

Marshall Memo 741

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

June 18, 2018

In This Issue:

1. [Strategies for making leaders better listeners](#)
2. [Ideas for improving “circle time” in preschool classrooms](#)
3. [What influences elementary teachers’ beliefs about mathematics?](#)
4. [A Consumer Reports-type review of online literacy resources](#)
5. [The upside and downside of stress](#)
6. [Recommended steps with a loved one suffering from depression](#)
7. [The lifelong impact of adverse childhood experiences](#)

Quotes of the Week

“Listening leaders are better leaders.”

Dan Rockwell (see item #1)

“In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.”

Dwight Eisenhower (November 1957)

“At school you are not engaged so much in acquiring knowledge as in making mental efforts under criticism. A certain amount of knowledge you can indeed with average facilities acquire so as to retain, nor need you regret the hours you spend on much that is forgotten, for the shadow of lost knowledge at least protects you from many illusions. But you go to a great school not so much for knowledge as for arts and habits: for the habit of attention; for the art of expression; for the art of assuming at a moment’s notice a new intellectual position; for the habit of submitting to censure and refutation; for the art of indicating assent or dissent in graduated terms; for the art of working out what is possible in a given time; for discrimination; for mental courage and mental soberness.”

William Johnson Cory, 1875

“Good teachers know how to push students without making them so anxious that they give up. They have found the sweet spot for stress: Too much or too little and people don’t do their best... Stress is really just our body’s response to a challenge. The key to good stress is that the challenge be something you can manage and even master.”

Richard Friedman (see item #5)

“With time and attention at such a premium in early-childhood classrooms, especially in high-poverty communities, it would be unfortunate not to maximize the quality of circle time and start the day on a path toward quality learning and engagement.”

Andres Bustamante, Annemarie Hindman, Carly Champagne, Barbara Wasik (item #2)

1. Strategies for Making Leaders Better Listeners

“Listening is the first step back from the abyss of lousy leadership,” says Dan Rockwell in this *Leadership Freak* article. “Listening leaders are better leaders.” Here are Rockwell’s suggestions for how subordinates can help their bosses get better at listening:

- Show respect.
- Focus on organizational interests.
- Understand bosses’ concerns, and if you don’t know what they are, ask.
- Make life easier for them; don’t ask them to control things you should be doing.
- Apply the Golden Rule: How would you like others to listen to you? Listen to bosses that way.
- Tell them what they need to hear before explaining what you need to say.
- Be brief. Plan what you want to say, especially the conclusion, and don’t ad-lib.
- Begin with a conclusion, for example, “I’d like your insights on --- so that I can ---.”
- Leave emotion out of the conclusion. Tell your bosses what you want to get done.
- Ask more “what” questions and fewer “how” questions. *What do you want to accomplish? What’s the big picture? What should I be concerned about? What’s important to you right now?*
- Ask “how” questions after you’ve tried something that hasn’t worked out: “This is what I’ve tried. What suggestions do you have?”
- Invite reflection: “What are you hearing me say? What do you think is important to me?”

“7 Ways to Help Your Boss Be a Better Listener” by Dan Rockwell in *Leadership Freak*, June 14, 2018, <https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/06/14/7-ways-to-help-your-boss-be-a-better-listener/>; Rockwell can be reached at dan@leadershipfreak.com.

[Back to page one](#)

2. Ideas for Improving “Circle Time” in Preschool Classrooms

In this *Elementary School Journal* article, Andres Bustamante, Annemarie Hindman, Carly Champagne, and Barbara Wasik (Temple University) report on their study of circle times in 22 preschool classrooms in an urban, high-poverty school district. These regular 15-20-minute teacher-led class meetings are almost universally used in U.S. preschools to kick off the day. Components may include taking attendance, students greeting one another, discussing and

updating the calendar, reporting on the weather, updating a weather chart, singing songs with a social or academic focus, reviewing a morning message, reading a book, and previewing the rest of the day.

As Bustamante, Hindman, Champagne, and Wasik began their study, they were aware of anecdotal evidence that circle time is often students' least favorite part of the school day and that discipline problems are common. Using video recordings and a careful analysis of teachers' full day, they tried to figure out what worked and what didn't, focusing on teacher and child talk during circle time, types of activity, student engagement, and classroom quality. Here's what they found:

- Most teachers used only three of the possible activities during circle time, most often the calendar, morning message, and singing, dancing or repeating letters and numbers.
- All these activities were mostly teacher-managed, with little student discourse, critical thinking, or problem solving.
- Teacher talk during circle time was twice as prevalent as child talk.
- The calendar activity was quite abstract for preschool children.
- The morning message, which involved close attention to letters and words, was often time-consuming; the researchers thought this important skill-building would be better handled in individual or small-group instruction.
- Both teacher and student talk consisted mostly of statements and close-ended questions rather than open-ended queries and extended back-and-forth exchanges. In other words, people were talking *at* each other rather than *with* each other.
- Few new words or concepts were introduced in circle time.
- The quality of instruction, as measured on the CLASS rubric, was low, especially in the instructional support realm.
- Children's engagement decreased significantly as circle time progressed.

In short, conclude Bustamante, Hindman, Champagne, and Wasik, "circle time is not, on the whole, closely aligned with optimal practices in early childhood."

That said, the researchers found that circle time *could* be productive when instruction was more rich, warm, and structured. Even modest improvements in pacing and instructional quality, they found, made a difference. They identified two areas that could be improved relatively easily:

- *Rich exchanges* – One of the most fruitful circle time activities was children sharing what they did the previous evening or weekend or offering a piece of information about their lives. This kind of sharing tended to promote open-ended questions from teachers and increased back-and-forth exchanges. It also gave children a chance to practice gathering and vocalizing their thoughts and allowed teachers to repeat and extend children's statements and deepen their understanding of concepts.

- *Maintaining engagement* – The researchers noticed that children were quite engaged at the beginning of circle time but much less so as the minutes ticked by. This happened more often when circle time went longer than 20 minutes and when teachers devoted more time to managing behavior and less to content. "One critical consequence," say Bustamante, Hindman,

Champagne, and Wasik, “is that because circle time is generally the first organized activity in the day, children exposed to low-engagement circle times may deplete their resources for managing attention, emotion, and behavior at the very outset of the school day, setting the stage for difficulty throughout subsequent instructional periods.” This suggests that teachers should shorten circle time, keep the pace brisk, and use more-engaging activities “so that children remain challenged and interested within the context of a comfortable structure.”

“Moving forward,” the researchers conclude, “researchers and practitioners alike should focus on how we can more effectively capitalize on circle time to improve the depth of the content and the quality of teacher-child interactions. With time and attention at such a premium in early-childhood classrooms, especially in high-poverty communities, it would be unfortunate not to maximize the quality of circle time and start the day on a path toward quality learning and engagement.”

“Circle Time Revisited: How Do Preschool Classrooms Use This Part of the Day?” by Andres Bustamante, Annemarie Hindman, Carly Champagne, and Barbara Wasik in *The Elementary School Journal*, June 2018 (Vol. 118, #4, p. 610-631), <https://bit.ly/2ld5s3D>; the authors are at andres.bustamante5@gmail.com, annemarie.hindman@temple.edu, ahindman@temple.edu, and barbara.wasik@temple.edu,

[Back to page one](#)

3. What Influences Elementary Teachers’ Beliefs About Mathematics?

In this article in *American Educational Research Journal*, James Spillane (Northwestern University), Megan Hopkins (University of California/San Diego), and Tracy Sweet (University of Maryland) say that K-12 educators are involved in an ambitious effort to improve mathematics instruction. “Reformers argue that students should develop more-sophisticated understandings of what it means to do mathematics,” say Spillane, Hopkins, and Sweet, “including solving mathematical problems, articulating conjectures, and reasoning with others about mathematical ideas, so that they come to appreciate mathematical activity as more than computation.”

Since math teaching in the past was much more focused on procedures, the reform movement, say the authors, “necessitates sizable shifts in the mathematics content that is taught, the academic tasks on which students work, and the ways in which students interact with teachers and one another.” For many teachers, these are significant mindshifts, requiring changes in beliefs as well as classroom practices. Spillane, Hopkins, and Sweet report on their one-year study of teachers’ beliefs about mathematics in the 14 elementary schools in a district implementing a reform math curriculum (*Investigations*), focusing particularly on what influenced teachers’ beliefs.

What teachers believe about instruction is “well established by the time they enter college,” say the authors, “often through an extended ‘apprenticeship of observation’ to teaching, and tends to resist alteration.” Those beliefs influence planning, instructional decision making, and classroom practices. If teachers believe math involves learning a set of procedures for getting correct answers, that will have a major effect on how they teach and assess. This

traditional belief system will also affect teachers' receptiveness to reform initiatives, unless their beliefs are changed so that they *believe their way into a new way of acting*. But it's also possible that changes in classroom practices can affect teachers' beliefs so they *act their way into a new way of believing*.

Spillane, Hopkins, and Sweet found that in this school district, there were small but significant gains in teacher beliefs that supported reform mathematics. The key seemed to be whom teachers interacted with in two important venues: a district mathematics committee and school-based professional learning community meetings examining student assessment results. The more teachers interacted with reform-minded colleagues, the more they moved in that direction; the more they interacted with traditionally oriented colleagues, the less they accepted reform beliefs.

Interestingly, the researchers found that most teachers didn't always gravitate to colleagues with the same belief system. The structure of PLCs and the math committee – which brought together teachers, instructional coaches, lead teachers, principals, and district leaders – was helpful, in most cases, in bringing them into contact with those of reform views, influencing the overall positive shifts the researchers documented. New curriculum materials and common math assessments that embodied the reform content were also instrumental in shifting teacher beliefs. Still, fully 30 percent of the teachers in the study became *less* supportive of reform mathematics.

“School District Educational Infrastructure and Change at Scale: Teacher Peer Interactions and Their Beliefs About Mathematics Instruction” by James Spillane, Megan Hopkins, and Tracy Sweet in *American Educational Research Journal*, June 2018 (Vol. 55, #3, p. 532-571), <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0002831217743928>; Spillane can be reached at j-spillane@northwestern.edu.

[Back to page one](#)

4. A Consumer Reports-Type Review of Online Literacy Resources

In this Thomas B. Fordham Institute white paper, Melody Arabo, Jonathan Budd, Shannon Garrison, and Tabitha Pacheco (all frontline K-12 educators) analyzed online tools for improving K-12 reading and writing skills:

- *Newsela* <https://newsela.com> – This website provides high-quality news articles, historical documents, and other texts for students in grades 2-12, covering science, law, health, arts, sports, opinion, and economics. Users can toggle between five levels of reading difficulty (on the Lexile scale). There are also real-time assessments testing comprehension with multiple-choice questions and writing prompts. Teachers can get free access, with content suitable for elementary and secondary students, or pay for Newsela PRO with additional features. The Newsela website also has an annotation tool and text sets of news articles, biographies, speeches, and historical documents organized around central themes or topics.

“Overall, Newsela is an excellent resource for classroom teachers,” concluded the Fordham review. “Its articles are interesting, gathered from trusted media sources, and

presented at multiple levels of complexity so that students with varying reading skills can access the text. The site is easy to use, and.. students find it engaging.”

- *Readworks* <https://www.readworks.org> – This free site has more than 2,600 classroom-ready K-12 informational and literary passages, paired texts, text sets, lessons, comprehension units, and novel study units, all accompanied by question sets. All passages are searchable by keyword, grade, Lexile level, topic, text type, and skill or strategy. Topics include civics and government, technology and engineering, and world history; skills include author’s purpose, cause and effect, drawing conclusions, and vocabulary in context. Many of the paired passages have “StepReads” – slightly more accessible versions of the original passages.

The Fordham review was critical of the accessibility of some material on the ReadWorks site, but said it was “a valuable resource that provides teachers with a wealth of reading comprehension resources at no cost.”

- *Achieve the Core* <https://achievethecore.org> – This free website has resources to help implement Common Core and other college-and-career standards, including PD modules, classroom lessons with annotations, videos, planning tools, student writing samples, math tasks, and assessments. “Achieve the Core is well organized,” said the Fordham review. “Though its sheer number of resources can be overwhelming at first, once familiar with it, the site is easy to navigate.” The review gave special praise to the site’s “expert pack” text sets.

The Fordham review compared Newsela, Readworks, and Achieve the Core on six key features:

- Provides high-quality texts aligned to Common Core: *All three*
- Texts are intentionally ordered: *Achieve the Core only*
- Assessments are available for each passage: *Newsela and Readworks*
- Assessments are available for the text sets: *ReadWorks only*
- Classroom activities are provided for each text within a text set: *Achieve the Core only*
- Texts are available at multiple reading levels: *Newsela and ReadWorks*

- *Curriculet* <https://www.waterford.org/curriculet/> – This online grade 3-12 digital library (with free and paid versions) has books and news articles for students’ independent reading, and to supplement a standard curriculum. Texts contain periodic “checkpoints” to assess student engagement and comprehension. “One significant weakness,” said the Fordham review, “is the store’s search feature, which does not allow users to select texts based on Lexile level or interest outside of basic categories such as new releases, poetry, children’s literature, and historical fiction. Despite this limitation, however, Curriculet is a helpful resource for teachers looking for reputable reading texts and accompanying assessments that can be used for either individual students or small groups, depending on reading level and need.”

- *Lexia Reading Core5* <https://www.lexialearning.com/products/core5> – This paid PreK-5 literacy site, aligned to Common Core standards, is adaptive and operates like a game: students begin with on-grade-level texts, activities, and assessments, and the program adapts to become more or less challenging based on their performance. The site also has a scope and

sequence, lesson scripts, and suggestions for students who are struggling with an online activity. The Fordham review said this site was “well-organized, thorough, and easy to follow, covering many components of reading instruction... engaging for students, aligned to the Common Core State Standards, and provides real-time actionable performance data for teachers...” However, the “biggest weakness is its cost. Teachers looking to enhance their classrooms may need to look for something more affordable – or free.”

- *Quill* <https://www.quill.org> – This free website has grade 1-12 Common Core-aligned digital worksheets in grammar, vocabulary, and writing skills (there’s also an \$80-a-year teacher premium package (as of 2017) that provides more detailed student reports). The site has a variety of materials and genres, including fiction, mythology, and historical documents. This site has no multiple-choice questions; students have to respond to reading passages by writing complete sentences, and if their response is incorrect or incomplete, they have to try again. Quill also has a diagnostic assessment that can place students at appropriate lessons.

“After poring over this site and exploring its activities,” concluded the Fordham review, “I definitely recommend Quill to elementary language arts teachers. The most significant advantage is that the tool measures proficiency on the grammar-specific skills that students are expected to acquire under the Common Core standards. It also reduces the amount of grading, so it will save teachers time...” The site specializes in grammar, editing, and sentence-writing skills, so it’s not the place for writing lengthy essays. It’s not a game-based site, so it’s not ideal for students who need the motivation of earning points or having a cartoon avatar to keep them engaged. In addition, it’s necessary to get the paid version of Quill to have access to more-detailed reporting on student progress.

- *Writelike* <http://writelike.org> – This free, game-like middle-grade site aims to improve students’ writing craft through analysis, writing exercises, and emulation of master authors. The site has self-guided lessons that scaffold learning on key writing topics like semicolons, similes, and metaphors and ask students to mimic a particular writer’s language and style. The site also has exercises, including:

- Reading a sentence, clearing it from the screen, then attempting to reproduce it verbatim from memory;
- Reordering sentences to get them in the proper narrative sequence;
- Rewriting the content of a text into a different style – such as a fable or book review.

Drills are grouped by different challenges, e.g., spelling and punctuation practice that can be accessed by students or teachers.

“Writelike’s greatest strength,” concluded the Fordham review, “is the creative way in which it exposes students to numerous authentic literary excerpts and strong texts that they can read and emulate. The interactive exercises are fun and will likely keep students engaged, while helping to improve important writing skills such as writing in different styles, rearranging sentences into the correct order, and proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar...” Among the site’s downsides: it may initially be overwhelming to a teacher; it’s not explicit enough about the Common Core standards it covers; certain literary texts may be too sophisticated for typical middle-school students; some of the directions are cryptic and

informal; and students aren't required to write a particular number of words before progressing to the next level (they could proceed by typing a single character).

- *iCivics Drafting Board* <https://www.icivics.org/products/drafting-board> – This free online tool is part of the middle- and high-school civics education site, founded by retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. The iCivics site has curriculum units, lesson plans, games, and other resources on the Constitution, civil rights, and the three branches of government, as well as mini-lessons and brief readings and activities on historical figures, events, and court cases.

iCivics Drafting Board is an interactive writing tool designed to help students develop strong argumentative writing skills while exposing them to important social studies content. Each unit introduces a contemporary civics topic (for example, the electoral college, voting age, military intervention) with brief readings that summarize diverse viewpoints from real and/or fictional people. Students then select evidence to complete a fictional news story summarizing the issue, then choose one side of the issue and make their claim in an argumentative essay. As they draft their essays, students can get one of five levels of support – such as having evidence within the text highlighted or being given a topic sentence. As students draft their essays, a helpful bar tracks progress on their introduction, multiple claims, evidence, a counter paragraph, and the conclusion.

“Overall,” concluded the Fordham review, “iCivics Drafting Board is interactive, easy to use, engaging, and real-world relevant... It is also clear about what it intends – and does not intend – to do.” Drawbacks include the time required to complete each segment (two hours), the need for more clarity on what constitutes mediocre and effective evidence, and insufficient emphasis on judging the quality and quantity of students' responses.

- *ThinkCERCA* <https://thinkcerca.com> – This grade 3-12 site focuses on close reading and writing argumentative essays in history, current events, science, and math (CERCA is an acronym for making claims, supporting claims with evidence, reasoning, counterarguments, and using audience-appropriate language). After an initial assessment of students' reading levels, texts can be customized by Lexile level and students' prior knowledge. ThinkCERCA can be used as a complete ELA curriculum covering Common Core standards, as a supplementary tool, and as a writing program to cultivate cross-curricular ties between ELA and content areas. Lessons are organized in three formats: direct instruction, applied reading and writing, and additional reading practice. ThinkCERCA recommends teaching lessons to the whole class at first until students understand the program.

“Whichever method the teacher chooses,” said the Fordham review, “the paid premium subscription is a must to access the writing portions of the site.” The price as of 2017 was \$40 per student. The site does give students access to their accounts so they can work on assignments from a home computer. Logging into the website can be overwhelming at first because of the “sheer volume of available materials,” but there's support in a 20-minute introductory webinar. Teachers can also explore the website using a filter to find grade level, subject, Common Core standard, theme, or lesson type.

“The Right Tool for the Job: Improving Reading and Writing in the Classroom” by Melody Arabo, Jonathan Budd, Shannon Garrison, and Tabitha Pacheco, edited by Victoria McDougald, Thomas B. Fordham Institute, March 2017, <https://bit.ly/2M0namr>

[*Back to page one*](#)

5. The Upside and Downside of Stress

“We hear that stress can lead to everything from depression to cancer,” says psychiatrist Richard Friedman (Weill Cornell Medical College) in this *New York Times* article. “But the right kind of stress can actually be beneficial. And it’s particularly important for young people, whose brains and bodies are uniquely sensitive to the impact of experience. Stress is really just our body’s response to a challenge. The key to good stress is that the challenge be something you can manage and even master.”

That’s why teachers who give students difficult but do-able work, producing a moderate amount of anxiety, are more effective than teachers who are permissive or tyrannical. “Good teachers know how to push students without making them so anxious that they give up,” says Friedman. “They have found the sweet spot for stress: Too much or too little and people don’t do their best.”

Brain studies have given us new insights into this dynamic. Moderate amounts of stress stimulate the production of adrenaline and cortisol, which enhance the growth of neurons and boost learning, memory, performance, and resilience. But when pressure is too intense, or when people are stressed for long periods of time, the same hormones wreak havoc, shrinking neurons, harming performance, and creating health problems like sleep deprivation, obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

Friedman reports another insight from cognitive science: when people feel in control of a difficult situation, stress doesn’t impair their performance – even if they’re actually not in control. “The idea,” he says, “is that our attitude about stress – something that’s pretty easy to change – can influence whether we experience it as manageable or noxious.”

“The Stress Sweet Spot” by Richard Friedman in *The New York Times*, June 2, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/01/opinion/stress-students-kids-brains-sleep.html>

[*Back to page one*](#)

6. Recommended Steps with a Loved One Suffering from Depression

In this *New York Times* article, Heather Murphy summarizes expert advice on what to do when a friend or loved one is showing signs of severe depression:

- *Don’t underestimate the power of showing up.* You may not feel you can help, but being with the person can make a difference. Acknowledging depression is a good sign, says Norman Rosenthal, a clinical professor of psychology at Georgetown University. “When you shine the light on the shame,” he says, “it gets better.”

- *Don’t try to cheer the person up or offer advice.* Upbeat rebuttals, saying things aren’t so bad, and giving compliments and suggestions can be counterproductive. “Your job as a support person is not to cheer people up,” says psychotherapist and author Megan Devine. “It’s

to acknowledge that it sucks right now, and their pain exists.” You might say what the person means to you or, “It sounds like life is really overwhelming for you right now” and then simply listen.

- *It’s okay to ask if the person is having suicidal thoughts.* “It’s important to know you can’t trigger suicidal thinking just by asking about it,” says Allen Doederlein of the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance. If the answer is yes, ask for specifics and do what you can to steer the person to professional help.

- *Take any mention of death seriously, even if it’s casual.* Ask follow-up questions and take steps to get help if you’re not confident the person is safe. This might involve putting your friend in touch with their therapist, calling a suicide prevention line like 1-800-273-TALK, calling 911 and asking for a crisis intervention team, or getting to a hospital emergency room.

- *Facilitate professional help.* “You alone cannot fix this problem, no matter how patient and loving you are,” says Murphy. “A severely depressed friend needs professional assistance from a psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker, or medical professional.” You can help by doing research on a well-matched professional, making an appointment, and then persisting in making sure the appointment is kept. An important message: Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of.

- *Set boundaries and take care of yourself.* A depressed person can become uncharacteristically self-centered, mean, even belligerent, and it can be hard to know how to respond when a loved one picks fights or sends nasty texts. “You don’t have to attend every argument you are invited to,” says Devine. And it may be necessary to set limits: “It sounds like you’re in a lot of pain right now, but you can’t call me names.” There also have to be limits on the time you devote to the person and the impact visits have on your job or life. A consistent weekly time is better than open-ended promises and sporadic visits.

- *Remember, people do recover from depression.* “It can be hard when you’re in the middle of the storm with a depressed friend to remember that there was a time before, and hopefully an after, this miserable state,” says Murphy. “But it’s essential to remind yourself – and the person you’re trying to help – that people do emerge from depression. Because they do. I have seen it. Every single one of the experts quoted here has seen it, too. But it will take patience and time.”

“What to Do When a Loved One Is Severely Depressed” by Heather Murphy in *The New York Times*, June 10, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/07/health/depression-suicide-helping.html>

[Back to page one](#)

7. The Lifelong Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences

In this *New York Times* article, Emily Badger reports on a Boston study of men and women returning from prison to their neighborhoods and families. The researchers asked questions about their childhood experiences, including, “Did you ever see someone get killed during that time?” Of the 122 men and women in the study, 42 percent answered yes. Some had witnessed more than one killing.

These statistics shocked Bruce Western, one of the researchers. “I’ve never seen anyone be killed,” he said. “I’m 54 years old, and I think I will probably not see that in my life. And it was incredibly common in the lives of the respondents we talked to... The whole ethical foundation of our system of punishment I think is threatened once you take into account the reality of people’s lives.”

Western said there’s an unstated assumption in the criminal justice system that there are two categories of people – victims and offenders – with the latter punished on behalf of the former. That line disappears when we look at the life histories of former prisoners, who have been offenders, victims, participants, and witnesses to violence, sometimes repeatedly. Most were raised in poverty, in environments that were often chaotic, stressful, abusive, and violent, without predictable routines or consistent adult supervision. Studies show that children growing up in these conditions are more likely to have asthma and depression, do less well on standardized tests, fall into unemployment, have mental health problems, and use drugs.

When the criminal justice system deals with offenders from more privileged backgrounds, lawyers often say, “but he’s a good kid,” “he has a bright future,” and advocate for mercy and counseling. By contrast, says Western, with the poor, “There’s neither a past, nor a future.” He believes we need to reconsider the simplified model of offenders-and-victims and allow more support and second chances for those who experience extreme trauma as children.

“As a Child, Did You Ever See Someone Get Killed?” by Emily Badger in *The New York Times*, May 28, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/25/upshot/have-you-ever-seen-someone-get-killed.html>

[Back to page one](#)

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*If you have feedback or suggestions,
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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
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