Marshall Memo 280

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
April 6, 2009

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"[B]rothers should pull up their pants."
President Obama on the saggy-pants look (see item #9)

"[I]t's remarkable how many parents think sex education should be handled in the home, then are so queasy they leave the teaching of it up to episodes of 'The Real World.'"
Anna Quindlen (see item #6)

"Sometimes I think that we, as teachers, are so eager to get to the answers that we do not devote sufficient time to developing the question. But it's the *question* that piques people's interest."
Daniel Willingham (see item #1)

"Americans, like other Westerners, tend to view intelligence as a fixed attribute, like eye color."
Daniel Willingham (see item #2)

"I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."
Michael Jordan (quoted in item #2)

1. Why Real Thinking Is Hard – And How to Maximize It in the Classroom

In this thoughtful article in *American Educator*, University of Virginia psychologist Daniel Willingham presents a theory on why it's so difficult to get all students engaged and happy in the classroom: people enjoy challenging mental work *only if they experience success*, and orchestrating successful learning experiences for diverse groups of students is really difficult.

"Your brain serves many purposes," says Willingham, "and thinking is not the one it does best." This is because most of the real estate in the brain is devoted to the more complex tasks of seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, tasting, and moving. Willingham illustrates this by posing the following problem:

> You are in an empty room and are given a candle, some matches, and a box of tacks. The challenge: how can you get the lighted candle about five feet off the ground without holding it? You've already tried melting some of the wax and sticking the candle to the wall and that didn't work.

Given twenty minutes, most people cannot solve this problem. But once they hear the answer, they realize that it's not particularly tricky: dump the tacks out of the box, tack the box to the wall five feet off the ground, and use it as a platform for the candle.

This problem demonstrates three things about thinking through an unfamiliar problem, says Willingham. First, thinking is *slow* (as contrasted with our instant visual "take" on a new room we've entered). Second, thinking is *effortful*; it takes concentration and a lack of distractions. Third, thinking is *uncertain*; trying to solve the candle problem, our brains go up a number of blind alleys and might not even get us close to the solution.

If we're so bad at thinking through problems, asks Willingham, how do people hold down a job or manage their money? How do teachers make the hundreds of decisions they have to make every day? The answer is that we rely on memory. "Most of the problems you face are ones you've solved before," he says, "so you just do what you've done in the past." This is why the candle problem would be a cinch once you've heard the solution. "Most people think that they have a terrible memory, and it's true that your memory is not as reliable as your visual or movement systems," says Willingham, "but your memory system is much more reliable than your thinking system, and provides answers quickly and with little effort." All of

us have myriad procedural memories – how to drive, for example, or how to solve a standard dispute between two students on the playground – which we use every day without having to "think" at all.

But what about real thinking – solving challenging, novel problems? Willingham says it can be intensely rewarding and pleasurable (brain scans confirm this) and people are drawn to this kind of thinking, but the conditions have to be just right. The pleasure and satisfaction come from *successfully* solving a thinking problem. "Working on a problem with no sense that you're making progress is not pleasurable," he says. "In fact, it's frustrating. And there's no great pleasure in simply knowing the answer either." If you didn't solve the candle problem yourself, there was little satisfaction in being told the answer, just as there's less satisfaction in having a joke explained to you than if you "got it" yourself. There's also minimal satisfaction in solving a problem (or getting a joke) that's too easy.

So the key is hitting the "sweet spot" – not too easy and not too hard. "Working on problems that are at the right level of difficulty is rewarding," says Willingham, "but working on problems that are too easy or too difficult is unpleasant… If the student routinely gets work that is a bit too difficult, it's little wonder that he doesn't care much for school."

Willingham devotes the rest of the article to a number of suggestions on how to make thinking easier – thereby helping students have more success and enjoyment in school.

• *Orchestrate four key factors*. He suggests that successful problem-solving depends on four things:

- Sufficient information from the teacher or other sources;
- Helpful information in the student's long-term memory; facts really matter to thinking;
- Helpful procedural memories learned previously;
- Sufficient space in the student's working memory to process the problem in real time.

These factors matter whether we are solving a problem as simple as 18 x 7 or as challenging as the candle problem (what makes the latter so difficult is that most people have nothing in long-term memory to help them).

• *Give students appropriately challenging think-work every day*. Too many lesson plans consist of a string of teacher explanations, says Willingham. If students are going to get better at thinking, they need to do real cognitive work. He urges teachers to make sure their lesson plans contain a good mix of challenging problems and tweak them so most students can solve them successfully.

• *Take into account what students know*. Imagine that a fifth-grade teacher began a lesson with this question: "You've all heard of the Boston Tea Party; why do you suppose the colonists dressed as Indians and dumped tea in the Boston Harbor?" If students didn't have the necessary background knowledge – the relationship of the colonies to Great Britain in 1773, the social and economic significance of tea, alternative courses of action for the colonists – they would very likely brand this question as "boring." What they mean, says Willingham, is that it's not a well-timed question; the teacher needs to do some teaching first!

• *Take into account limits in students' working memory*. "Remember that people can only keep so much information in mind at once," says Willingham. "Overloads to working

memory are caused by things like multi-step instructions, lists of unconnected facts, chains of logic more than two or three steps long, and the application of a just-learned concept to new material (unless the concept is quite simple)." The solution: slowing the pace and using visual aids so students can hold the necessary information in working memory and solve problems in real time.

• *Pose interesting questions that will draw students into the subject matter*. "Sometimes I think that we, as teachers, are so eager to get to the answers that we do not devote sufficient time to developing the question," says Willingham. "But it's the *question* that piques people's interest. Being told an answer doesn't do anything for you." He urges teachers to start with the end in mind – the information and understandings we want students to have at the end of a lesson or unit – and then frame interesting questions at the right level of difficulty so students are hooked.

• *Avoid baffling puzzlers*. Provocative "essential questions" are a good way to engage students, but some teachers overreach, says Willingham. For example, a classic science demonstration is putting a burning piece of paper inside a milk bottle, putting a peeled hard-boiled egg over the opening, and, after the paper burns out, watching the egg get sucked into the bottle. Students ooh and ah, but unless they have the background knowledge to understand what's going on, this is like a magic trick and no real learning takes place. Willingham suggests that the demonstration would have more impact after students have learned a little about how cooling air contracts, forming a partial vacuum.

• *Differentiate*. All children can learn, but it's naïve to believe that all students have the same level of preparation and background knowledge, says Willingham. He urges teachers to differentiate assignments and give extra support to students who lack certain skills and background knowledge.

• *Regularly shift gears*. "When you change topics, start a new activity, or in some other way show that you are shifting gears, virtually every student's attention comes back to you," says Willingham. It's smart to plan these events to maximize student engagement.

• *Keep a diary*. In the extremely busy life of a classroom, it's easy for teachers to forget successful – and unsuccessful – lessons, says Willingham. He urges teachers to jot down how different lesson elements went for future reference.

"Why Don't Students *Like* School? Because the Mind is Not Designed for Thinking" by Daniel Willingham in *American Educator*, Spring 2009 (Vol. 33, #1, p. 4-13) http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/spring2009/WILLINGHAM(2).pdf; This article is excerpted from Willingham's new book, *Why Don't Students Like School?* (John Wiley & Sons, 2009).

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2. Counteracting Beliefs about Innate Intelligence

"Americans, like other Westerners, tend to view intelligence as a fixed attribute, like eye color," says Daniel Willingham in this two-page sidebar in the *American Educator* article just above. "If you win the genetic lottery, you're smart, but if you lose, you're not." Eastern

cultures, including China and Japan, view intelligence as malleable: you can get smarter through effective effort. Which do psychologists believe is the correct view? While it's true that there are differences in children's intelligence, says Willingham, "intelligence can be changed through sustained hard work."

This view is a sea change from what most psychologists believed about intelligence just a generation ago. What brought about the shift? Studies in U.S., Holland, and a dozen other countries have documented a steady increase in I.Q. scores across the board – for example, a 21-point gain in Holland over the last 30 years. These gains are far too large to be attributable to genetic changes; they must have been caused by environmental factors.

This and other discoveries have led scientists to conclude that the genetic role in intelligence as relatively modest. Willingham gives the following example of how genes were given too big a part in the past. Identical twin boys are separated at birth and adopted by two different families. Both are unusually tall for their age and continue to grow faster than their peers, and they do well in informal basketball games around the neighborhood. Each of their parents puts up a basketball net at home, and the boys get lots of extra practice shooting hoops. Each is recruited for his junior-high basketball team and gets lots of playing time.

By the end of high school, each twin is an expert basketball player – better than 98 percent of other boys. If researchers tracked down the twins, they would find very similar basketball skills and might conclude that basketball prowess is genetic. But they would be wrong. What really happened was that one genetic characteristic – height – nudged each boy toward environments that included lots of practice and encouragement to play basketball well. It was practice, not genes, that made them good at basketball.

How might this work with intelligence? Suppose a young child (because of genetic differences) is a little quicker to understand things, has a slightly better memory, and is more persistent with cognitive tasks. The child's parents notice this and encourage the child in intellectual pursuits, perhaps without even being aware of it. They talk about more sophisticated subjects than they did with his older sister and brother, and as the child grows up, he begins to see himself as one of the "smart kids." He makes friends with like-minded kids and competes with them for good grades, and spends more time reading than playing and watching sports.

"The key idea here is that genetics and the environment interact," says Willingham. "Small differences in genetic inheritance can steer people to seek different experiences in their environments, and it is these environmental differences, especially over the long term, that have large cognitive consequences."

The implications for schools are enormous. Educators need to realize that the genetic intellectual endowment of most lower-achieving students probably differs little from higher-achieving students. "But they probably differ a good bit from your other students in what they know, their motivation, their persistence in the face of academic setbacks, and in their self-image as students," says Willingham. "I fully believe that these students can catch up, but it must be acknowledged that they are far behind, and that catching up will take enormous effort." Here are his suggestions for what schools can do to close the gap:

• *Praise effort, not ability*. Students need to be taught that intelligence is under their control and can be developed through hard work. This message can be sent by praising effective work rather than innate intelligence. It's also important to avoid insincere praise, which devalues the currency.

• *Teach students that hard work pays off*. Willingham shares a conversation he had with one of his students who was on the football team and devoted a lot of time to football practice and neglected his studies:

- "Willingham: Is there a player on the team who has a lot of natural ability, but who just doesn't work very hard, goofs off during practices, and that sort of thing?
- Student: Of course. There's a guy like that on every team.
- Willingham: Do the other players respect him?
- Student: Of course not. They think he's an idiot because he's got talent that he's not developing.
- Willingham: But don't they respect him because he's the best player?
- Student: He's not the best. He's good, but lots of other guys are better.
- Willingham: Academics is just the same. Most people have to work really hard at it. There are a few who get by without working very hard, but not many. And nobody likes or respects them very much."

Most people instinctively understand the relationship between hard work and talent development in other fields, but need to have the parallel explicitly drawn in the realm of intellectual development.

• *Treat failure as a natural part of learning*. To develop intellectually, students need to take on tasks that are a little beyond their reach, which means being able to deal with failure and use it as feedback. Michael Jordan once said, "I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed." Teachers need to stress the importance of learning from failure and model this themselves.

• *Don't take study skills for granted*. Willingham suggests that teachers make a list of all the tasks they ask students to do at home and then analyze the skills they need to complete that work successfully. Do they know how to study for a quiz? Do they know how to assess the importance of different things they've read and heard and seen? Do they know how to plan and organize their time?

• *Be realistic about what it will take*. Low-achieving students need to work harder than higher-achieving students to catch up. They need time and support to pull that off.

• *Show students you believe they can improve*. This can be in direct statements of support and caring, and indirectly by not praising second-rate work. The hidden message in phony praise is, "Good job – for someone like you." A better follow-up comment would be, "I appreciate that you finished the project on time, and I thought your opening paragraph was interesting. But I think you could have done a better job organizing it. Let's talk about how."

"Can We Make School More Enjoyable – and Effective – for 'Slow' Students Too?" by Daniel Willingham in *American Educator*, Spring 2009 (Vol. 33, #1, p. 10-11), same e-link as above

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3. A Broader View of School Accountability

In this *American Educator* article, Richard Rothstein, Rebecca Jacobsen, and Tamara Wilder make the case for broader accountability for schools than has been the case under NCLB. These are the eight outcomes they believe schools should produce in students:

- Basic academic knowledge and skills in reading, writing, math, science, and history;
- Critical thinking and problem solving: being able to analyze information, apply ideas to new situations, and develop knowledge using computers;
- Appreciation of literature and the arts (musical, visual, and performing);
- Preparation for skilled employment for those not pursuing college education;
- Social skills and work ethic: communication, personal responsibility, and the ability to get along with people from varied backgrounds;
- Citizenship and community responsibility: public ethics, knowledge of how government works, and participation in voting, volunteering, and being active in community life;
- Physical health: good exercise and nutrition habits;
- Emotional health: self-confidence, respect for others, and the ability to resist peer pressure to engage in irresponsible personal behavior.

To cover all eight areas, the authors advocate the use of a NAEP-like sampling assessment covering all subject areas, supplemented by British-style inspections in which all schools are carefully reviewed every few years by trained teams, with little or no advance notice, with the reports made public. [There's a lot more to this article, much of it in the policy realm; it's all available at the link below.]

"Grading Education" by Richard Rothstein, Rebecca Jacobsen, and Tamara Wilder in *American Educator*, Spring 2009 (Vol. 33, #1, p. 24-32), http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/spring2009/ROTHSTEIN(2).pdf#page=5
This article is excerpted from Rothstein, Jacobsen, and Wilder's new book, *Grading Education: Getting Accountability Right* (Economic Policy Institute, Teachers College Press, 2008).

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4. A Study of the Teaching of Writing in High School

In this article in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, researchers Sharlene Kiuhara, Steve Graham, and Leanne Hawken report on a national study of 361 high-school teachers of language arts, social studies, and science. Here are the conclusions:

• *Writing is critical*. It opens occupational and educational doors, has cross-disciplinary applications, and is an essential skill in a variety of work, social and civic contexts. Eighty-four

percent of teachers in the study strongly agreed that writing is an essential skill for students after high school.

• *Many students are not developing adequate writing skills*. On the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 56 percent of grade 8 and 12 students scored at the Basic level and 12 percent were Below Basic. Basic means only partial mastery of writing skills needed for proficient grade-level work. College instructors report that half of high-school graduates are not prepared for college writing. U.S. businesses spend $3.1 billion annually to improve workers' writing.

• *Writing is largely absent from school-reform efforts*, apparently because of the mistaken belief that literacy development is sequential, with reading preceding writing. In fact, writing about books and articles is an effective strategy to improve reading comprehension. While teachers complain frequently about poor reading comprehension by students, most reading interventions focus on reading fluency rather than reading comprehension.

• *Writing performance can be improved with effective teaching*. The authors list 17 evidence-based strategies for teaching writing:

- Verbally praising and using positive reinforcement
- Direct instruction
- Establishing specific goals for writing assignments
- Student use of writing as a tool for subject-matter learning
- Grammar instruction
- Student engagement in prewriting activities
- Student completion of writing assignments using word processing
- Strategies for planning
- Student engagement in research/inquiry
- Strategies for summarizing
- Process approach to writing
- Student use of self-monitoring strategies for performance and goals
- Student collaboration to plan, draft, revise, and edit.
- Strategies for editing
- Strategies for revising
- Student emulation of models of good writing
- Sentence-combining instruction

• *Effective teaching of writing is infrequent*. In this study, the most frequent writing assignments involved little analysis and interpretation, and almost half the teachers did not assign even one multi-paragraph writing assignment each month. Evidence-based practices were used infrequently. Most teachers did not believe their college teacher-education program adequately prepared them to teach writing. A sizable minority of language arts and social studies teachers indicated that their in-service preparation was inadequate; for science teachers this was close to 60 percent.

• *The most common writing activities are short answer responses to homework*, reading material, worksheets, and summaries. The next most common are journal entries and lists. This was followed by the writing of instructions and five-paragraph essays.

• *Curriculum materials are used infrequently*. Only 11 percent of respondents said they used any materials to teach writing, with 21 percent of language arts teachers responding affirmatively, followed by five percent of science teachers and three percent of social studies teachers.

• *Adaptations for struggling writers are used infrequently*, with only two out of 16 adaptations (such as graphic organizers, re-teaching, and sentence construction skills) used by a majority of teachers at least once or twice a month. Most adaptations occurred only once or twice a year for the majority of teachers.

• *Teacher preparation for writing instruction is inadequate*. 71 percent of all teachers said that they received minimal to no preparation to teach writing during college pre-service preparation, and 44 percent continued to report the same low level of preparation following college. Even teachers who reported that they had received training said their perception of readiness was not related to their actual use of those strategies in the classroom.

"Teaching Writing to High-School Students: A National Survey" by Sharlene Kiuhara, Steve Graham, and Leanne Hawken in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Winter 2009 (Vol. 101, #1, p. 136-160), no e-link available; many thanks to Douglas Reeves for spotting and summarizing this article.

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5. The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP)

In this *Education Week* article, Stephen Sawchuk describes the Teacher Advancement Program, which was initiated in 2000 by businessman Lowell Milken and is being used in 219 schools around the U.S. It has four key components:

- *A career ladder*: Teachers can move through three levels: Career Teachers work full-time in the classroom; Mentor Teachers remain in the classroom but also help lead professional development; Master Teachers are released from the classroom and observe their colleagues, model strategies, team-teach, and work with teacher teams. Mentor and Master Teachers join the principal and assistant principals to form the School Leadership Team.
- *On-site, ongoing, applied PD*: Mentor and Master Teachers observe and coach their colleagues, seek out new ways to improve teaching and learning, and work with grade-level and subject-area teams to review student assessments and foster collegial dialogue around continuous improvement.
- *Rubric-based supervision and evaluation*: Members of the School Leadership Team make informal and formal classroom visits and use 5-point rubrics (from Exemplary to Unsatisfactory) to give teachers feedback and evaluate them.
- *Performance-based compensation*: Pay bonuses in TAP schools are based on a mix of three factors: the teacher's supervision/evaluation rubric scores, schoolwide test-score

growth, and the teacher's contribution to classroom-level growth (the ratio of these factors varies from one school to another). Bonuses for teachers in non-tested subjects are based more heavily on schoolwide growth.

"In this model," said Kevin Guitterrez, a leader in a cluster of nine charter schools in New Orleans, "good teachers get better, and bad teachers can't hide. That is always going to ruffle some feathers but it's what's best for kids."

"TAP: More Than Performance Pay" by Stephen Sawchuk in *Education Week*, Apr. 1, 2009 (Vol. 28, #27, p. 25-27) http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/04/01/27tap_ep.h28.html

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6. What Schools Should Teach About Sex

In this *Newsweek* column, Anna Quindlen contrasts the strong public mandate for comprehensive sex education (around 90% in several recent polls – "I'm not sure that many people would agree about teaching long division," quips Quindlen) with the timidity of many school districts on this subject. Abstinence-only programs have been heavily funded in the last few years, but a recent U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study showed that they don't work. Other studies have revealed that adolescents in abstinence-only and virginity-until-marriage programs become sexually active at about the same rate as other teens – but are less likely to use contraception and protect themselves again sexually transmitted diseases.

A new middle ground is emerging: stressing the importance of abstinence while providing medically accurate and age-appropriate information to kids who have already become sexually active.

What about the role of parents? "[I]t's remarkable," says Quindlen, "how many parents think sex education should be handled in the home, then are so queasy they leave the teaching of it up to episodes of 'The Real World.'" Schools clearly have an important role to play, and adults overwhelmingly realize that.

Better sex ed programs are becoming available, says Quindlen, but she worries that many have a blind spot: "With their emphasis on HPV, STDs and problem pregnancies, they seem to ignore one critical point: pleasure. It's the equivalent of talking about salmonella and forgetting to mention that food tastes good."

"Let's Talk About Sex" by Anna Quindlen in *Newsweek*, March 16, 2009 (p. 62), http://www.newsweek.com/id/188136

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7. Are Unions to Blame for Failing Urban Schools?

In this February 2009 blog posting quoted in *American Educator*, education historian Diane Ravitch describes her reaction to a New York businessman/philanthropist who said that teacher unions prevent the city's schools from improving because principals can't hire and fire teachers as they want. "I responded that I was puzzled," says Ravitch. "The unions don't seem to cause low performance in the wealthy suburban districts that surround our city. They don't

seem to be a problem for the nations that regularly register high scores on international tests. If getting rid of unions were the solution to the problem of low performance, then why, I asked him, do the southern states – where unions are weak or nonexistent – continue to perform worse than states with strong unions? And how can we explain the strong union presence in Massachusetts, which is the nation's highest performing state on the National Assessment of Educational Progress? I suggested that low performance must be caused by something else other than teachers' unions. I have not yet received a replay, so I suppose he is thinking about it."

"Dispelling Myths About Teacher 'Tenure' – Education Historian Diane Ravitch on Teachers' Unions" in *American Educator*, Spring 2009 (Vol. 33, #1, p. 3)
http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/spring2009/notebook.htm
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8. Twelve Principles for Successful Labor-Management Collaboration

In this *American Educator* article about successful collaboration between a school district and its teacher union, Jennifer Dubin shares the "guiding principles" that the superintendent and union president use to strengthen labor-management partnership:

- We will work hard to understand the core of each other's job.
- We will respect each other.
- We will be honest with each other.
- We will not "sugar coat" difficult issues.
- We will disagree without being disagreeable.
- We will reflect on each other's comments, suggestions, and concerns.
- We will seek clarification until we understand.
- We will maintain confidentiality.
- We will both "own the contract."
- We will solve problems rather than win arguments.
- We don't let each other fail.
- We will laugh at ourselves and with each other.

"From Picket Line to Partnership: A Union, a District, and Their Thriving Schools" by Jennifer Dubin in *American Educator*, Spring 2009 (Vol. 33, #1, p. 14-19, 40),
http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/issues/spring2009/DUBIN(2).pdf
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9. The President Speaks Out on Saggy Pants

In this *Miami Herald* news story, Hannah Sampson reports on a high school that rustled up 200 donated belts and organized "Pull Up Your Pants Day" to get male students to deal with their saggy trousers. The school was spurred into action by a TV interview with President Obama on the subject (see the link below). Asked if he thought there should be legislation against saggy pants, Obama said, "You don't have to pass a law. But that doesn't mean folks

can't have some sense and respect for other people and, you know, a lot of people may not want to see your underwear. I'm one of them… brothers should pull up their pants."

Other forces are at work that may be pushing this prison-inspired fashion statement into obscurity. Many hip-hop artists have taken to wearing business suits, and peer influence may be following along. A 15-year-old Florida freshman recently stopped affecting the saggy-pants look. Asked why, he said, "I asked a girl if she liked it and she said not no more."

"Plantation High Students Get Hand Pulling Up Their Pants" by Hannah Sampson in *The Miami Herald*, Apr. 4, 2009, http://www.miamiherald.com/news/broward/story/970030.html.

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10. Short Items:

a. Quarterly goals for student reading levels – This chart from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (at Columbia University) suggests the Fountas-Pinnell reading levels that students should attain at each stage of the school year:

http://www.tc.edu/rwp/assessment/08-09/benchmarks/Independent%20Reading%20Benchmarks%202008-2009.pdf

The TCRWP website has a number of other helpful resources for elementary literacy educators: http://rwproject.tc.columbia.edu.

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b. PBS teacher website – This Public Broadcasting System-sponsored website offers thousands of local and national standards-based lesson plans, multimedia resources, and activities. It includes monthly professional development webinars and blogs focused on technology in the classroom. Check it out at www.pbs.org/teachers

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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).

Subscriptions:

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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
Changing Schools (McREL)
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