surprise must show in one's voice. Effective speakers go from a whisper to a crescendo and use pauses for dramatic effect.

• *Facial expressions* – "Listeners need to see as well as hear your passion," say the authors, "especially when you're telling a story or reflecting their sentiments." And eye contact is very important.

• *Gestures* – "A fist can reinforce confidence, power, and certitude," say the authors. "Waving a hand, pointing, or pounding a desk can help draw attention."

"If you think you can't improve because you're not naturally charismatic," conclude the authors, "you're wrong… It's true that no amount of training and practice will turn you into

Churchill or Martin Luther King Jr. But the CLTs can make you more charismatic in the eyes of your followers, and that will invariably make you a more effective leader."

"Learning Charisma: Transform Yourself Into a Person Others Want to Follow" by John Antonakis, Marika Fenley, and Sue Liechti in *Harvard Business Review*, June 2012 (Vol. 90, #6, p. 127-130), no e-link

Back to page one

2. New Skills That Leaders Must Acquire

In this thoughtful *Harvard Business Review* article, consultant and IMD professor Michael Watkins describes "seven seismic shifts" that leaders must make when they are promoted from narrow functional responsibilities to leading an entire enterprise.

• *Specialist to generalist* – The challenge is quickly learning the mental models, tools, and vocabulary of a number of different units in the organization. The danger is over-managing those within one's comfort zone and under-managing the others. "Leaders must be able to speak the language of all the functions and translate for them when necessary," says Watkins. "And critically, leaders must know the right questions to ask and the right metrics for evaluating and recruiting people to manage areas in which they themselves are not experts."

• *Analyst to integrator* – A leader must go beyond analyzing the specifics of a particular area and make decisions based what's good for the entire organization. "The skills required have less to do with analysis and more to do with understanding how to make trade-offs and explain the rationale for those decisions," says Watkins.

• *Tactician to strategist* – It's easy for a newly appointed leader to get lost in the weeds of meetings and day-to-day decisions and fail to develop big-picture strategies. Watkins says new leaders need to learn: (a) level shifting – knowing when to focus on details, when to focus on the big picture, and seeing the links between them; (b) pattern recognition (seeing important causal relationships and separating the signal from the noise); and (c) mental simulation (anticipating how various parties will respond to what you do, predicting their actions and reactions, and deciding on the best course of action).

• *Bricklayer to architect* – "As leaders move up to the enterprise level, they become responsible for designing and altering the architecture of their organization," says Watkins, "– its strategy, structure, processes, and skill bases. To be effective organizational architects, they need to think in terms of systems. They must understand how the key elements of the organization fit together and not naively believe… that they can alter one element without thinking through the implications for all the others."

• *Problem solver to agenda setter* – Leaders are often chosen because they are good at solving problems, but when they become organizational leaders, they "must focus less on solving problems and more on defining which problems the organization should be tackling," says Watkins. The array of problems and opportunities is "head-spinning", and the leader's challenge is to set the agenda, make good decisions, and delegate responsibility appropriately.

• *Warrior to diplomat* – Many leaders' previous experience in the trenches doesn't prepare them to deal at the strategic level with multiple stakeholders. To do that well, they

need to develop their skills at negotiation, persuasion, conflict management, and alliance building.

• *Supporting cast member to lead role* – Top leaders must quickly get used to being in the limelight, which requires keeping one's guard up at all times. "Managers at all levels are role models to some degree," says Watkins. "But at the enterprise level, their influence is magnified, as everyone looks to them for vision, inspiration, and cues about the 'right' behaviors and attitudes. For good or ill, the personal styles and quirks of senior leaders are infectious, whether they are observed directly by employees or indirectly transmitted from their reports to the level below and on down through the organization." A vital skill is developing self-awareness and taking the time to be empathetic with what subordinates are thinking and feeling.

"How Managers Become Leaders: Seven Seismic Shifts of Perspective and Responsibility" by Michael Watkins in *Harvard Business Review*, June 2012 (Vol. 90, #6, p. 64-72), no e-link

Back to page one

3. A "Conversational" Leadership Style

"Smart leaders today, we have found, engage with employees in a way that resembles an ordinary person-to-person conversation more than it does a series of commands from on high," say Boris Groysberg (Harvard Business School) and Michael Slind (author and communications consultant) in this *Harvard Business Review* article. They go on to describe four key elements of these conversations:

• *Intimacy: getting close* – To be effective, institutional conversations should minimize distances – institutional, attitudinal, and spatial – that separate the boss from subordinates. Closeness "shifts the focus from top-down distribution of information to a bottom-up exchange of ideas," say Groysberg and Slind. It depends, of course, on leaders building trust by being straightforward and authentic; listening well, with curiosity and humility; and regularly getting anonymous feedback on performance.

• *Interactivity: promoting dialogue* – This means getting past monologues (in person or in print) and "embracing the unpredictable vitality of dialogue," say the authors. They also recommend using social media, which allow for the kind of two-way communication that's impossible with traditional media.

• *Inclusion: expanding employees' roles* – These conversations and social-media dialogues allow employees to be content providers, contributing ideas and insights to the general good. If this is working well, employees are "brand ambassadors", thought leaders, and storytellers. "When employees speak from their own experience, unedited, the message comes to life," say Groysberg and Slind.

• *Intentionality: pursuing an agenda* – Without a clear purpose, conversations can meander and waste time, say the authors. Leaders should do a good job explaining vision, strategy, and the logic behind decisions so employees are conversant with them and can contribute – or push back – with knowledge of the big picture.

"Leadership Is a Conversation" by Boris Groysberg and Michael Slind in *Harvard Business Review*, June 2012 (Vol. 90, #6, p. 76-84), no e-link

Back to page one

4. When Procrastination Makes Sense – and When It Doesn't

"Procrastination is not always bad," says University of Iowa professor David Perlmutter in this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article. "Sometimes the work you put off doing is better left undone. And sometimes the best ideas just come late." But in general, he says, procrastination is not helpful: "Put off everything until the last minute, and you will perennially fall behind, disappoint others, and hurt your reputation. So learn when it's OK to be late, and when you're only hurting yourself." Here are his suggestions:

• *Know the real deadline*. Some grant proposals won't be accepted if they are a minute late. Other deadlines are less rigid and even negotiable ("I'll have it finished in a week. Is that okay?"). The key is knowing the difference. Perlmutter suggests creating mini-deadlines for big projects and putting ticklers in an electronic calendar for each stage.

• *Be clear about the level of quality required*. Perfectionism is one reason people procrastinate – we want to keep working on a project until it's flawless. But at some point it's time to let it go. "We have lots of work to get done, every day," says Perlmutter, "and the world cannot wait for us to get it just right." He once said to an instructor who was berating himself for less-than-perfect teaching, "When good teachers stumble they figure out what went wrong, get up, dust themselves off, and teach again with solutions in mind."

• *Put everything in a master plan*. "We all underestimate how much time and effort it takes to do anything worth doing," says Perlmutter. He recommends creating a comprehensive plan for all projects and major activities, being sure to include everything and budget time realistically.

• *Expect the unexpected*. "An experiment fails or a homework assignment proves too confusing for the students," says Perlmutter. "Your child comes down with chicken pox or a major service project is dropped in your lap. Sometimes there's nothing you can do when confronted with the unexpected but revise your plans." Which suggests we should build in extra time for contingencies.

• *Recognize when to cut your losses*. "Knowing when to quit one project, walk away, and start a new one is a key survival skill in our trade," says Perlmutter. "When you find yourself continuously stymied, when problem after problem delays you, when you seem to have lost your enthusiasm for some venture, maybe you *should* just give up.… [S]ome of the world's most successful people – whether inventors, military strategists, politicians, or entrepreneurs – have learned that quitting can be a smart move."

• *Sometimes procrastination is the right choice*. A project that you abandoned for good reason can suddenly become relevant and worth pursuing a few years later.

• *Dare to be early*. Finishing work early can endear you to superiors, give you extra time to review your work before the actual deadline, and leave time for your family and leisure pursuits.

"Varieties of Procrastination" by David Perlmutter in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 25, 2012 (Vol. LVIII, #37, p. A39-A40),
http://chronicle.com/article/Varieties-of-Procrastination/131904/
Back to page one

5. Helping Quiet Children Get the Most Out of School

In this thoughtful *Education Week* article, Sarah Sparks reports on new research about quiet students. "Whoever designed the context of the modern classroom was certainly not thinking of the shy or quiet kids," says Robert Coplan of Carleton University in Canada. "[I]n many ways, the modern classroom is the quiet kid's worst nightmare." Why? Because many classrooms are crowded, highly stimulating, put a premium on oral performance, and tacitly assume that being an extrovert is the norm. Teachers may believe that it's their job to help introverted students come out of their shells and turn them into extroverts.

Rapid-fire question-and-answer sessions are an example of this, says Susan Cain, author of *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* (Random House, 2012): "So if a teacher asks a question and the person doesn't answer right away, the most common thing is the teacher doesn't have time to sit and wait, but has to go on to someone else – and in the back of their head might think that child is not as intelligent or didn't do his homework."

According to one study, as many as half of Americans are introverts, defined as being uncomfortable with a high level of stimulation and drawing energy from working or learning in an environment with less social stimulation. Introversion is not the same as shyness – being fearful or anxious about social contact. Shy people, once they overcome their fears, can turn out to be extroverts, reveling with being the center of attention. The distinction between introversion and shyness can be observed in children as young as four: shy kids stand anxiously on the periphery of a group of unfamiliar children, whereas introverted kids play happily on their own. "It seems clear," say Coplan and Cain, "that 'solitude' is an insufficient criterion for characterizing children as 'socially withdrawn.'"

Introverted students usually get less attention from teachers than their extroverted classmates. "The kids who are bouncing around the room and punching people in the face need to be addressed right away," says Coplan. "In a classroom of limited resources, that's where the resources go." Interestingly, the tradeoff isn't entirely one-sided:

- Not participating in class discussions and oral interactions means that quiet students get less value from this kind of instruction.
- On the other hand, quiet students often do better on standardized tests because they spend more time and get more practice working independently.
- On the third hand, if quiet students don't work with other students on projects, they're unprepared for workplaces where teamwork is essential.

In the outside world, scientists, engineers, and other technical workers must be able to collaborate with colleagues *and* work quietly by themselves. Schools need to prepare all students for both modalities.

Studies of college classrooms have found that in large groups, vocal students tend to dominate, even when they don't know the right answer. "There are many situations in which so much talk is not helpful, and if there is so much talk, there is less time to sit back and think," says Diana Senechal, a former New York City teacher and author of *Republic of Noise: The Loss of Solitude in Schools and Culture* (Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2011). "Those times of not entering the conversation – listening to what other say, thinking about it – can be very important." Time for listening and contemplation is especially important in history classes, says Senechal, and she urges teachers to keep discussions going after the initial contributions by highly verbal students and invite quiet students to chime in. Clickers and online discussions are another way to allow these students to participate.

The City Neighbors Charter School in Baltimore is intentional about creating an introvert-friendly environment. "We start with play-based kindergarten and give increased independence and autonomy each year that you are in school," says executive director Bobbi MacDonald. "It used to be everyone is seated at their desks in a row, and everyone is supposed to be thinking the same thing at the same time. Those days are gone. When an individual needs a minute, it's not unusual for that student to find a space." Classrooms in the school have a mix of desks, tables, and small reading nooks with soft chairs and students often work on projects in small groups. The school makes a point of keeping groups small (two or three students) and assigning roles (team leader, time-keeper, note-taker) so quiet students make a contribution.

City Neighbors requires all students to read 25 books a year and conference one-on-one with a teacher after finishing each book. "Somewhere in that 25 the child will find that one book that they love," says MacDonald, "and when that happens, the teacher is right there waiting for them."

"Studies Highlight Classroom Plight of Quiet Students" by Sarah Sparks in *Education Week*, May 23, 2012 (Vol. 31, #32, p. 1, 16),
www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/05/23/32introvert_ep.h31.html

Back to page one

6. Can Computers Score Student Writing As Accurately As Humans?

In this *New York Times* column, Michael Winerip reports on a recent finding that computers can compete with humans in scoring student essays. Mark Shermis of the University of Akron collected 16,000 secondary-school essays that had been hand-scored by teachers and fed them through automated grading systems developed by nine different companies. Computer scoring produced "virtually identical levels of accuracy, with the software in some cases proving to be more reliable," according to a news release. An even bigger advantage was speed. Human graders can assess about 30 essays an hour. One of the computer systems (e-Rater from the Educational Testing Service) can grade 16,000 essays in 20 seconds!

"Is this the end?" asks Winerip. "Are Robo-Readers destined to inherit the earth?" Not so fast, says Les Perelman, director of writing at M.I.T., who was given access to e-Rater, the computer scoring system developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS). He concluded that automated readers are easy for students to game, are vulnerable to test prep, set a very limited

and rigid standard for what good writing is, and might pressure teachers to dumb down writing instruction. The biggest problem is that computer readers can't discern truth from nonsense. "E-Rater doesn't care if you say the War of 1812 started in 1945," says Perelman. The software looks only at whether a fact is part of a well-structured sentence. The substance of an argument doesn't matter, he says, as long as it looks to the computer as if it's well-argued.

To prove the point, Perelman fed an essay into e-Rater in which he said that the number one reason for high college costs was excessive pay for greedy teaching assistants. "The average teaching assistant makes six times as much money as college presidents," he wrote. "In addition, they often receive a plethora of extra benefits such as private jets, vacations in the south seas, and starring roles in motion pictures." He even threw in a line from Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" just to see if he could get away with it. E-Rater gave Perelman's essay the top score of 6.

Perelman also found that the software gives more points for longer essays. He submitted a 716-word essay with more than a dozen nonsensical sentences and got a 6. A well-argued, well-written essay of 567 words got a 5. "Once you understand e-Rater's biases," he says, "it's not hard to raise your test score." E-Rater doesn't like short sentences, sentence fragments, short paragraphs, or sentences beginning with "or." E-Rater likes connectors, like "however", and big words.

In fairness to ETS, says Winerip, it was the only company to give Perelman access to its product. And ETS officials defended their system. "E-Rater is not designed to be a fact checker," said Paul Deane, a research scientist. It's best used to give students rapid feedback on drafts so they can improve them before submitting a final draft to a teacher. ETS says that for high-stakes situations (like the Graduate Record Exam), e-Rater is always backed up by a human scorer.

As for being biased in favor of longer essays, Deane argued that good writers have internalized the skills that make them more fluent and are therefore able to write more in a limited amount of time.

On Perelman's point about test prep, ETS officials contend that his advice on how to game the e-Rater is too complex for most students to absorb, and if they can, they're demonstrating the very kind of high-level thinking the program is designed to pick up. "In other words," says Winerip, "if they're smart enough to master such sophisticated test prep, they deserve a 6."

"Facing a Robo-Grader? No Worries. Just Keep Obfuscating Mellifluously" by Michael Winerip in *The New York Times*, Apr. 23, 2012 (p. A11), http://nyti.ms/HZlqlj

Back to page one

7. Reading Recovery, Small-Group Instruction, and RTI

"Preventing reading difficulties early in a child's education is a primary goal for educators as well as for society," say Robert Schwartz and Mary Lose (Oakland University) and Maribeth Schmitt (Purdue University) in this *Elementary School Journal* article. Reading Recovery, an intensive literacy intervention for struggling first graders that uses highly trained

teachers for one-on-one instruction, is an effective part of a school's Response to Intervention (RTI) strategy. One study found that only 2% of at-risk students in a Reading Recovery school needed special-education services as second graders, compared to 66% of at-risk students in a school that used conventional instruction and small-group remediation.

But Reading Recovery's per-student price tag had led many educators to explore other less-expensive interventions, including small-group instruction by Reading Recovery teachers and one-on-one instruction by less intensively trained educators. In a 1994 study, Pinnell et al. studied the impact on children's reading achievement of teachers trained in Reading Recovery and other configurations with different numbers of students. Here are students' post-test text reading levels:

- Reading Recovery-trained teachers working one on one with students – 10.58
- Reading Recovery-trained teachers working with groups of 3-5 students – 6.25
- Teachers with abbreviated Reading Recovery training working one on one – 5.95
- Teachers using direct instruction working one on one with students – 4.31
- Standard Title I small-group instruction (the control group) – 4.72

The "pure" Reading Recovery treatment (first on the list above) was the only one in which these high-risk students did well on all four assessments used and the only one in which students demonstrated sustained gains at the beginning of second grade.

Another study conducted in 2007 by Burroughs-Lange and Douetil in London schools serving disadvantaged students found a 14-month difference in reading age norms at the end of first grade between students who had Reading Recovery and those who had standard remediation with teaching assistants. The Reading Recovery students had an end-of-year text reading level of 15 while the control group had an average text reading level of 4.4.

Schwartz, Lose, and Schmitt conducted their own study comparing student outcomes of Reading Recovery teachers working one on one and with groups of 2, 3, and 5 students. Similar to the 1994 study described above, they found significant differences in post-test text reading levels between one-on-one and small-group instruction:

- Reading Recovery-trained teachers working one on one with students – 11.62
- Reading Recovery-trained teachers working with groups of 2-5 students – 8.37

Here are the percentages of students reading at text level 10 or above at the end of the intervention period:

- Reading Recovery-trained teachers working one on one with students – 61%
- Reading Recovery-trained teachers working with groups of 2 students – 38%
- Reading Recovery-trained teachers working with groups of 3 students – 26%
- Reading Recovery-trained teachers working with groups of 5 students – 19%

"Based on this analysis," conclude the authors, "it appears that the 1:1 treatment is the only condition that reduces the percentage of students who are at risk by reducing the gap between those initially low-performing students and their average peers."

The authors go on to say that, while Reading Recovery is the best intervention for at-risk first graders, other interventions work for students with less severe deficits. Each school, they say, should put together the most effective combination, keeping in mind these variables:

- Teachers' professional expertise;
- Teacher-student ratio;
- Students' entering literacy levels;
- The timing of the interventions available.

"No one approach to intervention on behalf of struggling readers will work for all students," conclude Schwartz, Lose, and Schmitt. "A comprehensive approach to early intervention that combines individual and small-group components can support educational opportunity for all children… The mix of individual and small-group services should be sufficient to reduce the achievement gap across first grade… The question is not whether individual, small-group, or classroom instruction is most effective; it is clear that all are essential. Rather, an RTI approach should focus on how best to achieve optimum literacy outcomes for all learners, in a timely manner and based on their individual needs."

"Effects of Teacher-Student Ratio in Response to Intervention Approaches" by Robert Schwartz, Mary Lose, and Maribeth Schmitt in *Elementary School Journal*, June 2012 (Vol. 112, #4, p. 547-567),

Back to page one

8. When Pre-teaching Is Helpful and When It's Not

In this article in *Principal Leadership*, San Diego State University professors Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey say there are times when pre-teaching (frontloading) key information is necessary – students lack important background knowledge – and times when it isn't. "The peril of pre-teaching is that in many cases, it can actually make learning more difficult because the learner hasn't been primed to know the value of the new information," say Fisher and Frey. "Sometimes it's better to let students struggle a bit… [L]earning is not error-free, and sometimes an educator's job is to provoke those errors and then teach toward rectifying them." In addition, diving right into the content can introduce an element of excitement and suspense, with students wondering how the experiment or story will turn out.

Fisher and Frey believe there are two types of lessons where pre-teaching is not a good idea:

• *Inquiry-based instruction* – In such lessons, the whole point is for students to uncover information through carefully planned learning experiences. For example, in a U.S. history class on the 1929 stock market crash, students took different roles – wealthy investor, common investor, broker, banker – and monitored the worth of their portfolios as they heard actual news bulletins on the status of the market. "It was amazing to watch all my money evaporate," said one student afterward. "I was doing OK in the market at first, and then, just like that, it was gone. I hope the government has better rules now so that doesn't happen to people." This simulation would not have been nearly as effective with a lot of pre-teaching.

• *Close reading of complex text* – "When students must carefully read a piece of text and dig deeply into the meaning, teachers should not pre-teach content," say Fisher and Frey. "Like inquiry, the goal of close reading is for students themselves to figure out what is confusing and to identify resources that they can use to address their confusion. It is essential

that they develop the metacognition required to understand difficult text." For example, a history teacher had students read George Washington's farewell address several times over several days, gradually unpacking and investigating what he was saying and why it was so important. If this teacher had done a lot of pre-teaching, students might have dispensed with reading the actual speech and paid attention only to what the teacher told them about it.

"The Perils of Pre-teaching" by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey in *Principal Leadership*, May 2012 (Vol. 12, #9, p. 84-86), http://bit.ly/KzDTZf; the authors can be reached at dfisher@mail.sdsu.edu and nfrey@mail.sdsu.edu.

Back to page one

9. Short Items:

a. Constitution contest – Constituting America is sponsoring a contest on the U.S. Constitution. Middle-school students can submit a song or essay and high-school students can also create a short film or public-service announcement. Winners receive recognition, prizes, and scholarships, and high-school winners can win a trip to a historic city on September 17th. The contest deadline is July 4th. Details at http://www.constitutingamerica.org/downloads.php.

"Bulletin Board: We the People" in *Principal Leadership*, May 2012 (Vol. 12, #9, p. 6)

Back to page one

b. Active math games – In this article in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, Andrea Christie Elkin recommends a website with simple activities to encourage mathematics and physical activity in the classroom: http://www.yourtherapysource.com/freestuff.html.

"Students Hop, Skip, and Jump Their Way to Understanding" by Andrea Christie Elkin in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, May 2012 (Vol. 18, #9, p. 524), http://www.nctm.org.

Back to page one

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.marshall48@gmail.com

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 43 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and writer, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 44 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are about 50 issues a year).

Subscriptions:

Individual subscriptions are $50 for the school year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and information on paying by check or credit card.

Website:

If you go to http://www.marshallmemo.com you will find detailed information on:

- How to subscribe or renew
- A detailed rationale for the Marshall Memo
- Publications (with a count of articles from each)
- Article selection criteria
- Topics (with a count of articles from each)
- Headlines for all issues
- What readers say
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

Marshall Memo subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

- The current issue (in PDF or Word format)
- All back issues (also in PDF or Word)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- How to change access e-mail or log-in

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Better Evidence-Based Education
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
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
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
The Atlantic Monthly
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
The School Administrator
Theory Into Practice