

Marshall Memo 747

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
August 6, 2018

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Quotes of the Week

“Do the [New York City and Boston] exam schools produce academically outstanding graduates, or do they simply admit stellar students and enjoy credit for their successes?”
Susan Dynarski (see item #1)

“Sorting students into tracks is a primary means of structuring opportunity.”
Anysia Mayer, Kimberly LeChasseur, and Morgaen Donaldson (see item #4)

“Why did a smart student like you pick such a no-name college?”
A question asked Patricia McGuire in a job interview (see item #2)

“While schools and classrooms can be organized in ways that develop [social-emotional] skills, the importance of these skills really doesn't sink in for young people until they experience them in a real workplace, working alongside adults who are responsible for delivering a product or a service in real time.”
Robert Schwartz (see item #3)

“[W]hat is obvious to us is rarely obvious to a novice – and was once not obvious to us either, but we have forgotten our former views and struggles... [E]xperts frequently find it difficult to have *empathy* for the novice, even when they try. That's why teaching is hard, especially for the expert in the field. Expressed positively, we must strive unendingly as educators to be empathetic with the learner's conceptual struggles if we are to succeed.”
Grant Wiggins (quoted in item #9)

“There's a place for creative and narrative writing, but high-school students in particular need to know how to construct a coherent argument based on their analysis of one or more texts.”
David Griffith and Ann Duffett (see item #5)

“Delegation is the skill that makes remarkable success possible.”
Dan Rockwell (see item #7)

1. What Is the Impact of Elite Exam Schools on Their Students?

In this Brookings Institution paper, Susan Dynarski (University of Michigan) addresses a provocative question: Do the selective exam schools in New York City and Boston (among them, Stuyvesant and Boston Latin) add value for the students who attend them? “Do the exam schools produce academically outstanding graduates,” asks Dynarski, “or do they simply admit stellar students and enjoy credit for their successes?”

Selection bias occurs when students are drawn to a particular school, or are screened based on certain criteria. In the case of exam schools, says Dynarski, we have “selection bias on steroids.” At Stuyvesant, for example, selected students have test scores better than 95 percent of students in the city’s public middle schools. “How can we possibly disentangle the effect of the exam schools in the face of such massive differences in baseline achievement?” she asks.

It turns out there is a way – regression-discontinuity design – and two groups of researchers used it to assess the value-add of Boston’s and New York City’s exam schools. Here’s what they looked at: (a) the test results of students who scored just above an exam school’s cut-off and enrolled; (b) the results of students who scored just below it (the small difference is essentially random, an artifact of slight variations in the test or how a student was feeling that day); and (c) the downstream academic achievement and college attendance of these two virtually identical groups of students. From these data, the researchers were able to deduce the causal impact of an exam school on those who attended.

What the researchers found, reports Dynarski, was “a precisely *zero effect* of the exam schools on college attendance, college selectivity, and college graduation... These students may well be happier, more engaged, or safer at these schools. But it is surprising we don’t see effects where so many expected them.”

In New York City, there’s currently a lively debate on how to introduce more diversity into the exam schools (African-American and Latino students, who make up about 70 percent of the city’s public school population, are significantly underrepresented). At the moment, a single test (the Specialized High School Admissions Test or SHSAT) determines admission, and some advocate using other criteria – student portfolios, teacher recommendations, class rank – to admit students.

“But getting rid of the test is *not* the answer,” says Dynarski. “Well-educated, high-income parents work the system to get their kids into these programs. The less transparent the approach... the greater the advantage these savvy, connected parents have in winning the game.” A better strategy, she suggests, is making the entrance test universal (rather than

something students have to sign up for), which has been found to have a democratizing effect in states where college-admissions tests are free, required, and given during school hours. The same is true when elementary-school tests for giftedness are made universal. In New York City, all seventh and eighth graders already take state tests, and these could be used instead of the SHSAT. “When so many are complaining about over-testing,” says Dynarski, “why have yet another test for students to cram and sit for?”

She goes on to suggest the approach Texas has used to diversify its flagship state universities. Texas admits the top-achieving students from each high school across the state; New York City’s exam schools could admit the top-scoring students from every middle school. This might lead some advantaged parents to enroll their children in poorer middle schools to improve the chance of admission to exam schools (Texas experienced this with its high schools), but that’s not necessarily a bad thing, says Dynarski: it would lead to more diversity in middle schools.

But back to Dynarski’s initial point: in terms of downstream results, it may not be such a big deal whether a student gets into an exam school. The preparation and motivation a student brings to the table, and the quality of teaching in non-exam schools, are more important. “New York City has a lot to grapple with in deciding the fate of its exam schools,” she concludes. “Taking into account the scientific evidence on their performance could be a terrific way forward.”

“Evidence on New York City and Boston Exam Schools” by Susan Dynarski in Brookings Institution paper, July 19, 2018, <https://brook.gs/2uBgkNR>; Dynarski can be reached at dynarski@umich.edu.

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2. High-Achieving, Low-Income Students: Which College Is Best?

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Patricia McGuire (Trinity Washington University) acknowledges the logic of telling high-achieving students from low-income families not to “undermatch” when they apply to college – to go ahead and apply to prestigious colleges with name recognition and alumni networks that will connect them to powerful places. She applauds universities like Princeton that are working to increase economic diversity.

But McGuire has concerns. Just below the surface, she says, is the “not-so-subtle disparagement of the non-elite institutions that serve significant numbers of low-income, African-American, and Latino students... Ironically, undermatching theory... reinforces the implicit bias that higher education’s caste system has assiduously cultivated for centuries. While appearing to make prestigious colleges more open to a diversified student body, in fact, undermatching theory exalts the elitism of a relatively narrow band of institutions, opens a slender chute for a very few students to enter, and slams the door on everyone else.”

The saddest thing, says McGuire, is the way this line of thinking has made its way into mainstream thinking. When she interviewed for a clerkship with a local judge after graduating from Trinity Washington University, the judge asked, “Why did a smart student like you pick such a no-name college?” This kind of thinking is quite common, says McGuire, and it

“reinforces the implicit biases of employers and others who distribute society’s prizes, exacerbating rather than eliminating social inequality.”

The only things that really matter, she says, are what students learn once they get to college, and graduating with the skills they need to be successful. A recent report from the American Council on Education found that colleges that specialize in educating low-income students of color have a better track record than prestigious colleges at moving students up the economic ladder. And some elite colleges have a long way to go in how they educate and welcome less-advantaged students. “[G]etting an at-risk student from enrollment to completion is a multidimensional commitment requiring a great deal of coordination among many faculty and staff members,” says McGuire. “Colleges that work routinely with such students know that even very smart low-income students of color often feel inadequate academically and socially, and sometimes they sabotage themselves... The campus environment is key: whether faculty members are willing to engage in profound pedagogical and curricular change in order to teach a broader range of students more effectively; whether the advising and co-curricular-support systems are sufficiently robust to provide great assistance to students who bring new challenges to the campus scene; whether the rest of the student population is sufficiently generous of spirit to welcome a more-diverse group of peers.”

What needs to happen, concludes McGuire, “is enlarging the total pipeline of learning opportunities across all institutions to meet the increasingly sophisticated intellectual demands of the future national and global society. We need all institutions, not just a privileged few, to be doing even more to reach that goal.”

“How Concerns About ‘Undermatching’ Perpetuate Higher Ed’s Caste System” by Patricia McGuire in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 3, 2018 (Vol. LXIV, #39, p. A48), available for subscribers at <https://www.chronicle.com/article/How-Concerns-About/243843>; McGuire can be reached at president@trinitydc.edu.

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3. What College and Career Preparation Looks Like

In this article in *School Administrator*, Robert Schwartz (Harvard Graduate School of Education) notes the shift in recent years from “college for all” (focused on four-year degrees) to all students leaving high school “college and career ready.” Under the new mantra, students aren’t asked to choose one or the other, and each term has an expanded definition:

- *College ready* means prepared for some form of postsecondary education or training, including apprenticeship, soon after graduation; early-college programs give a leg up by getting students started on postsecondary credits while still in high school.
- *Career ready* means students having a deep understanding of how to get launched on a career path at whatever point they leave the education system.

“In order to do that,” says Schwartz, “we need to expose all young people in a systematic way to the world of work and careers, beginning at least as early as the middle grades, so they can understand the intersection between their own interests and strengths, the range of occupations that match those interests and strengths, and the education and training pathways that can lead

them there.” Even for advantaged students who are headed for a four-year college, work experience is important and college should be a route to a career, not a destination.

With seismic shifts in the economy – automation taking over more and more low-skill jobs – employers are looking for people with self-direction, problem-solving skills, leadership, and the ability to work in teams. Where will these social-emotional proficiencies come from? “While schools and classrooms can be organized in ways that develop such skills,” says Schwartz, “the importance of these skills really doesn’t sink in for young people until they experience them in a real workplace, working alongside adults who are responsible for delivering a product or a service in real time.” The bottom has fallen out of the traditional youth labor market in recent years, with only a quarter of students getting any work experience by age 17. That makes internships and other extended work-based experiences during high school absolutely crucial to developing professional skills – and getting ideas for future career directions.

“College Is the Means, Career Is the End” by Robert Schwartz in *School Administrator*, August 2018 (Vol. 75, #7, p. 34-37), <http://my.aasa.org/AASA/Resources/SAMag/2018/Aug18/Schwartz.aspx>; Schwartz can be reached at robert_schwartz@gse.harvard.edu. Schwartz is co-author, with Nancy Hoffman, of *Learning for Careers: The Pathways to Prosperity Network* (Harvard Education Press, 2017).
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4. Tracking and Achievement Grouping in High-School Classrooms

“Sorting students into tracks is a primary means of structuring opportunity,” say Anysia Mayer (California State University/Stanislaus) and Kimberly LeChasseur and Morgaen Donaldson (University of Connecticut) in this *American Journal of Education* article. The rationale for achievement grouping and tracking is to allow teachers to more efficiently meet the needs of students with different learning profiles. This is especially important for students who need extra time and support to master the curriculum. The argument against sorting students by perceived ability is that it results in lowered expectations and inferior instruction for low-achieving students and widens existing gaps in academic achievement.

In this article, Mayer, LaChasseur, and Donaldson report on their classroom observations of teachers in six high schools, watching the same teachers as they worked with low- and high-track ELA or mathematics classrooms. The researchers used the CLASS-S observation tool to focus on teachers’ proficiency in three areas:

- Emotional support – Classroom climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for adolescent perspectives;
- Organizational support – Productivity, behavioral management, and instructional learning formats;
- Instructional support – Conceptual understanding, analysis and problem solving, and quality of feedback.

In most classrooms, the researchers noticed significant differences in how high- and low-track students were treated on all three dimensions. Some examples:

- *Emotional support* – With his high-track students, one English teacher expressed genuine interest in conversations about their activities outside class; started class by asking how students felt about a test they’d taken the day before and listened attentively; said “That’s okay” to a late-arriving student and helped him catch up; gave students the choice of working alone or with a partner; and said he was flexible on the deadline for an assignment, asking students what would work for them.

With his low-track classes, this teacher was noticeably less warm, made fewer inquiries about students’ lives outside school, used sarcasm, and snapped at a student who complained about having to hand in work: “It’s not my fault that you’ve used your class time unwisely.” Students had much less autonomy in choosing work partners and moving around the classroom, and the teacher didn’t deal with pockets of students who seemed not to be paying attention while he was reading aloud from a novel.

- *Organizational support* – With his high-track classes, another English teacher who was teaching a Shakespeare play gave students clear learning targets, actively facilitated the lesson, used a variety of strategies, asked students to create two truths and one lie about themselves, and had high student engagement throughout the lesson – no heads down, no social chatting.

Working with a low-track class, the same teacher did not use a variety of strategies, spending most of the class going through a PowerPoint presentation at a slow pace. Observers noted “lots of long pauses,” low student engagement, and the teacher reacting to inattention by saying things like, “You need to focus now,” “Quiet please,” and “Shhhh.” A number of students had their heads down.

- *Instructional support* – In this domain, there was the biggest difference between instruction of high- and low-track students. With her high-track ninth graders, one teacher structured opportunities for students to interpret *Romeo and Juliet* and “freewrite” about their own opinions on the play and justify their insights in an all-class discussion. “How did you figure that out?” prodded the teacher at one point, and there were multiple exchanges with students, with a tight “feedback loop” and students doing a good deal of interpreting, analyzing, and making connections to the text.

In her low-track classes, this teacher gave students fewer opportunities to practice higher-level thinking or problem solving. In a 55-minute class, students spent 15 minutes reading silently and then another 15 minutes copying vocabulary words and definitions from the whiteboard. There were no opportunities for critical thinking or feedback. Then students did a grammar worksheet (identifying adverbs in sentences) that had no connection to *Of Mice and Men*, the book they were reading. After that, students worked in small groups filling out another worksheet ranking the seriousness of various crimes, which the teacher said would help them understand *Of Mice and Men*; students weren’t asked to explain their thinking. The bottom line: this teacher’s lower-track class, say the researchers, was “much less intellectually stimulating” than her high-track class.

The good news is that Mayer, LaChasseur, and Donaldson found three teachers (of the total sample of 26) who provided higher levels of emotional, organizational, and instructional

support to their low-track students than they did to their high-track students, and another three teachers who gave their low-track students higher levels of support in at least one domain. All these teachers were able, to one degree or another, “to defy the institutionalization of poorer-quality instruction for students tracked into low-level classes. (Interestingly, the researchers didn’t find any teachers who gave identical levels of support to high- and low-track students.) Some examples:

- *Emotional support* – In his low-track geometry class, one mathematics teacher fostered a culture in which students helped each other, had options in how to demonstrate learning, showed kindness to one another, and openly posed questions to clear up misconceptions. He also had students take leadership roles in the class, fostered productive peer interactions, and connected math content to students’ lives. At one point, the teacher asked a student to put something away, the student refused, and other students urged him to comply. Among this teacher’s common utterances: “Very good,” “You got it,” “Thank you,” “My apologies,” “I’ll help you,” and “Are you with us?” Students were comfortable taking risks as they learned challenging material. In his high-track classes, this teacher was much less warm, used no references to students’ lives, and seemed intent on covering the curriculum in a businesslike fashion.

- *Organizational support* – In her low-track English classes, another teacher maximized learning time through clear expectations, pacing, facilitation, having students give quick summaries, and using a variety of student writing, presentation, and discussion. In contrast, her upper-track classes were less productive and varied, with dead time while she handed back papers and a lack of feedback and discourse while students read out loud.

- *Instructional support* – With his low-track students, the math teacher described above paid careful attention to misconceptions, broke down concepts to manageable pieces, provided scaffolding, and pushed students to deepen their analysis of problems, repeatedly asking them “How?” and prompting them to explain their thinking. By contrast, with his high-track students he spent 15 minutes going over homework, posed questions to which he supplied the answers, and explained concepts without drawing out students.

“However,” conclude Mayer, LaChasseur, and Donaldson, “these teachers represent a small subset of our sample. Given the significant differences in instructional quality between low- and high-track classes for the majority of teachers in the study, it seems unlikely that intervening without reorganizing into heterogeneous classes would improve access for the majority of previously low-track students.”

“The Structure of Tracking: Instructional Practices of Teachers Leading Low- and High-Track Classes” by Anyisia Mayer, Kimberly LeChasseur, and Morgaen Donaldson in *American Journal of Education*, August 2018 (Vol. 124, #4, p. 3445-477), <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/698453>; Mayer can be reached at apmayer@csustan.edu,

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5. How Is Common Core ELA Implementation Going?

In this white paper from the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, David Griffith and Ann

Duffett report on a nationwide study of the implementation of Common Core ELA standards. Specifically, the researchers wanted to know how teachers are responding to the three instructional shifts that the Common Core suggested for English Language Arts. Here's what they found:

- *Shift #1: Regular practice with complex texts and their academic language:*

- Teachers are using a variety of tools to gauge text complexity (e.g., Lexile, structure, and purpose).
- Teachers are teaching vocabulary in context, as students encounter words in texts.
- A concern, say Griffith and Duffett, is that teachers are gearing texts to students' current reading levels, rather than using texts at grade level and scaffolding instruction for students who are reading below that level.

- *Shift #2: Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from literary and informational texts:*

- Teachers are emphasizing "close reading" by asking more text-dependent questions and spending more time on word choice and connotation.
- A concern is that many teachers are still prioritizing creative expression and students' personal experiences versus evidence-based writing.

- *Shift #3: Building knowledge through content-rich curriculum:*

- Teachers are assigning less fiction and more literary nonfiction and informational texts.
- However, teachers report assigning fewer "classic works of literature," which concerns Griffith and Duffett.
- Most teachers acknowledge that not enough attention is being paid to building students' general knowledge.

Griffith and Duffett believe these findings suggest four takeaways for ELA classroom teachers:

- Teachers should take another look at their ELA curriculum to make sure they aren't overlooking classic works of literature. These should include books like *Lord of the Flies* and *The Great Gatsby* and also *The Emancipation Proclamation*, *Diary of a Young Girl*, and *Letter from Birmingham Jail*. In addition, teachers of mathematics, science, and social studies should do their part in having students read notable texts.

- Writing instruction needs more attention. "There's a place for creative and narrative writing," say Griffith and Duffett, "but high-school students in particular need to know how to construct a coherent argument based on their analysis of one or more texts."

- Schools need to tackle the content knowledge deficit. The best way is for all subject-area teachers to assign content-rich texts and use well-chosen text sets.

- Teachers need more support working with students who are reading below grade level. This is all about supporting students as they wrestle with texts that are challenging: teachers analyzing deficits, identifying strengths, building vocabulary, focusing on Tier 2 words, using questions as "bread crumbs" to lead students toward a deeper understanding of a text, and using more text-based writing to strengthen students' capacity for analysis. Of course students should also be doing lots of reading at their current level to build confidence, knowledge, vocabulary, and proficiency.

6. Capstone Projects in a Suburban New York Middle School

In this article in *AMLE Magazine*, veteran middle-school principal Seth Weitzman sings the praises of capstone projects, which aim to sum up the inquiry skills and other key qualities students should acquire over their middle-school years. A good capstone project has several characteristics: it sparks intense curiosity and passion; there’s a meaningful purpose to what’s presented (*So what?*) that’s obvious to an outside audience; and the project’s conclusions must be justified by evidence. Some sample projects from the Mamaroneck, New York school where Weitzman was principal:

- Redesigning football helmets to prevent concussions;
- Japanese-Americans’ internment: Could something like this happen again?
- Social justice topics, including Asian-American stereotypes, racism in the judicial system, and animal rights;
- Amending the Patriot Act to better balance civil rights and national security;
- Proposed revisions to the school’s homework guidelines (*Is homework helpful or harmful?*);
- The impact of divorce on children;
- The desirability of a therapy dog for the school;
- Chronicling a week-long “social media cleanse;”
- The growing popularity of food trucks;
- How color choices influence marketing decisions;
- What makes something funny?
- Turning a violin into an electronic instrument and performing a musical composition.

Teachers, counselors, and administrators at Weitzman’s school set the guidelines and then acted as “inquiry guides” as eighth graders shaped their projects (the adult-to-student ratio was 1:7).

In May and June, with most state testing finished, the school trimmed six minutes from each period in the schedule and created a 48-minute Capstone Period each day over four weeks for students to work on their projects, either with their cohort or individually in the library or a hallway. Weitzman’s school followed the Stripling Model of Inquiry:

- *Wonder*: Develop questions, make predictions and hypotheses.
- *Investigate*: Find and evaluate information to answer questions and test hypotheses; think about information to illuminate new questions and hypotheses.
- *Construct*: Build new understandings connected to previous knowledge; draw conclusions about questions and hypotheses. *What does all this mean?*
- *Express*: Apply understandings to a new context or situation; express new ideas to share learning with others.
- *Reflect*: Think about what’s been learned and ask new questions.

- *Connect*: See links to self and previous knowledge; gain background and context.

One addition the school made to this inquiry model was a requirement for field study: interviewing an expert, conducting a survey, or visiting a museum, historic site, laboratory, or business.

The culmination of all this work took place on two mornings in June, with presentations made in classrooms, to seventh graders on the first day and to eighth-grade parents on the second. Students used PowerPoint slide shows, tri-fold poster boards, models, and simulations – one boy cooked three varieties of pancakes. Capstone projects were assessed with a rubric on four dimensions: Evidence of quality research and sources; originality; organization and preparedness; and works cited.

Before the advent of capstone projects, says Weitzman, the last few weeks of school were consumed with preparing for and taking final exams. “In contrast,” he says, “our students now finish middle school practicing inquiry, a lifelong learning skill, and making learning their own... putting together the most important lessons we’ve taught them the previous three years.”

“Capstone Projects” by Seth Weitzman in *AMLE Magazine*, August 2018 (Vol. 6, #3, p. 6-9), no e-link available; Weitzman can be reached at sethweitzman@yahoo.com.

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7. What Leaders Should Delegate and What They Shouldn’t

“Delegation is the skill that makes remarkable success possible,” says Dan Rockwell in this *Leadership Freak* article. “After an employee demonstrates competence, initiative, and follow-through, delegate authority... You delegate a task when you say sweep the classroom floor. You delegate authority when you say keep the classroom clean and provide the resources to get the job done.”

Long term, leaders need to build capacity, trust competent colleagues, and not be a bottleneck. But there are seven things Rockwell believes leaders should never outsource:

- Crisis management;
- Decisions that affect the entire organization;
- Behaviors the leader needs to model to demonstrate values and build culture;
- One-time tasks to people who don’t already have the necessary skills;
- The business of developing subordinates;
- High-risk activities to untested subordinates;
- Ultimate responsibility.

“7 Things Successful Leaders Never Delegate” by Dan Rockwell in *Leadership Freak*, August 5, 2018, <https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/08/05/7-things-successful-leaders-never-delegate/>; Rockwell can be reached at dan@leadershipfreak.com.

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8. Books By and About Native Americans

In this article in *Language Arts*, author/educator Debbie Reese urges K-12 educators to “unlearn stereotypical representations of Indigenous peoples and replace harmful narratives

with accurate information and understandings.” In selecting books for libraries and classrooms, Reese has several suggestions:

- *Choose books that are tribally specific* – for example, a book about a girl of the Muscogee Nation in Georgia.

- *Use present-tense verbs to talk about Native nations.* For example, “Today, the Muscogee Creek Nation is in Oklahoma. Before Europeans arrived on what became known as the North American continent, the Muscogee Creeks were in Georgia.”

- *Choose books by Native writers.* For example, *Jingle Dancer* (HarperCollins, 2000) by Cynthia Leitich Smith, who is writing from her own personal knowledge of a ceremonial dance.

- *Feature books and history of Native Americans all year round*, not just in November, which is usually when schools focus on such content.

“Each year the market is flooded with problematic books that publishers market to classroom teachers,” says Reese, “but there are also gems worth reading.” Here are some of her recommendations (see <https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com> for more):

- *The Story of the Milky Way: A Cherokee Tale* by J. Bruchac and G. Ross (Dial Books, 1995)
- *Beaver Steals Fire: A Salish Coyote Story* by Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (University of Nebraska Press, 2005)
- *If I Ever Get Out of Here* by E. Gansworth (Arthur A. Levine Books, 2013)
- *Jingle Dancer* by C.L. Smith (Morrow Junior Books, 2000)

“Critical Indigenous Literacies: Selecting and Using Children’s Books About Indigenous Peoples” by Debbie Reese in *Language Arts*, July 2018 (Vol. 95, #6, p. 389-393), <https://bit.ly/2vmWQwU>; Reese can be reached at dreese.nambe@gmail.com.

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9. Grant Wiggins’s Messages for Teachers

In this personal tribute to Grant Wiggins, his long-time colleague and collaborator Jay McTighe summarizes three lessons Wiggins imparted to teachers:

- Plan backwards from authentic performance.
- Feedback is key to successful learning and performance.
- Empathize with the learner.

Well worth reading in its entirety!

“Three Lessons for Teachers from Grant Wiggins” by Jay McTighe, July 2018, <https://www.jaymctighe.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Three-Lessons-from-Grant-Wiggins-1-2.pdf>

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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 other educators very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 48 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, writer, and consultant lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 60 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). Every week there's a podcast and HTML version as well.

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Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

All Things PLC
American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
District Management Journal
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Next
Education Update
Education Week
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis
Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
English Journal
Essential Teacher
Exceptional Children
Go Teach
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Language Arts
Literacy Today (formerly Reading Today)
Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School
Middle School Journal
Peabody Journal of Education
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Reading Research Quarterly
Responsive Classroom Newsletter
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
School Administrator
School Library Journal
Social Education
Social Studies and the Young Learner
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
Teaching Exceptional Children
The Atlantic
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Education Gadfly
The Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Professional (formerly Journal of Staff Development)
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
Theory Into Practice
Time Magazine