Marshall Memo 590

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
June 8, 2015

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"If you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier."

> Lisa Delpit (1995), quoted in "(Re)labeling Social Status: Promises and Tensions in Developing a College-Going Culture for Latina/o Youth in an Urban High School" by Betty Achinstein, Marnie Curry, and Rodney Ogawa in *American Journal of Education*, May 2015 (Vol. 121, #3, p. 311-345), http://bit.ly/1eYQR6D

"Sometime every March, I come to the realization that I am not going to get everything done before the end of the school year. That's when I start my summer project list."

> Cassandra Barnett in "The School Librarian's Summer Project List" in *Knowledge Quest,* May/June 2015 (Vol. 43, #5, p. 6-7), http://bit.ly/1B1bclw; Barnett can be reached at cassandra.barnett@arkansas.gov

"Who teaches children about human relationships? The answer is everyone they have contact with, be they young or old, male or female, loving or cruel. Children learn about relationships through social osmosis. They see the patterns around them and internalize those behaviors as the blueprints for what to expect from their own lives."

> Francesca Sternfeld in "Necessary Lessons: Schools' Critical Role in Reducing Family Violence" in *Education Week*, June 3, 2015 (Vol. 34, #32, p. 26-27), www.edweek.org

"Sometimes the reason for misbehavior is very different than the obvious and requires a totally different intervention than the usual consequences."

> Richard Curwin (see item #6)

"Mathematics is the language of science, the foundation of engineering, the power switch for new technology – but students often struggle to transfer their understanding of math concepts to practical application in other STEM subjects."

> Sarah Sparks (see item #4)

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1. Some Ideas for Improving Teaching and Learning

In this article in *Harvard Ed. Magazine*, Lory Hough passes along a set of simple, clear recommendations from a variety of educators:

• *Be kind*. While many students know what's expected of them academically, they also need explicit guidance on ethical expectations, say Rick Weissbourd and Stephanie Jones. They need practice taking the perspective of another person (*What would you do?*) and being respectful and caring.

• *Slow down*. "Slow learning involves radically expanding the typical timeframe devoted to learning about complex things," says Shari Tishman. "It might mean spending a few hours looking at a painting rather than a few minutes, or spending an entire afternoon examining the pattern of weeds growing at the edge of the playground."

• *Let students move*. "In our school day, we build in two full movement classes during the day along with short movement bursts, that we call brain bursts, to break up classes and get kids active rather than having them sit for hours and hours straight," says Massachusetts principal Kevin Qazilbash. His school has seen significant gains in student achievement and attitudes.

• *Create student crews*. Meg Campbell, principal of Codman Academy Charter School in Boston, reports great success with single-sex, grade 9-12 advisory groups. "This means every ninth grader has a big sister or big brother in each of the other classes," she says, which fosters deep friendships across grades and promotes a feeling of family in the school community. Why single-gender? "It gives students a break from what I call hormone display behavior."

• *Install a buddy bench*. This is a place on the playground where students can sit if they're feeling lonely or bored; the idea is that others approach students on the bench and invite them to play.

• *Teach children how to deal with strong emotions*. Christina Hinton reports on the success of sending disruptive, upset preschool children to a "safe place" – a warm, colorful area where they deal with their emotions. One safe-place game: Children pretend they are filling their bellies like a big balloon and then let the air out in one big gust. Another: children put their arms above their head and let them drop while making the *shhhh* sound of running water. Games like these teach young children "that emotions should not be suppressed, but rather experienced and dealt with in constructive ways," says Hinton.

• *Teach students to query*. "When students know how to ask their own questions, they take greater ownership of their learning, deepen comprehension, and make new connections and discoveries of their own," says Dan Rothstein.

• *Find similarities*. Hunter Gehlbach used a survey of ninth graders and their teachers to

identify common interests. Sharing these student-student and student-teacher commonalities boosted performance and grades. [See Memo 572 for a summary of this work.]

• *Use personal stories to motivate students*. Chris Hulleman and Judy Harackiewicz found that when high-school students were asked to write short essays linking science content to their personal lives, their interest and grades went up.

• *Start the high-school day later*. "Today, you'd be hard-pressed to find a health professional, a sleep scientist, or educator who would defend starting high school in the 7 a.m. hour, now the norm for many U.S. high schools, as good for physical or mental health, safety, or learning," said a recent *New York Times* article.

• *Make meetings more useful*. "One simple thing educators can do is to start every meeting by clarifying the objectives of the meetings and then dive right into tackling the most important objective early in the meeting," says Kathryn Parker Boudett, co-author with Elizabeth City of *Meeting Wise*. Another time- and stress-saver is a checklist of key items.

• *Use checklists*. Boston surgeon/author Atul Gawande has written extensively about the power of checklists in airline cockpits and operating rooms. Checklists can also help young students be less forgetful at the end of the school day and prompt educators to remember important procedural steps so they can focus on deeper, more-creative tasks. [Memo 397 has a summary of Gawande's book, *The Checklist Manifesto*.]

• *Help with transportation*. The expense and/or inconvenience of getting to school can be a major reason for school failure, says Barbara Carletta Chen, who successfully intervened to get free bus transportation for a struggling San Diego student and saw her graduate on time and enroll in community college.

• *Include dads*. Boston principal Mairead Nolan organized a weekly "Dads Read" book club/dinner for the men in her students' lives. Teachers and coordinators read stories and model how to read for understanding, and students take home a free book afterward. "Dad's Read is a powerful twist on a book club," says Heather Weiss. "It is a small intervention addressing a big, important question: How can schools successfully engage dads to support their children's learning and literacy and make the learning fun?"

• *Revamp the open house*. Most schools' open house meetings are not "linked to learning," says Karen Mapp. These meetings should be structured in a way that allows teachers to share specific grade-level learning goals, and time for families to share what they know about their children's strengths and weaknesses. Open house meetings should include the best school, home, and community resources to maximize students' learning. [See Memo 554 for a short video of Karen Mapp making this point.]

• *Simplify the financial aid form*. Bridget Terry Long worked with H&R Block to simplify the FAFSA form and worked with parents so they could fill it out in eight minutes. The college enrollment of students from families who took part increased by seven percentage points compared to a control group, and downstream, the percentage of students enrolled in college for two consecutive years increased by eight points.

• *Use texting to keep college-bound students on track*. A few personalized texts over the summer can have a significant impact on "summer melt" – students who are admitted to

college and don't enroll in the fall – say Benjamin Castleman and Lindsay Page. [See Memo 556 for an article on this intervention.]

• *Ask outside groups for help*. "We cannot improve schools in isolation," says Darienne Driver, newly appointed Milwaukee superintendent. She has reached out to dance and theater companies and local artists to beef up arts instruction in the schools.

"Does It Have to Be So Complicated?" by Lory Hough in *Harvard Ed. Magazine*, Summer 2015 (p. 20-25), http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/ed/15/05/does-it-have-be-so-complicated; Hough can be reached at lory_hough@harvard.edu.

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2. Can Interim Assessment Analysis Be Useful?

In this *Teachers College Record* article, Amanda Datnow and Lea Hubbard (University of California/San Diego) review the literature on teachers' use of interim assessment data and are struck by some of the ways that good intentions go astray:

- Some interim assessments are not well-aligned with content, state assessments, pacing guides, and the skills being taught in classrooms.
- Low-quality multiple-choice questions often prevent teachers from getting insights into what children understand.
- Multiple-choice question data have the unintended consequence of leading teachers to use the data to track, group, or place students rather than analyze why students weren't learning.
- Some teachers aren't trained to adjust their teaching in response to interim assessment data. "Much of the information that could be used to support learning and instructional practice is left untapped," say Hoover and Abrams in a 2013 study.
- Some teachers don't follow up and re-teach skills identified as problem areas in their interim assessments.
- Some teachers don't follow up on post-assessment re-teaching days to see if the interventions were effective.
- The overall focus may be on motivating students to improve testing performance rather than improving deep learning.
- In low-performing schools (with mostly Hispanic and African-American students), teachers tend to focus on the "bubble" students – those just below proficiency whose gains will boost the school's academic standing – whereas in higher-performing schools (with mostly white students), teachers are more likely to focus on how to improve their teaching methods and the learning of all students.
- Few teachers involve students in understanding their own assessment results and putting into action a plan for self-improvement.

Datnow and Hubbard conclude with an analysis of the factors that influence how well teachers use interim assessment data:

• *School leadership* – Principals set the tone for data use and provide the support necessary for teacher teams to do high-quality analysis and follow-up. A key leadership task,

say the authors, "is to guide staff in using data in thoughtful ways that inform action rather than promoting the idea that data in and of themselves drive action… Some leaders promote an accountability-focused culture in which data are used in a short time-frame to identify problems and monitor compliance. In such environments, sanctions and remediation are chief tactics, and increased test scores are the primary outcome of improvement outcomes. In contrast, when the culture of a district supports organizational learning, data use is more conducive to educational improvement. Without a fear of punishment, educators working in cultures focused on organizational learning can go beyond simply identifying a problem and work to understand the nature of the problem." Because these approaches differed by type of school, as noted above, the interim assessment process may serve to "perpetuate inequality," say Datnow and Hubbard. "Leadership is key in orienting data use in ways that disrupt rather than reinforce patterns of inequity."

• *Organizational contexts* – Classroom, grade-level, and school organizational choices – specifically providing meeting time – are key to position teacher teams to use interim assessment data effectively, say the authors. But in addition, schools have to provide training for teachers on data use. Without this kind of support, teachers find data reports difficult to understand and lack the confidence to make meaning of statistical information on their students. There's an additional element: "When stakes are high, perverse incentives come into play that may work against improving teaching and learning for all students," say the authors.

• *Teacher beliefs* – "Data use is also shaped by teachers' beliefs about assessment, teaching, and learning," say Datnow and Hubbard. Researchers have identified at least four different mental models: (a) Assessments are a valuable resource for improving teaching and learning (more common among primary-grade teachers); (b) assessments are tools for holding students accountable for minimum performance; (c) assessments are mainly reflections of students' entering characteristics – whether you had a year of "good students or not-so-good students;" and (d) assessments tell teachers what they already know about their students.

"Teachers' Use of Assessment Data to Inform Instruction: Lessons from the Past and Prospects for the Future" by Amanda Datnow and Lea Hubbard in *Teachers College Record*, April 2015 (Vol. 117, #4, p. 1-26), for purchase at http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=17848

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3. Overcoming Bad Habits When Looking at Student Learning Data

In this *Teachers College Record* article, Candice Bocala and Kathryn Parker Boudett of Harvard's Data Wise Project describe the three habits of mind they have found to be essential for educators to collaborate effectively around data:

• *A shared commitment to action, assessment, and adjustment* – in other words, improving how they improve. This includes organizing the syllabus around what's been learned in the data inquiry process; learning and modeling tools for gathering immediate feedback; documenting accomplishments; and reflecting on them. These habits counteract a common bad habit: creating action plans, implementing them, and moving forward without thoughtfully looking at the results.

• *Intentional collaboration* – making deliberate decisions about how to engage with colleagues. "The potential bad habit is assuming that just because a group of educators has been asked to work as a team, they will be collaborative and productive," say Bocala and Boudett. "Collaboration is complex work, and many educators lack meeting facilitation and team leadership skills." The authors believe it's essential for team members to be trained together and to learn teaching and modeling tools for working in groups.

• *A relentless focus on evidence* – "This habit supports a culture in which people make decisions based on specific, objective, and descriptive statements about what they see," say Bocala and Boudett. It takes a determined effort to overcome the common habit of drawing unfounded or unwarranted conclusions from student data – for example, *This student doesn't care about school* rather than *This student has not turned in assignments for three days*. "It is easy to fall into this bad habit," they continue, "because human beings are naturally predisposed to making meaning and creating interpretations using data from the world around us. However, these inferences or judgments are not helpful at the early stages of data inquiry because they move educators away from looking closely at the data and honing the practice of observations." It's also important to look at multiple data points, including classroom observations, not just test scores. Teams can use thoughtful observations and analyze case studies to move from statements like, *The teacher failed to engage students in rigorous work* to *Most students answered teachers' questions with one- or two-word statements*.

"Teaching Educators Habits of Mind for Using Data Wisely" by Candice Bocala and Kathryn Parker Boudett in *Teachers College Record*, April 2015 (Vol. 117, #4, p. 1-29), for purchase at http://www.tcrecord.org/library/Abstract.asp?ContentId=17853

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4. Improving Transfer of Mathematics Skills to Other Areas

"Mathematics is the language of science, the foundation of engineering, the power switch for new technology," says Sarah Sparks in this *Education Week* article, "but students often struggle to transfer their understanding of math concepts to practical application in other STEM subjects." Sparks attended a recent conference of the Association of Psychological Science and came away with some key factors that help students escape the "silos" of single subjects and transfer knowledge and skills to other areas:

• Among young children, language development is crucial, especially key vocabulary like *plus* and *take away*.

• Children's "approximate number system" – or the ability to estimate size differences between two groups without counting – is another key factor.

• 10 or 15 minutes of practice with a skill or concept to map the underlying content "can really change the type of memory models that are activated," says Charles Kalish of the University of Wisconsin/Madison.

• Using skills in a simulated situation – for example, second graders were asked to add different levels of blue and yellow flavoring to an ice cream machine to make shades of ice cream requested by various cartoon monsters. Students who worked in this simulation were

much more likely to be able to apply the skill in a novel situation than students who did purely symbolic practice.

• Hands-on practice is helpful for most students.

"Studies Probe How Students Can Apply Math More Widely" by Sarah Sparks in *Education Week*, June 3, 2015 (Vol. 34, #32, p. 14-15), www.edweek.org

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5. A Troubling Study of Unconscious Racial Bias in Schools

"Classroom discipline is, let's face facts, a fraught subject," says Kevin Mahnken in this *Education Gadfly* article. "It frequently occurs at the uncomfortable vector between schooling and race, where seemingly all useful reform conversations end up turning poisonous and accusatory. If you argue in favor of curbing suspensions and expulsions for black students, you're privileging the rights of reprobates over the studious kids trying to learn in an unruly environment. Advance a case for stricter measures, however, and you'll find 'disparate impacts' and the 'school-to-prison pipeline' hung around your neck. Few areas of education discourse are more in need of illuminating research."

Mahnken reports on two experiments by Stanford University researchers Jason Okonofua and Jennifer Eberhardt on implicit psychological bias. In the first, teachers were shown the disciplinary records of students with stereotypically Caucasian and African-American names, each describing two incidents of petty insubordination. After reading each report, teachers were asked to say how irritated they felt, how seriously they took the infraction, and how great a hindrance they believed it would be to their teaching. The results were striking: when teachers read about the second incident involving students with "black" names, they felt significantly more troubled, more likely to recommend harsher punishment, and more likely to see the student as a "troublemaker." This did not happen with students with "white" names.

In the second experiment, teachers were shown descriptions of the same disciplinary incidents and asked whether they could imagine suspending the hypothetical students at some point in the future. Teachers were far more likely to say the behavior of students with names like Darnell or Deshawn was indicative of a pattern that would lead to suspension. The more likely teachers were to think the student was black, the more likely they were to perceive the misbehavior as part of a troubling pattern.

"The results of this report hold weighty implications for education reformers," concludes Mahnken. "The effects of suspension on a child's academic career – indeed, his life as a whole – could potentially be cataclysmic; it disrupts learning in the event and correlates with delayed academic advancement down the line. Clearly, there is room for right-thinking people to disagree on competing approaches to discipline and how to safeguard the interests of kids who step into the classroom ready and eager to learn. But if the facts behind this debate are suffused with indisputable evidence of racial bias, reformers need to find a way of addressing it."

"Two Strikes: Race and the Disciplining of Young Students" by Kevin Mahnken in *The Education Gadfly*, June 3, 2015 (Vol. 15, #21), http://bit.ly/1G70WHz; the full study was published in *Psychological Science* (May 2015, Vol. 26, #5, p. 617-624) and is available for purchase at http://pss.sagepub.com/content/26/5/617.full.pdf+html

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6. Student Misbehavior – What's Up with That?

"Sometimes the reason for misbehavior is very different than the obvious and requires a totally different intervention than the usual consequences," says Richard Curwin (David Yellin College) in this *Edutopia* article. "It is never easy to determine why children do the things they do." Here are four unexpected motivations:

• *Sometimes students misbehave because they like you too much*. Some children have experienced so much pain that they build a wall between themselves and others and become frightened and push back when they sense a caring adult getting close to them.

• *Sometimes students want teachers to prove themselves*. Young people who have been shuffled through the foster-care system, feel cheated and abandoned by a parent after a divorce, or been let down by previous teachers will push a caring teacher harder and harder to see if he or she will be like the others.

In both of these situations, it's essential that teachers believe in the student and not join the parade of people who have abandoned them. A possible approach: "What you just did is unacceptable in our classroom, but no matter what you do, I'm still on your side. I will never give up or stop believing in you."

• *Sometimes students are physically attracted to a teacher*. With teenagers who are fairly close in age to youthful teachers, this can be a crush; younger students are sometimes attracted in a different way, calling a teacher Mommy or Daddy by mistake. Curwin's advice, which some teachers don't like to hear, is to dress as professionally and unprovocatively as possible, be friendly but not friends, draw clear professional boundaries, and avoid feeding fantasies.

• *Sometimes students need to be noticed*. As Rollo May once said, attention for something bad is better than no attention at all, and some young people feel anonymous or unseen in classrooms, among peers, and even at home; misbehavior can be a way of saying, *Notice me, I matter!* "These students can be helped by greeting them at the door before class, calling on them more frequently, asking them to help perform academic tasks, like solving a problem on the whiteboard, or generally making sure they feel appreciated," says Curwin. They appreciate being greeted in the corridor and occasionally sought out for a brief chat in the cafeteria or on the playground.

With all four of these misbehaving types, Curwin suggests making positive and negative comments in private (not saying to the whole class, "I like the way that Allen is sitting"), not writing their names on the board or discussing their behavior with other students, and never verbally blaming either the child or the parents. "Be more stubborn than these chronically misbehaving students and never give up on them," he concludes.

"Sometimes Misbehavior Is Not What It Seems" by Richard Curwin in *Edutopia*, May 12, 2015, http://www.edutopia.org/blog/misbehavior-not-what-it-seems-richard-curwin

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7. Four Key Qualities of a Successful Summer Reading Program

In this article in *Knowledge Quest*, Teri Lesesne (Sam Houston State University) salutes the idea of getting students to read over the summer but doubts that requiring certain books is an effective strategy for countering "summer slide." For example, entering pre-AP ninth graders in one school were asked to choose from among these books: *The Crucible, A Farewell to Arms, Cannery Row, Antigone,* and *Siddharta,* and regular ninth graders had to choose from these: *Speak, The Witch of Blackbird Pond, Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie, The Outsiders,* and *The Chocolate War*. Instead, she suggests that we CARE about readers:

• *Choice* – When teachers give students a narrow choice of books, says Lesesne, they are in effect saying they know the best books and students can't be trusted to find any. She suggests letting students choose from a much wider range of literature, including the Best Fiction for Young Adults lists www.ala.org/yalsa/best-fiction-young-adults or the Outstanding Books for the College Bound www.ala.org/yalsa/outstanding-books-college-bound. "Readers are more likely to read and to be engaged," she says.

• *Access* – Some students find it difficult to put their hands on books over the summer, and schools need to create alternatives: loaning books from classrooms and the school library, partnering with public libraries, organizing transportation to libraries, and holding book drives as a service initiative. But in addition to physical access to books, Lesesne believes there's an equally important second kind: "Books should be ones our readers can access intellectually, morally, culturally, and socially without assistance from an adult."

• *Response* – How will students be held accountable for doing their summer reading? Traditional formats – book logs, quizzes, essays – run the risk of being an onerous turn-off. Lesesne has no specific suggestions for how to escape this trap but believes we need to experiment with better ways to allow students to enjoy and get immersed in their reading while still making sure they do it.

• *Enthusiasm* – Brief, high-energy booktalks are the best way to pique students' interest, says Lesesne. She's worked with colleagues to present as many as 50 of these in a half-hour (15-30 seconds for each book). She also suggests organizing Twitter chats, a Facebook page, and Google+ Hangouts among students to share books and build buzz.

Lesesne closes by citing the Katy Independent School District in Texas for its exemplary summer reading program (entirely voluntary). You can find information on this program at http://elasummerreading.weebly.com.

"Summertime and the Reading Is Required?" by Teri Lesesne in *Knowledge Quest,* May/June 2015 (Vol. 43, #5, p. 18-21), no e-link available; Lesesne can be reached at doctorL@shsu.edu.

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8. Booktalks to Prime Students for Summer Reading

"In the summer, reading requires intrinsic motivation," say Jeff Whittingham and Wendy Rickman (University of Central Arkansas) in this article in *Knowledge Quest*. They cite research that the two best ways to counter summer regression in the reading proficiency of low-achieving and low-income students are: (a) giving students choice to boost interest and ownership, and (b) providing teacher/parent scaffolding in the form of booktalks, book clubs, reading ladders, and vocabulary development. Whittingham and Rickman are particularly keen on booktalks to pique students' interest in particular books just before summer vacation. Here are their recommendations for teachers and librarians:

- Choose first-rate books.
- Always read each book. "Your audience will recognize an imposter," they say.
- Practice your booktalk before you give it.
- Show your own passion for your selections.
- Keep it short – present the basics and move on.
- Don't oversell books. "Give the audience just enough and leave the rest to them."
- Never give away an ending.
- A booktalk is not a review – give just enough to hook potential readers.
- Have fun! "Your audience will not be motivated unless they enjoy the presentation," conclude Whittingham and Rickman.

"Booktalking: Avoiding Summer Drift" by Jeff Whittingham and Wendy Rickman in *Knowledge Quest,* May/June 2015 (Vol. 43, #5, p. 18-21), no e-link available; the authors can be reached at jeffw@uca.edu and wrickman@uca.edu.

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9. Humorous Children's Picture Books

"Children have for years gravitated to the humor found in certain picture books, comics, cartoons, and *Mad* magazine, to the dismay of many a librarian and teacher," say Frank Serafini (Arizona State University) and Richard Coles (University of Toronto/Ontario) in this article in *The Reading Teacher*. "However, it is important to remember that humorous texts often contain sophisticated elements of satire, irony, and parody and require readers to think and use their imaginations to associate one event or character with another. What may first look like a simple, funny book may in fact require readers to think in more complex and sophisticated ways."

Why do children find some books funny? There's the perception of incongruity, something that's surprising or different from what's expected, and things that make us feel better about ourselves. Laughter can be contagious, and researchers believe humor plays an important part in developing, negotiating, and maintaining relationships – and motivates children to seek out humor in their own lives. Teachers have also found that laughter helps decrease anxiety, stress, and boredom; improves classroom climate; makes learning less threatening and more enjoyable; helps create more positive attitudes toward learning; and increases students' perceptions about how much they have learned. Humor is also a way for

teachers to make personal connections with students and seem less aloof and unfriendly. Students say that a sense of humor is one of the most desirable qualities of a good teacher.

Serafini and Coles share some of their favorite picture books in this genre, sorted into three categories:

• *Books that deal with children's problems:*
  - *My Teacher Is a Monster* (Brown, 2014) – The challenge of having a mean teacher;
  - *The Boy Who Looked Like Lincoln* (Reiss, 2003) – What's funny about being different;
  - *The Frank Show* (Mackintosh, 2012) – What to bring to show and tell;
  - *The Unexpectedly Bad Hair of Barcelona Smith* (Graves, 2006) – One boy's challenges managing his unruly hair
  - *Parts* (Arnold, 1997) – Fears about knowing more about one's body
  - *What If…?* (Browne, 2014) – Children's anxieties going to a party and not knowing anyone;
  - *I'm Bored* (Black, 2012) – A playful sense of the world, entertaining oneself with simple things;
  - *Shark vs. Train* (Barton, 2010) – Sharing toys and getting along with other children;
  - *Creepy Carrots* (Reynolds, 2012) – A bunny is threatened by a bunch of carrots.

• *Books that offer absurd premises:*
  - *This Moose Belongs to Me* (Jeffers, 2012) – Wilfred befriends a moose that doesn't always behave as expected;
  - *Marcel the Shell with Shoes On* (Slate & Fleischer-Camp, 2011) – A small shell wears red shoes and talks
  - *Naked!* (Black, 2014) – A young boy runs around his house without clothes before settling into bed.

• *Books that play with readers' expectations:*
  - *Guess Again!* (Barnett, 2009) – Silhouetted illustrations lead the reader to expect one thing and then discover something completely farcical;
  - *That Is Not a Good Idea!* (Willems, 2013) – A parody of a wolf and chicken trying to outdo one another to see which one will be served for dinner;
  - *The Cat, the Dog, Little Red, the Exploding Eggs, the Wolf, and Grandma* (Fox, 2014) – A young boy tries to insert modern-day elements into a traditional tale;
  - *The Book With No Pictures* (Novak, 2014) – Different type fonts and other graphics break down the barrier between teller and tale
  - *Interrupting Chicken* (Stein, 2010) – Toys with traditional fairy tales and rituals around bedtime.

"Get ahold of some of the picture books shared in this column," say Serafini and Coles, "lighten up a bit, read them aloud, and have a good laugh with your students."

"Humor in Children's Picture Books" by Frank Serafini and Richard Coles in *The Reading Teacher*, May 2015 (Vol. 68, #8, p. 636-638), available for purchase at http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/trtr.1361/abstract; the authors can be reached at fserafini@mac.com and richard.coles@sympatico.ca.

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10. Concerns About Reviews of Math Programs by EdReports

In this *Education Week* article, Liana Heitin reports on criticism of EdReport's "consumer reports" analysis of math textbooks and programs. In an open letter, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics said the EdReports analysis was incomplete, contained errors, and misrepresented what's important in national math standards. Eric Hirsch of EdReports said his organization "will continue to make refinements."

"Math Groups Criticize EdReports Book Reviews" by Liana Heitin in *Education Week*, June 3, 2015 (Vol. 34, #32, p. 5), www.edweek.org; to read the full NCTM open letter, please click here: http://bit.ly/1B1OqtZ.

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If you have feedback or suggestions,
***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 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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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
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Center for Performance Assessment Newsletter
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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