

# Marshall Memo 383

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

April 25, 2011

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## Quotes of the Week

“Whether or not feedback is effective depends on what students need to hear, not what you need to say.”

Susan Brookhart (see item #2)

“My philosophy about primary care is that the only person who has changed anyone’s life is their mother. The reason is that she cares about them, and she says the same simple thing over and over and over.”

Physician Jeffrey Brenner (see item #1)

“How can we build into instruction the idea that failure is an integral part of learning? How can we build hope through failure instead of teaching students to fear failure?”

Debra Dirksen (see item #8)

“Throwing new teachers in classrooms to sink or swim and expecting them to learn what works through trial and error is not an efficient way to provide high-quality teaching for children or training for teachers.”

Donna Sterling and Wendy Frazier (see item #6)

“The bane of any teacher who has administered a weekly spelling test is that words that were mastered on Friday are forgotten by Monday.”

Michelle Newlands (see item #4)

“It was like a writing miracle. I quit teaching them how to write and started guiding them through their own writing.”

Christine Love Thompson (see item #3)

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## **1. How Focusing on the Worst of the Worst Can Pay Dividends for All**

In this intriguing *New Yorker* article, Boston surgeon/author Atul Gawande describes cutting-edge work in medicine with implications for K-12 schools. “Emergency-room visits and hospital admissions should be considered failures of the health-care system until proven otherwise,” says Jeffrey Brenner, a physician in Camden, New Jersey who runs a special clinic, the Camden Coalition, for the patients who are “super-utilizers” of the medical system, mostly through emergency-room visits. It turns out that one percent of Camden’s patients account for *one-third* of the city’s medical costs. Brenner believed that if doctors could improve treatment for them, overall health-care costs could be dramatically reduced. So he asked Camden doctors to refer their neediest patients to the Camden Coalition and began to focus resources and brainpower on helping those patients.

Frank Hendricks (a pseudonym) is one of Camden’s super-utilizers. He had multiple problems – congestive heart failure, chronic asthma, uncontrolled diabetes, hypothyroidism, gout, and a history of smoking, alcohol abuse, cocaine abuse, and obesity (he weighed 560 pounds). Hendricks had spent more time in hospitals in the last three years than he’d spent at home. But after several months of work with the Coalition team, Hendricks’s condition stabilized; he lost more than 100 pounds, was able to take care of himself most of the time, and was making almost no emergency-room visits. An independent study of the Camden Coalition’s work showed that successes like this had reduced medical costs among super-utilizers by 56 percent.

Brenner describes his matter-of-fact approach to working with patients like Hendricks: “Working with him didn’t feel any different from working with any patient on smoking, bad diet, not exercising – working on any particular rut someone has gotten into. People are people, and they get into situations they don’t necessarily plan on. My philosophy about primary care is that the only person who has changed anyone’s life is their mother. The reason is that she cares about them, and she says the same simple thing over and over and over.”

Brenner and his staff show similar caring and persistence as they keep in touch with their 300 worst-of-the-worst patients. They phone and make house calls to remind them about checkups, meds, diet, exercise, and other matters. “High-utilizer work is about building relationships with people who are in crisis,” says Brenner. “The ones you build a relationship with, you can change behavior. Half we can build a relationship with. Half we can’t.”

The basic problem with the health-care system, says Gawande, is that its two basic service mechanisms – visits to doctors and visits to emergency rooms – are fine for most

people but not for patients like Hendricks. “It’s like arriving at a major construction project with nothing but a screwdriver and a crane,” he says. What multiple-problem patients need is a tightly coordinated team that combines expert care with relationship- and trust-building.

Gawande visited another program in Atlantic City, the Special Care Center, and was struck by a patient-review staff meeting that’s held every morning. “I had never seen this kind of daily huddle at a doctor’s office,” says Gawande, “with clinicians popping open their laptops and pulling up their patient lists together.” He was also struck by who was there: two physicians, two nurse practitioners, a full-time social worker, the front-desk receptionist, and eight full-time “health coaches”, each of whom contacts his or her patients at least once every two weeks by phone, e-mail, and home visits. Most of the coaches live in the community, are of the same ethnicity as their patients, and have had similar health problems themselves. The coaches sometimes figure out simple things that make a difference – for example, the team discovered that the reason many patients dialed 911 rather than calling the clinic’s 24-hour line was that they didn’t have the number handy. The coaches taught patients how to enter it into their speed dials and 911 calls went down dramatically. “High-cost habits are sticky,” says Gawande. “Staff members are still learning the subtleties of unsticking them.”

Every morning, the team plans the day, coordinates members’ efforts, and celebrates victories. On the morning Gawande visited, a staff member announced that of the clinic’s 1,200 chronically ill patients, only one was in the hospital (she was about to be discharged) and the clinic’s patients had gone four days without an E.R. visit. Staffers cheered.

Overall, the clinic’s patients have made dramatic progress. Twelve months into the program, emergency-room visits and hospital admissions were reduced by more than 40 percent, surgical procedures were down by 20 percent, and patients were much healthier – of 503 with high blood pressure, only two were under poor control. Gawande spoke with one patient who had made dramatic progress through exercise, dietary changes, medication adjustments, and strict monitoring of her diabetes. What made the difference, he wanted to know. The patient said it was her coach. Why did she listen to her rather than her husband, who had been telling her many of the same things for years? “Because she talks like my mother,” said the patient.

How does this apply to schools? First, there’s simple economics: spiraling health-care costs are robbing public schools of funds. For example, as part of a 1993 education reform initiative, Massachusetts has sent nearly one billion dollars to school districts to finance smaller classes and improve teachers’ pay, but it ended up being diverted to rising health-care costs. “For every dollar added to school budgets,” says Gawande, “the costs of maintaining teacher health benefits took a dollar and forty cents.” The kind of clinic that Gawande describes has the potential to cut health-care costs and allow the U.S. to have decent health care for all *and* decent schools. Yes, this kind of clinic is more expensive than regular care, but it saves far more than it spends, says Gawande, citing an independent study.

[Second, this model of targeting resources, brainpower, collaboration, and caring on the neediest could work in schools – in fact, it’s already being used by some successful programs to turn around seemingly “unteachable” students. Particularly striking are the daily team

meetings in which providers coordinate services and share information and ideas. Gawande says that health-care reform is more likely to come from grass-roots efforts like those in Camden and Atlantic City than it is from Washington, D.C. Perhaps similar ventures in schools will be the solution to our persistent achievement gap.

[Third, educators would do well to emulate the matter-of-fact approach toward very needy students that the clinics have with their patients. These medics aren't resentful of incredibly sick people walking through the door the way some educators seem resentful toward hard-to-teach students. We need to accept children with serious, seemingly intractable problems *as they are* and work with skill, persistence, and love to make them better.]

“The Hot Spotters” by Atul Gawande in *The New Yorker*, Jan. 24, 2011 (p. 41-51), [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/01/24/110124fa\\_fact\\_gawande](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/01/24/110124fa_fact_gawande)

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## 2. Feedback That Helps

“Whether or not feedback is effective depends on what students need to hear, not what you need to say,” says consultant Susan Brookhart in this article in *The Virginia Journal of Education* (spotted in *Education Digest*). Here are her desiderata about feedback:

- *Timely* – The quicker the better, says Brookhart, so students get feedback while they still remember the assignment and why they were doing it.

- *Identifying one or more strengths and at least one next step* – Sometimes students aren't aware of their strengths and need them reinforced, and they often need next steps pointed out. A teacher might say to a struggling student, “I see you skipped this line. It might help to keep your place with your finger.”

- *Focused on students' work and work processes, not on them personally* – It's not helpful to talk about how smart or lazy a student is. Talk about the work.

- *Descriptive, not judgmental* – The best feedback compares work to specific criteria or exemplars. With struggling students, the standard or exemplar might be so far from their current work that it's intimidating, in which case it's helpful to compare current work to earlier, less-developed work.

- *Positive, clear, and specific* – “‘Clear’ means clear to the student,” says Brookhart. “The tone of feedback, whether written or oral, should convey your confidence in the student as a learner. It should not sound like giving orders.” Struggling students need to focus on one or two small steps they need to take to improve, and simple, clear vocabulary is important. With more successful students, specific praise is better than “Great job” – for example, “This is a great paper. I especially appreciated the way you made a chart to summarize your information and then discussed it point by point. That made it really clear.”

- *Check for understanding* – “Do you understand?” is not enough. Better to ask, “What is the most important thing you see here?” or “What is the very next thing you're going to do on this paper?”

“Tailoring Feedback” by Susan Brookhart in *The Virginia Journal of Education*, February 2010 (spotted in *Education Digest*, May 2011, Vol. 76, #9, p. 33-36); see an earlier Brookhart article on feedback in Marshall Memo 215.

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### **3. A Tennessee Teacher Changes Her Approach to Teaching Writing**

In this thoughtful *Kappan* article, reading specialist Christine Love Thompson talks about her early struggles teaching writing. She’d been trained in the process approach – prewrite, draft, revise, publish – but her elementary students found it boring and tedious. “Most students didn’t have the stamina or the motivation to labor through all the stages,” she says. “It would take days, sometimes weeks, to see a finished product. Even with the help of graphic organizers and step-by-step instructions, I found that the whole process revolved around students writing the same words or sentences over and over again, without any major improvements or revisions to their work.”

Thompson believes the problem was that she was overemphasizing prewriting – asking students to plan their compositions up front. The result was a lack of spontaneity and creativity as students plodded from step to step, and a lack of investment when it was time to revise and edit. Thompson ended up doing a lot of the editing for students, which meant too much red ink, too much emphasis on grammar and spelling, and not enough on content.

Thompson’s “aha” moment came when she downloaded top-scored student writing samples from the state website and noticed that they were exciting, substantive, authentic, and fun to read – and contained some grammatical and formatting errors. She decided she had been wrong to emphasize the step-by-step process and completely changed the way she taught writing. From now on she would help students write without fear – to “let their imaginations take the wheel and drive the writing piece... Writing is a discovery activity in which the text emerges as the student writes.” She used the state exemplars to make a checklist for students that included:

- An introduction that hooks the reader;
- Figurative language – similes, metaphors, and idioms;
- Vivid vocabulary;
- A beginning, middle, and end;
- Sentence variety;
- Voice and authenticity;
- Best-guess spelling and good-enough grammar in early drafts.

Thompson read her students examples of vivid writing and stopped marking up their drafts.

She also got students reading and commenting on each others’ drafts, using the same checklist and the same language she used. For the first time, she saw students evaluating their own writing and constantly improving it. “It was like a writing miracle,” she says. “I quit teaching them how to write and started guiding them through their own writing.” Students’ writing improved by leaps and bounds as they told their own stories and found their own voice. Some of the best writing was produced by academically average students, and writing became immensely popular in her class. “They begged for more time to write and couldn’t wait to

share their stories,” she says. “Writing meant something to them and became self-expression, no matter what writing prompt or topic they were given. Once they had the proper tools, encouragement, freedom, and the checklists as a guide, students could find ways to make topics work in ways that were interesting to them.”

And indeed, once Thompson changed her approach, almost all of her students scored at the highest levels on the state writing test.

“A Dose of Writing Reality: Helping Students Become Better Writers” by Christine Love Thompson in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2011 (Vol. 92, #7, p. 57-61)  
<http://www.kappanmagazine.org>

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#### **4. Seven Steps to Better Spelling**

“The bane of any teacher who has administered a weekly spelling test is that words that were mastered on Friday are forgotten by Monday,” says Toronto vice principal and literacy consultant Michelle Newlands in this article in *The Reading Teacher*. “Furthermore, there is little transfer of word knowledge to students’ independent writing.” Newlands believes spelling is an important part of becoming literate – and also matters to self-esteem: we feel foolish when we make spelling mistakes. What’s more, we avoid words we aren’t confident about spelling, which impoverishes our writing.

But what is the best way to teach spelling? “Spelling is not just memory work,” says Newlands. “It is a process of conceptual development.” She recommends using seven basic principles of strategy instruction to constantly improve spelling. “Strategy instruction can be inserted into any effective writing program and can contribute to creating more critical, reflective writers who understand the way words work,” she says. “The goal of effective spelling instruction is to create fluent writers, not perfect scores on the spelling test.”

Before getting into her strategies, Newlands enunciates two general principles: First, to maximize retention, students should study words at their instructional level – not too hard, not too easy. This suggests using a pretest before plunging into a word list. Second, she suggests that students should only study words that they can read and understand. This is because “it is the balance between known and unknown words that is the best predictor of students’ ability to master and retain correct spelling of words.” Now, here are Newlands’s strategies:

- *Know the rules.* Through word study, students should learn common spelling patterns and generalizations and irregular words.

- *Observe patterns and trends.* For example, fourth graders might study words with the same sound but different spellings – for example, delay, break, trade, whey, weight, and e-mail.

- *Apply a strategy.* Among the strategies students can apply as they write are: visualize – think about what the word looks like; try alternative spellings and choose one; think of a word that is similar and use that word to help spell the new word (e.g., muscle, muscular); sound it out; use an analogy (if you know night, you can spell flight); check a word list or word bank; use a dictionary; ask a friend; ask the teacher.

- *Analyze errors and correct them.* Newlands says the reason many students misspell words is that in a standard spelling test, they are relying on semantic memory, which requires many repetitions before a word can be successfully and routinely retrieved. It's helpful for students to draw on episodic memory, that is, memory related to a learning context (for example, people remember where they were the morning of September 11, 2001). Teachers' challenge is to create instructional episodes that support the storage of spelling words. One approach is to have students analyze their errors and catalogue the type of mistake they made (for example, phonemic, orthographic, missed letters, insertions, and letter reversals). "In this activity," says Newlands, "students engage episodic memory through a metacognitive analysis of their spelling behavior and gain an understanding of the types of errors they make and how to correct them."

- *If at first you don't succeed, try a new strategy.* English spelling is difficult, says Newlands, especially with words that look wrong even when they're spelled correctly – for example, genealogy, inoculate, knowledgeable, millennium, questionnaire, and superseded. Students should use memorization, mnemonics, whatever works.

- *Trust your instincts and be confident.* "We need to instill in all our aspiring spellers a belief in their own ability to be competent, capable, and successful," says Newlands. Good spelling instruction and lots of practice can build confidence and good instincts. So do word activities like Scrabble, crossword puzzles, word searches, word bingo, and word cards.

- *Have fun!* Spoonerisms, alliteration, and orthography are good ways to explore words and address spelling mistakes.

"The important rule to remember," concludes Newlands, "is to keep the focus of spelling lessons on thinking critically, reasoning things out, and analyzing what was done."

"Intentional Spelling: Seven Steps to Eliminate Guessing" by Michelle Newlands in *The Reading Teacher*, April 2011 (Vol. 64, #7, p. 531-534); can be purchased at <http://www.reading.org/Publish.aspx?page=/publications/journals/rt/v64/i7/abstracts/rt-64-7-newlands.html&mode=redirect>; Newlands can be reached at [Michelle.Newlands@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:Michelle.Newlands@tdsb.on.ca)

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## 5. The Best Strategy for Counteracting Summer Reading Loss

In this important *Kappan* article, Harvard Graduate School of Education professor James Kim and University of Virginia researcher Thomas White cite a study showing that more than half the gap in ninth-grade reading comprehension scores between low-income and middle-income students can be traced to differences in summer learning opportunities in the elementary grades (Alexander, Entwisle, and Olson 2007). But an earlier study (Cooper et al. 2000) showed that summer school is not the answer. In fact, this study showed that summer school actually *increases* the gap between middle-income and low-income students.

So what is to be done? A series of studies have shown that there is a low-cost way to close the gap: give disadvantaged students well-chosen books to read every summer and teach them and their parents how to make the best use of the books. Here are the key ingredients:

- *A good supply of books* – 8-12 books per child seems to be the right range.

- Interesting books – Student choice is important here.
- “*Just right*” reading level – If students choose their own books, they sometimes pick books that end up being too difficult, so readability should be a factor in choice.
- *Teachers scaffolding* – This means a few lessons at the end of the school year on comprehension strategies for silent, independent reading, and instructions to read aloud to parents.
- *Instructions to parents* – They are asked to have their children read aloud to them and give feedback on fluency and expression, and to mail in postcards showing their children’s progress over the summer.

“Solving the Problem of Summer Reading Loss” by James Kim and Thomas White in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2011 (Vol. 92, #7, p. 64-67) <http://www.kappanmagazine.org>; note that there are 13 other articles on summer learning loss in the Marshall Memo archive.

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## 6. Supporting New Science Teachers

“Throwing new teachers in classrooms to sink or swim and expecting them to learn what works through trial and error is not an efficient way to provide high-quality teaching for children or training for teachers,” say George Mason University professors Donna Sterling and Wendy Frazier in this *Kappan* article. They go on to report on their study of the most effective ways to support provisionally certified middle- and high-school science teachers in urban and suburban districts in Virginia. Teachers in the experimental group were given:

- A fellow classroom teacher serving as a mentor;
- A university-based course on how to teach science (a week during the summer with follow-up sessions during the year);
- A retired science teacher serving as a coach during class time;
- An academic mentor from George Mason who communicated by phone, e-mail, and face-to-face meetings;
- An advanced science methods course during the second year of teaching, focusing on use of technology and inquiry-based teaching methods;
- A website that provided links to teaching strategies for special-needs students and other resources.

Teachers in the control group were assigned only a mentor teacher.

Sterling and Frazier found that teachers who had the five additional supports – and positive working conditions – produced the greatest gains in students’ science achievement. When asked which forms of support made the biggest difference, novice teachers mentioned in-class coaching and science methods courses. They didn’t find mentor teachers and university-based academic mentors particularly helpful. Here is more detail on the most effective supports:

- *Coaching* – Retired master teachers helped the new teachers establish classroom management routines, lay out their curriculum for the year, and plan effective lessons. They also modeled hands-on lessons, brainstormed solutions when things didn’t go well,

complimented the novices when they were successful, and advocated for them when their schools treated them poorly (novice teachers often had multiple preps, were required to move from room to room, and were assigned extra duties like coordinating science fairs and coaching sports). The coaches in the study met three times a year to share strategies and talk about what was working best.

- *Methods courses* – The basic course helped teachers survive the first year and gave them the big picture of science standards, classroom pedagogy, assessment, and how students learn science. The second-year course was helpful in revisiting topics and going into greater depth.

- *Supportive working conditions* – New teachers had a much greater chance of being successful with students when they had fewer preps so they could repeat the same lesson multiple times and refine their methods; a single, well-equipped science classroom so they didn't have to spend time hauling materials from place to place; and few or no additional duties so they could concentrate on learning how to teach science well.

“Setting Up Uncertified Teachers to Succeed” by Donna Sterling and Wendy Frazier in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2011 (Vol. 92, #7, p. 40-45) <http://www.kappanmagazine.org>

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## 7. Making the Most of Elementary Science Textbooks

“Textbook publishers have been criticized for producing texts that are quite challenging for young readers,” says Hunter College professor Nadine Bryce in this article in *The Reading Teacher*. She spells out what makes elementary science textbooks such problematic instructional tools and describes some solutions devised by four primary-grade teachers in New York City:

- *Difficult technical vocabulary and abstract concepts* – One remedy: projecting an enlarged section of a challenging textbook page on an interactive whiteboard, helping students focus on the difficult words, discussing which reading strategy would work best (think about it, skim, reread, look at captions, labels, and charts, read on and go back), deciding on the best one, and thinking aloud while applying the strategy.

- *Dense presentation of concepts* – One remedy: using a big-book version of the textbook to do a shared reading of a difficult passage after activating prior knowledge and then summarizing and synthesizing the key points.

- *Superficial treatment of topics* – “Textbooks present information quickly and briefly,” says Bryce. “They minimize the detailed processes and nuances involved in establishing what knowledge gets represented and what gets left out. Controversies are minimized, and an objective, abstract view of information is presented as fact.” One remedy: reading the passage with students, having them skim and spot highlighted words, drawing out their prior knowledge about the topic, and then supplementing the text with video and additional Internet resources.

- *Information delivered in a dry, uninteresting way* – One remedy: have students read passages out loud, answer questions, make text-to-self connections, and dramatize the meaning (for example, explaining force by pushing and pulling against each other).

- *Lack of organization and a reader-unfriendly style* – One remedy: guiding students through textbook chapters drawing attention to headings, subheads, highlighted words, photos and captions, guiding questions, review questions, and suggestions for inquiry activities.

Bryce concludes by listing five general strategies that help students make sense of poorly written and packaged science textbooks:

- Using readalouds, guided reading, and independent practice with feedback, gradually releasing responsibility to students.
- Explicitly teaching reading strategies and empowering students to use them independently.
- Incorporating art and movement into textbook reading sessions to tap into other modalities.
- Using technology, including interactive whiteboards, to enlarge textbook pages and focus attention on specific textual features.
- Getting students involved in authentic literacy projects that bring content to life.

“Meeting the Reading Challenges of Science Textbooks in the Primary Grades” by Nadine Bryce in *The Reading Teacher*, April 2011 (Vol. 64, #7, p. 474-485); can be purchased at: <http://www.reading.org/Library/Retrieve.cfm?D=10.1598/RT.64.7.1&F=RT-64-7-Bryce.pdf>; Bryce can be reached at [nbryce@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:nbryce@hunter.cuny.edu).

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## **8. Checking for Student Understanding**

“In video games, failure is good,” says Western New Mexico University professor Debra Dirksen in this *Kappan* article. “Players start over so they can learn and gain the skills necessary to move on to higher levels. The gaming industry has learned what we as educators need to learn: the ability to press reset is motivating, and players use this tool to succeed at the game. How can we build into instruction the idea that failure is an integral part of learning? How can we build hope through failure instead of teaching students to fear failure?”

The answer, says Dirksen, is the skillful use of on-the-spot and interim assessments in classrooms. She believes that when teachers check on student understanding and immediately follow up, there are major gains in learning. Among the most effective methods are “clickers”, pair-and-share collaborative learning, quick-writes, weekly summaries, graphic organizers, and journaling. One activity that Dirksen has found particularly helpful is “Circle, Square, Triangle”: after being presented with new content, students are asked to jot down three things:

- Circle – What’s still going around in your head? What do you still not understand?
- Square – What’s squared away? What do you really understand?
- Triangle – What three things could you use in your life, work, or studies?

Students’ responses to these questions can give teachers invaluable information on next steps.

“Hitting the Reset Button: Using Formative Assessment to Guide Instruction” by Debra Dirksen in *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2011 (Vol. 92, #7, p. 26-31)

<http://www.kappanmagazine.org>

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## 9. Websites:

**a. Free technology for teachers** – See <http://www.freetech4teachers.com/> for a variety of Internet resources.

Thanks to Marshall Memo reader Nicki Logan Eastburn for this tip

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**b. Foreign-language websites** – *The Language Educator’s* Web Watch section features these (among other) websites:

- <http://www.globe.gov> – Science and environmental education in many languages;
- <http://lefttoright.yolasite.com> – Games and activities for language learning, featuring modifications of Mastermind, Scrabble, and Scattergories, and crossword puzzles in the target language.

“Web Watch” in *The Language Educator*, April 2011 (Vol. 6, #3, p. 60-61)

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**c. Figment** – <http://figment.com> is like Facebook for aspiring writers – students can share their work with readers around the world. After creating a free Figment profile, students can post original short stories, poems, and novels for their classmates and others to read and review. Figment also has excerpts from new books, interviews with authors, writing contests, and discussions. Before each piece of writing is an estimate of how many minutes it will take to read.

“Websites to Know” in *Teacher PD Sourcebook*, Spring 2011, p 8

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**d. Tikatok** – This website – <http://www.tikatok.com/classroom> - lets children write, illustrate, and publish their own stories. It also has hints on the writing process as students develop their stories. When a story or book is complete, teachers can order professional-quality hard-cover, paperback, or digital copies. Teacher registration is free.

“Websites to Know” in *Teacher PD Sourcebook*, Spring 2011, p. 8

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**e. Showbeyond** – This website is also geared to developing students’ writing, but focuses more on multimedia slideshow narratives: <http://www.showbeyond.com/show/home>

“Websites to Know” in *Teacher PD Sourcebook*, Spring 2011, p. 9

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**f. National library of virtual manipulatives** – Utah State University developed this website to showcase effective visual representations of K-12 math manipulatives in geometry, algebra, measurement, data analysis, probability, and numbers and operations. It's at <http://nlvm.usu.edu>.

“Websites to Know” in *Teacher PD Sourcebook*, Spring 2011, p. 8

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**g. GeoGebra** – This free website helps make the connection between algebra and geometry: <http://www.geogebra.org/cms>

“Websites to Know” in *Teacher PD Sourcebook*, Spring 2011, p. 9

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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](mailto: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 41 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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- The current issue (in PDF or Word format)
- All back issues (also in PDF or Word)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- How to change access e-mail or log-in

## ***Publications covered***

*Those read this week are underlined.*

American Educator  
American Journal of Education  
American School Board Journal  
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews  
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  
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Rethinking Schools  
Review of Educational Research  
Teachers College Record  
The Atlantic Monthly  
The Chronicle of Higher Education  
The Language Educator  
The Learning Principal  
The New Yorker  
The Reading Teacher  
The School Administrator  
Theory Into Practice  
Tools for Schools