

# Marshall Memo 595

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education

July 13, 2015

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## Quotes of the Week

“If we want to reduce poverty, one of the simplest, fastest, and cheapest things we could do would be to make sure that as few people as possible become parents before they actually want to.”

Isabel Sawhill, Brookings Institution economist, quoted in “Colorado Finds Startling Success in Effort to Curb Teenage Births” by Sabrina Tavernise in *The New York Times*, July 7, 2015, <http://nyti.ms/1DbCWzB>

“Illiteracy, whether willful or unwitting, creates isolation from power... Literacy in the culture confers power, or at least access to power.”

Eric Liu (see item #1)

“The takeaway message is clear: Handwriting needs to be returned to the elementary language-arts curriculum.”

Ray Reutzel (see item #4)

“It was noted at a staff meeting, ‘Oh, teacher A and B in grade 3 – let’s give them a round of applause. Their kids did so well. They were 10 points above the rest of the team.’ Yay, teacher A and B! And teachers C D, E, and F were sitting there going, ‘I hate you.’”

A teacher in Texas after benchmark testing (see item #3)

“You just need to teach harder.”

A statement in a Texas PD session preparing teachers for a new state test (*ibid.*)

“Hiring principals who have the ability to identify organizational weaknesses, establish school-wide systems to support teachers and students, and galvanize the collective buy-in and involvement of all teachers is a central lever for improving the teaching and learning environment.”

John Papay and Matthew Kraft (see item #2)

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## 1. Creating an Updated, Online, Crowd-Sourced “Core Knowledge” List

In this article in *The Atlantic*, Eric Liu (Citizen University and The Aspen Institute) recalls E.D. Hirsch’s 1987 list of 5,000 names, phrases, dates, and concepts that every educated American should know. The list was an appendix to Hirsch’s book, *Cultural Literacy*, in which he argued that schools need to teach a common set of cultural terms and schema to bind a diverse nation together and give the less-advantaged a shot at entering the American mainstream. Here’s an example of the amount of background knowledge required to understand a single sentence: *One hundred and fifty years after Appomattox, our house remains deeply divided.*

- Appomattox is both a place and an event.
- It marked the end of the American Civil War.
- That war was fought during the presidency of Abraham Lincoln.
- He famously declared that “a house divided against itself cannot stand.”
- The divisions that led to the Civil War were largely about slavery.
- Some of today’s divisions are over slavery’s political, social, and economic legacies.
- The question implied in the quote is how or whether we will respond to those legacies.

“Illiteracy, whether willful or unwitting, creates isolation from power,” says Liu. “And so any endeavor that makes it easier for those who do not know the memes and themes of American civic life to attain them closes the opportunity gap... That means understanding what’s being said in public, in the media, in colloquial conversation. It means understanding what’s not being said. Literacy in the culture confers power, or at least access to power.”

Hirsch’s list was hotly debated for years. Supporters embraced his argument that cultural illiteracy was a major problem among poor and minority people, and that led to hundreds of “Core Knowledge” schools teaching a grade-by-grade extrapolation of the original list. Critics of cultural literacy pointed out that Hirsch’s choices tilted toward “dead white men” (Cotton Mather, Andrew Mellon, Herman Melville) and a Eurocentric view of history and culture, and that memorizing lists of facts was not a worthwhile educational endeavor.

This raging debate pitted cultural literacy against multiculturalism, but this is a false dichotomy, says Liu. Since well before the formation of our nation, “the United States has been shaped by nonwhites in its mores, political structures, aesthetics, slang, economic practices, cuisine, dress, song, and sensibility.” The relevant metaphor is a kaleidoscope, “reflecting at each turn the presence and influence of peoples generally excluded from traditional histories of American life – and reflecting too the way each of those peoples, whether Apache or Chinese

or Mexican or West African, influenced other peoples in America. Yes, America is foundationally English in its language, traditions of law, social organization, market mindedness, and frames of intellectual reference. But then it is foundationally African as well – in the way African slaves changed American speech and song and civic ideals; in the way slavery itself formed and deformed every aspect of life here, from the wording of the Constitution to the forms of faith to the anxious hypocrisy of the codes of the enslavers and their descendants... Americans have come to see – have chosen to see – that multiculturalism is not at odds with a single common culture; it is a single common culture.”

“A generation of hindsight,” says Liu, “now enables Americans to see that it is indeed necessary for a nation as far-flung and entropic as the United States, one where rising economic inequality begets worsening civic inequality, to cultivate continuously a shared cultural core. A vocabulary. A set of shared referents and symbols. Yet that generational distance now also requires Americans to see that any such core has to be radically reimagined if it’s to be worthy of America’s actual and accelerating diversity.” Liu suggests that we update Hirsch’s 1987 list, casting out what is stale and narrow and adding new terms and ideas.

Liu agrees that just teaching a list can be “the very worst form of rote learning and standardized, mechanized education.” But he argues that if a revitalized list is brought to life by effective teaching and connected to a broader education, it can catalyze discussion, debate, and deeper inquiry and be very helpful in schools. The important job is updating Hirsch’s original list so it captures the new America. Some initial suggestions:

- Fewer English antecedents (the Battle of Trafalgar);
- Fewer grammatical terms (ellipsis);
- Fewer outmoded idioms (tied to his mother’s apron strings);
- New terms (attaching -gate to scandals after Watergate);
- New cultural references (Hindu worship, Korean mores on the treatment of elders);
- Images (ballplayers in internment camps);
- Symbols (*Don’t Tread on Me* flags, *99 Percent* placards, quinceañera dresses);
- Iconic sounds (Marine Corps cadence calls, a sustained Sinatra note);
- Media metaphors (playlists, bookmarks) and pop culture references.

But these edits should not crowd out important historical and cultural items, says Liu. “[E]very voice contains an echo; every echo can be given new voice.” The new list, he says, is not about raising the “self-esteem” of minority and disadvantaged Americans. “It’s about raising the collective knowledge of all – and recognizing that the wealthy, white, and powerful also have blind spots and swaths of ignorance so broad as to keep them dangerously isolated from their countrymen.”

Another change: the new list can’t be in a book and can’t be produced by one person or even a team of wise men and women, says Liu. “It has to be an online, crowd-sourced, and organic document that never stops changing, whose entries are added or pruned, elevated or demoted, according to the wisdom of the network.” Out of this collective effort will emerge a new, prioritized list of “what every American needs to know.” And, taking advantage of the magic of technology, items need to be cross-referenced – for example, clicking on “robber

barons” should lead us to “malefactors of great wealth” (Teddy Roosevelt), “economic royalists” (FDR), and “the 1 percent.”

Liu concludes by inviting readers to send in their top ten list of required knowledge and “illuminating gateways” for everyone from a new immigrant to a member of the power elite. Here is his own list:

- Whiteness
- The Federalist Papers
- The Almighty Dollar
- Organized labor
- Reconstruction
- Nativism
- The American Dream
- The Reagan Revolution
- DARPA
- “A sucker born every minute.”

You can contribute your list at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZN5F92J>.

“What Every American Should Know: Defining Common Cultural Literacy for an Increasingly Diverse Nation” by Eric Liu in *The Atlantic*, July 3, 2015, <http://theatlantic.com/1HYqBEw>

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## **2. The Vital Importance of Schools’ Professional Working Conditions**

In this article from the Albert Shanker Institute, John Papay and Matthew Kraft (Brown University) say that researchers and the lay public aren’t paying enough attention to one of the most important factors in effective teaching and learning: professional working conditions.

“We treat teachers as if their effectiveness is mostly fixed, always portable, and independent of school context,” say Papay and Kraft. “As a result, we rarely complement personnel reforms with organizational reforms that could benefit both teachers and students... Put simply, teachers who work in supportive contexts stay in the classroom longer, and improve at faster rates, than their peers in less-supportive environments.”

These are some of the key environmental factors identified in recent studies of effective schools:

- The quality of relationships among professionals;
- A school culture characterized by trust;
- Opportunities for collaboration among colleagues;
- Supportive and responsive school leadership;
- A fair teacher-evaluation system that provides meaningful feedback;
- Effective professional development;
- Academic and behavioral expectations for students;
- Consistent order and discipline;
- Student support services to attend to students’ social and emotional needs;
- Efforts to engage parents.

Conversely, the high turnover that is common in struggling schools is largely a factor of poor professional working conditions, say Papay and Kraft. In one Massachusetts study, teachers working in schools with poor working conditions were three times as likely to say they were thinking about transferring out as teachers in schools with positive environments.

The people with ability to affect almost all the environmental factors are principals, say Papay and Kraft. “They are the ones who establish these organizational supports and build school-wide cultures. Hiring principals who have the ability to identify organizational weaknesses, establish school-wide systems to support teachers and students, and galvanize the collective buy-in and involvement of all teachers is a central lever for improving the teaching and learning environment.”

“Developing Workplaces Where Teachers Stay, Improve, and Succeed” by John Papay and Matthew Kraft from the Albert Shanker Institute, May 28, 2015, <http://bit.ly/1M628Qm>; the authors can be reached at [john\\_papay@brown.edu](mailto:john_papay@brown.edu) and [mkraft@brown.edu](mailto:mkraft@brown.edu).

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### **3. Unintended Consequences of High-Stakes Testing in Texas**

In this article in *Reading Research Quarterly*, Dennis Davis (University of Texas/San Antonio) and Angeli Willson (St. Mary’s University/San Antonio) describe the transitions Texas educators have made with the introduction of a series of statewide student assessments: TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills), then TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills), and most recently, STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness). “The shift from *basic skills* to *minimum skills* to *academic skills*, then to *knowledge and skills*, and most recently to *academic readiness*,” say Davis and Willson, “implies an upward ratcheting of academic expectations and an effort to ensure closer alignment to college and career preparation.”

Drawing on in-depth interviews, focus groups, and artifacts from elementary and middle-school literacy educators in public schools in south/central Texas, Davis and Willson identify three overarching themes of a test-centric instructional environment:

#### Theme #1: Test preparation:

- *Mandatory annotation strategies* – Teachers frequently used short texts (2-3 pages) photocopied from commercially available test practice workbooks and kits and taught students highly regimented procedures that they were expected to implement whenever they encountered a test item that asked, for example, about main idea or cause and effect. Students were also required to leave tangible evidence on their papers so teachers (and in some cases administrators) could see if they had implemented the strategies. Some examples: underlining and annotation, CSPS (character, setting, problem, solution), and for poetry, TOPCAT (title, organization, paraphrase, clues, attitude, and theme). As one teacher described it, “From day 1, they were starting, hammering it into the kids... three days of reading process, with one story a day.” Even students who didn’t find the mark-up strategies helpful were required to use them, and teachers were called on the carpet by administrators if they didn’t comply. Davis and Willson were especially concerned that students were told, “Use your strategies,” but what

teachers meant was very specific test-prep strategies, not broader conceptual problem-solving.

- *26-line maximum* – The STAAR writing assessments in grades 4 and 7 strictly limit students to one page with 26 lines. Teachers constantly reminded students about this limit. Could students ever write longer compositions in class? Yes, but teachers often said that anything over one page wouldn't count. "This practice appears to rest on the assumption," say Davis and Willson, "that what students learn outside of explicit test preparation instruction will not necessarily prepare them for the actual test because the test requires a different orientation toward the content that runs counter to the learning outcomes of typical reading/writing instruction."

- *Frequent benchmark testing* – Teachers described the heavy security around these practice tests – they were not allowed to break the seal on the test packets until immediately before giving them to students, and had to computer-scan the tests in their first available prep period. Right after that, teachers looked at how their students had done compared to colleagues' students within their school and district. Teachers reported that the benchmark tests, which were created within the district, had low-quality items, instructional alignment problems, no transparency, and took up large amounts of instructional time – in one school, twelve days a year.

- *Public scrutiny of data* – Results from benchmark tests were aggregated, parsed, and put to work in classrooms. Teachers often focused extra help on students who were close to the cut-off, not on "hopeless cases." Teachers' scores were compared to an arbitrary cutoff and ranked across classrooms and schools without respect to student growth or prior achievement. In one school, a district PLC person would project scores on a screen and demand, "Why are they performing this way?" Some administrators praised or reprimanded teachers based on their benchmark test scores, and even in schools where this didn't happen, teachers compared themselves with colleagues and felt badly if they were low on the totem pole.

#### Theme #2: Uncertainties moving to new tests:

- *Increasing rigor* – This was the buzzword as the new STAAR tests loomed on the horizon, and as teachers looked at released items, they believed, as one district PD session put it, "You just need to teach harder" – that is, more intensely, more quickly, covering new areas like poetry and drama (which were rarely tested before). The conceptual difficulty of STAAR items made teachers question some of their previous test-preparation activities, which was seen as good news by some teachers, perhaps as a sign that they could start afresh and teach in more authentic ways. But that hope was dashed when the first year's test results were released and the test-prep regimen again shackled their teaching.

- *Craving sample test items* – Prior to the first year of STAAR, teachers desperately wanted examples of how the new standards would be assessed, but without sample items in some areas, they were uncertain how to proceed. "This sentiment suggests that test-formatted items are thought to communicate the intent of the standards," say Davis and Willson, "or at least to demystify the parts of the standards that really matter." One teacher vented, "Nobody knew what this crazy test contained. Nobody knew how it was set out. But somehow, we were supposed to teach it. It doesn't make sense. How can you teach something you don't know?... I

think halfway through the year, we all felt exhausted. But to me, I felt like I was running in a circle trying to achieve an end that I didn't know what it was.”

Theme #3: Why test prep flourishes even when people know better:

- *No unpleasant surprises for students* – The practices described above are motivated by teachers' earnest desire to spare their students the painful experience of taking a test for which they weren't prepared – and also for teachers to spare themselves the humiliation of poor performance by their students. To this end, teachers worked hard to prepare students for the content, format, language, specific question stems, timing, length, and even the position of desks, frequency of bathroom breaks, and rules for test security.

- *Breaking learning into small pieces* – As teachers tried to prepare their students to do well on STAAR, they fragmented reading and writing instruction into what Davis and Willson call “a minuscule grain size” so each skill could be tagged to a lesson plan, written on the board, and posted on the parent website per school policy – “on the assumption that a single skill can be isolated from the larger process of meaning making,” say Davis and Willson. Some teachers bridled at these requirements; in a small act of resistance, one teacher rarely posted her standards and admitted that she began by deciding what she wanted to teach and then hunted for a matching Texas standard. She did, however, comply with her principal's mandate on documenting standards in her lesson plans. Teachers said that the state standards that weren't assessed in STAAR – including listening, speaking, media, research, and, at grades 3, 5, 6, and 8, writing – were rarely taught.

- *Drawing conclusions from insufficient assessment data* – Students' performance on a single test item was taken as evidence of mastery of a state standard – something Davis and Willson call “largely indefensible.” Teachers were concerned about this, and also the fact that data reports publicly ranking teachers didn't take into account students' before-and-after growth or the number of students with special needs in a particular class. In addition, there was public shaming of teachers and students. One teacher described the following dynamic after a benchmark test: “It was noted at a staff meeting, ‘Oh, teacher A and B in grade 3 – let's give them a round of applause. Their kids did so well. They were 10 points above the rest of the team.’ Yay, teacher A and B! And teachers C D, E, and F were sitting there going, ‘I hate you.’”

Davis and Willson conclude with these words: “Our findings solidify our concern that test preparation is becoming so deeply ingrained in the fabric of educational practice that it often goes unnoticed. Our participants described a learning culture in which teaching to the test extends much deeper than the narrowing of curricular objectives and prioritization of the assessed curriculum. Instead of instructional practices bending to align to the test, we see the test being allowed to enlarge and encircle all aspects of instructional practice... Additionally, it is concerning to us to hear participants use the term *professional learning communities* or *PLCs* when talking about data analysis meetings that focus more on comparison than professional development and limit teachers' collaboration and authority to make decisions... This limited understanding of data leaves little room for other forms of data that teachers might collect/construct to probe student learning and make thoughtful instructional decisions...

Given the deeply entrenched nature of test-centric practices in our participants' settings, our work raises important questions about the agency of teachers in being 'creatively compliant and selectively defiant.' Previous research has demonstrated that teachers can and do go rogue and directly violate administrative mandates to enact their broader visions for literacy instruction. Even when teachers are working within assessment-centric mandates, their professional identities and experiences play a role in determining how those mandates are integrated into their instruction."

Summing up, here are the practices that Davis and Willson believe are the most in need of critical scrutiny by educators and researchers:

- The use of test-formatted passages as texts for instruction;
- Time spent helping students practice prescribed ways of providing written evidence of their test-taking strategies (e.g., margin notes keyed to specific test objectives);
- The use of test-formatted questions as a focus of classroom discussion;
- Conversations about data derived from test-formatted practice tests.

"Practices and Commitments of Test-Centric Literacy Instruction: Lessons from a Testing Transition" by Dennis Davis and Angeli Willson in *Reading Research Quarterly*, July/August/September 2015 (Vol. 50, #3, p. 357-379), available for purchase at <http://bit.ly/1Rub71f>; the authors can be reached at [dennis.davis@utsa.edu](mailto:dennis.davis@utsa.edu) and [awillson@stmarytx.edu](mailto:awillson@stmarytx.edu).

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#### **4. Five Questions About Early Literacy Instruction**

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, Ray Reutzel (University of Wyoming/Laramie) answers a series of questions he's frequently asked by primary-grade literacy teachers:

• *Do students need to learn handwriting these days?* Until recently, says Reutzel, "I believed what many teachers believed – that handwriting instruction could be neglected without penalizing students. I was wrong. Research over the last 30 years continues to show that handwriting speed and legibility, or what some call transcription fluency, predicts everything from a student's quality and quantity of written composition to his or her ability to take notes and the scores and grades he or she receive on exams in college classes." So even though the Common Core standards don't mention handwriting, Reutzel believes it is an essential prerequisite to achieving the standards. From kindergarten through college, students who lack transcription fluency will struggle to get their ideas down quickly enough to remember what they are thinking about as they write. "And even though handwriting transcription fluency is considered a low-level skill," he says, "it appears to be nonetheless consistently related to an accurate predictor of the amount and quality of the texts students produce – of students' creativity of thought, organization, coherence of ideas, comprehensiveness of topical coverage, and clarity of expression... The takeaway message is clear: Handwriting needs to be returned to the elementary language-arts curriculum."

• *Do rhyming and alliteration activities develop phonemic awareness?* Reutzel says that as phonemic awareness emerged as a powerful predictor of literacy success 15-20 years ago, many primary educators assumed that classroom activities involving rhyming and

alliteration would develop phonemic awareness. There were also lots of fun poems, songs, chants, and raps that teachers could use to engage students in rhyming and alliteration. But a 2006 study found that phonological awareness actually had two components: (a) rhyming, and (b) phoneme identification and manipulation. Other researchers have found that the latter – phoneme segmentation, blending, and letter-sound relationships – is a much more productive way to develop young children’s reading proficiency. Reutzel’s take-away: rhyming and alliteration activities are fun and should continue, but the powerhouse practice is phonemic awareness.

- *What is the best way to teach the letters of the alphabet?* Mastering the alphabet is essential to reading success, but it’s more challenging for children than many adults think. The traditional one-letter-a-week approach is far too slow and cumbersome, says Reutzel – plus, it’s ineffective. Recent research points to teaching a letter a day in brisk, strategic, 12-minute lessons that take into account the sequence of difficulty: start with the first letter in each child’s given name; then the letters at the beginning and end of the alphabet; then the letters that appear most frequently in printed materials; then letters that say their sound; then consonants that have been presented earlier in children’s oral language development; then letters with distinctive visual features (terminations, straight lines, curved lines, diagonal lines, intersections). “Teaching students to fluently produce this smaller set of distinctive features before teaching them how to write all the alphabet letters has been found to lead to quicker mastery of letter transcription,” says Reutzel. These quick, razzle-dazzle lessons, repeated 6-7 times and distributed through the school year, might include letter recognition, naming, associating the symbol with a sound, writing, distinguishing the letter being taught from other letters, and categorizing letters into upper- and lowercase.

- *Don’t assume that children understand concepts about print.* Print concepts may seem obvious – letters, words, sentences, top, bottom, left, right, first, last, book handling, etc. – but there are huge differences in the experiences children have had before they enter first grade. Children from middle-class homes have experienced 1,000-1,700 hours of one-on-one storybook reading and another 1,000+ hours of print experiences in their homes and communities. Children from low-income homes have logged only 25 hours of storybook reading and less than 200 hours of general guidance about the forms and nature of print. This means there will be children in almost every classroom who need assessment and explicit instruction in print concepts. Although this is not the most important precursor of reading proficiency, Reutzel says that for many children it’s a crucial bridge to others and can’t be taken for granted. It’s best taught to young children by immersing them in shared reading experiences using pointing, circling, framing, counting, highlighting, matching, and verbal punctuation (see Victor Borge’s classic phonetic punctuation video at <http://bit.ly/1UVNwGb>).

- *Is writers’ workshop the best way to teach writing?* This time-honored approach does moderately well in the research and has several steps: prewriting (mini-lessons to define audience, purpose, discourse styles, planning, resource use, and drafting), first draft, conferencing, revising, editing, and dissemination (author’s chair, books in the classroom library, digital books on the school’s website). It’s clearly better than the traditional approach

to teaching writing, says Reutzel, but there is much stronger research on SRSD – Self-Regulated Strategy Development. He suggests supplementing writers’ workshop with SRSD, which involves teaching students acronyms (POW+WWW – Pick my idea, Organize my notes, Write and say more, Who, When, Where, and What 2 and How 2; or TWA+PLANS – Think before reading, think While reading, think After reading + Pick goals, List ways to meet goals And make Notes, Sequence ideas). SRSD instruction follows these steps:

- Have students memorize each acronym for the several SRSDs to be taught.
- Develop students’ background knowledge.
- Discuss the strategy to be learned.
- Model high-quality writing.
- Analyze well-written exemplars of writing in the genre.
- Provide guided, supported practice.
- Get students performing the strategy independently.

“As a complement to writers’ workshop,” says Reutzel, “teachers of young children can embed SRSD instruction within a writer’s workshop framework with little effort by replacing the mini-lessons with SRSD lessons. During writing time, teachers can then provide guidance and support and gradually release these strategies to students’ self-regulated use in producing quality and quantity writing products that will address many, if not all, of the current writing Common Core State Standards.”

• *Should we teach text structure?* Reutzel says he sees very little of this in the classes he observes, and points to a large body of research linking explicit teaching of text structure during oral reading to students’ future reading success. This means pointing out the way a narrative or informational text describes, is sequenced, shows cause and effect, compares and contrasts, and uses headings, subheadings, diagrams, photographs, and other graphics. Walking students through these text features helps them understand how authors and illustrators get their message across and empowers them to be effective readers and writers.

“Early Literacy Research: Findings Primary-Grade Teachers Will Want to Know” by Ray Reutzel in *The Reading Teacher*, July/August 2015 (Vol. 69, #1, p. 14-24), no e-link available; Reutzel can be reached at [dreutze1@uwyo.edu](mailto:dreutze1@uwyo.edu),

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## **5. Children’s Books About Engineering**

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, Amy Wilson-Lopez and Stacie Gregory (Utah State University/Logan) say that reading and writing are “perfect partners of innovating and building,” and literacy instruction can be a great vehicle for enhancing students’ engineering creativity, reflection, and analysis. They suggest the following books in which characters solve problems through engineering:

- *The 5,000-Year-Old Puzzle: Solving a Mystery of Ancient Egypt* (Logan, 2002) – An ancient tomb is uncovered in 1924 and a young man must figure out how to light the interior without harming the artifacts.

- *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* (Kamkwamba & Mealer, 2012) – A village is threatened with drought and William must find a way to pump water out of the ground.
- *Clara and Davie: The True Story of Young Clara Barton, Founder of the American Red Cross* (Polacco, 2014) – Clara’s brother falls in a barn and breaks both his legs, and she nurses him back to health.
- *Iggy Peck, Architect* (Beaty 2007) – A footbridge collapses and a group of students must figure out how to escape from a small island.
- *The Lighthouse Cat* (Stainton, 2004) – The lighthouse’s beacon is snuffed out by a fierce storm and a nearby boat signals it’s in distress.
- *Pythagoras and the Ratios: A Math Adventure* (Elis, 2010) – Pythagoras and his band find their instruments are out of tune and he must find a way to make the instruments sound pleasing.
- *Our World of Water: Children and Water Around the World* (Hollyer, 2009) – How children in different parts of the world use different means to get water.
- *Solar-Powered Bread Baking in Ethiopia* (Torheim, 2014) – A breakthrough that allows people to bake bread where there isn’t electricity or firewood.

“Integrating Literacy and Engineering Instruction for Young Readers” by Amy Wilson-Lopez and Stacie Gregory in *The Reading Teacher*, July/August 2015 (Vol. 69, #1, p. 25-33), no e-link available; the authors can be reached at [amyalexandra.wilson@usu.edu](mailto:amyalexandra.wilson@usu.edu) and [staciegregory2@gmail.com](mailto:staciegregory2@gmail.com).

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# 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 44 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 64 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are 50 issues a year).

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- A collection of "classic" articles from all 11 years

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

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal  
American Educator  
American Journal of Education  
American School Board Journal  
AMLE Magazine  
ASCA School Counselor  
ASCD SmartBrief/Public Education NewsBlast  
Better: Evidence-Based Education  
Center for Performance Assessment Newsletter  
District Administration  
Ed. Magazine  
Education Digest  
Education Gadfly  
Education Next  
Education Week  
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis  
Educational Horizons  
Educational Leadership  
Educational Researcher  
Edutopia  
Elementary School Journal  
Essential Teacher  
Go Teach  
Harvard Business Review  
Harvard Educational Review  
Independent School  
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)  
Journal of Staff Development  
Kappa Delta Pi Record  
Knowledge Quest  
Middle School Journal  
Peabody Journal of Education  
Perspectives  
Phi Delta Kappan  
Principal  
Principal Leadership  
Principal's Research Review  
Reading Research Quarterly  
Reading Today  
Responsive Classroom Newsletter  
Rethinking Schools  
Review of Educational Research  
School Administrator  
School Library Journal  
Teacher  
Teachers College Record  
Teaching Children Mathematics  
Teaching Exceptional Children/Exceptional Children  
The Atlantic  
The Chronicle of Higher Education  
The District Management Journal  
The Journal of the Learning Sciences  
The Language Educator  
The Learning Principal/Learning System/Tools for Schools  
The New York Times  
The New Yorker  
The Reading Teacher  
Theory Into Practice  
Time  
Wharton Leadership Digest