Marshall Memo 804

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
September 23, 2019

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"It's especially hard for teachers who have long-developed reputations for being culturally responsive to accept that current students might not see us that way."

Matthew Kay (see item #2)

"Shouting into the wind is, of course, part of the job description for parents, teachers, and anyone else who genuinely cares for the well-being of young people. After all, there are some things we know that they don't."

Angela Duckworth (see item #6)

"I taught you this! We went over this! Don't you remember?"

Teachers' lament after spending hours teaching proper usage (see item #5)

"School boards, administrators, and teachers who impose the systematic study of traditional school grammar on their students over lengthy periods of time in the name of teaching writing do them a gross disservice that should not be tolerated by anyone concerned with the effective teaching of good writing."

George Hillocks (quoted in *ibid*.)

"When I'm sitting there on my couch, reading a book, and my kids are doing their own thing, I like to think, 'I'm parenting right now – they can see me reading this book.'"

Maria Russo, *New York Times Book Review* children's book editor, quoted in "Why Some People Become Lifelong Readers" by Joe Pinsker in *The Atlantic*, September 19, 2019, https://bit.ly/2mqV8Jh

1. A White Teacher Deals an Accusation of Racism from His Students

In this article in *Education Week Teacher*, Boston eighth-grade teacher Colin Turner describes how he was pulled aside by an African-American colleague last October and told that some students thought two statements he'd made were racist. The details:

• Briefing students for a field trip, Turner (who is white) said, "Remember that you are representatives of our school, your families, and our neighborhood, and people at the museum may judge us accordingly." A student asked, "What do you mean, judge us?" Turner replied, "I mean, people at the museum will see students from Roxbury, mostly students of color, and they will form an opinion about all students who look like you. I don't agree with it, I don't like it, but that's the way it is. So act in a way that represents yourselves well."

• During a discussion on careers, students talked about being nurses, baseball players, doctors; then a Cape Verdean student said he wanted to be an engineer. "That's great, Franco!" said Turner. "There aren't many people of color in that career. You'll be a pioneer. Good for you!"

Seeing the stricken look on his face as she relayed students' concerns, Turner's colleague said, "I know you're not a racist, and I told the students that I would have said the same thing to them. But they're not used to hearing that kind of thing from a white teacher. I realize you had good intentions, but their truth is more important than your intent."

For the rest of the day, Turner struggled to process the conversation. At first he was defensive: *Of course I'm not racist! I chose to teach in a mostly black and Latinx school. I've worked and lived here almost as long as they have. Don't they know who I am? These kids don't know what they're talking about. They are the ones making this a racial thing. Or maybe they're just trying to test me, and distract me from teaching.* Over dinner that evening, he thought of strategies to placate them. *I need to fix this. But how do I convince them I'm not racist?* By bedtime, he was feeling guilty. *I'm a failure. My comments were tone deaf at best, and racist at worst. What else have I said?*

The next morning, after a talk with his wife (also a Boston middle-school teacher), Turner was determined to have an authentic dialogue about race with his students, but he knew he had some homework to do. He talked again with the colleague who had passed along students' concerns, re-read parts of *Stamped from the Beginning* by Ibram Kendi and an article on white fragility by Robin DiAngelo, and spoke to a friend who teaches in New York City and does anti-racism work.

"As I discussed, reflected, and read," says Turner, "I began to see this from my students' perspective. Their teachers have been white women or white men, with few

exceptions. They get to eighth grade, and their white male history teacher, in the second month of school, implies that white people would form judgments about their entire racial community if they didn't behave well in a museum (a white space). Most of my students have probably heard negative stereotypes about their racial identities from other white teachers before, and are sensitive to them. From their position, anger and rebellion were appropriate reactions; pushing back was a healthy response. The more I thought about it, the clearer it was. What I said to students in those two instances was inappropriate and insensitive. My intentions were irrelevant. What mattered was the impact on my students. Did I really need to bring up race? Couldn't I have expressed high expectations without referring to racial identity? The pain I caused my students was what I needed to address – and repair."

Over the next several weeks, Turner created a unit on identity, race, and power with his students. He posted Kendi's definition of racism on the wall: *Any concept that regards one racial group as inferior or superior to another racial group in any way*, and also a definition of anti-racism: *All racial groups are equal*. Students used these to examine statements made by national political figures, asking, "Is this a racist idea? If so, what makes it racist?" Students discussed and wrote and worked through their ideas together. "It took time, repetition, mistakes, and re-do's," he says. "I had to constantly check my ego, and remind myself, 'This is about them, not you. Slow down and listen with empathy.'"

Gradually the classroom climate shifted, with students seeing that their teacher genuinely cared and was trying. Over the spring, there were several times when students called Turner on words they considered offensive, and he was able to apologize, win back their trust, and move on. "In the end," he says, "it turns out my students didn't need me to say anything to convince them that I wasn't racist. They needed me to listen with empathy, ask questions, and help them develop and practice the language to analyze issues of race on their own."

Turner is grateful to the colleague who passed along the students' concerns: "When she took the risk of telling me about their discomfort, she put students first." Reflecting on the incident, he sees the importance of spending more time at the beginning of every school year building relationships with students and earning their trust. "They may have had overtly or covertly racist teachers in the past," he says, "and be on edge, waiting for me to say something that invalidates or puts down their identities. I learned that I have to be responsible for my identity, which means thinking about how my students will interpret what I say, and understanding that as a white, middle-class man, I've had the privilege of not having to be aware of how my identity may influence the way people hear me. I need to be willing to learn as much from my students as they learn from me. That is the empathetic, supportive, anti-racist teacher that I want to be, and what our students deserve."

"'Mr. Turner, Are You a Racist?' A White Teacher Grapples with His Privilege" by Colin Turner in *Education Week Teacher*, September 18, 2019, https://bit.ly/2lXaF38

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2. A Teacher Keeps Up with His Students' Lingo

(Originally titled "Confronting Inequity: Learning the Language")

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, Matthew Kay tells how sociology teacher James Callahan keeps a Google spreadsheet of his students' ever-evolving slang – for example, *slaps* means of good quality, *low-key* means not obvious, and a *snack* is an attractive person. One of Callahan's students tweeted his admiration for the dictionary and the comment was retweeted over 170,000 times.

Kay loves this teacher's "authentic personal enthusiasm about his students' language and customs… Words new to him were not ugly, or lazy, or wrong – but *intriguing*. It's not hard to imagine him feeling the same way about students' ethnic names, or gender pronouns, or religious practices. If we seek to lead our students through inclusive, equity-focused instruction, we must first be genuinely interested – not publicity-seeking, faux interested – in who they are."

Kay is struck by the fact that Callahan constantly revises his slang dictionary, adding new terms and deleting ones that have fallen out of favor. "Just as software requires frequent updates," he says, "so too does our familiarity with students' cultures and shifting identities. Ground gained last year is not necessarily ground held this year – and woe to the teacher who leans too heavily on last year's understandings."

"It's especially hard," Kay continues, "for teachers who have long-developed reputations for being culturally responsive to accept that current students might not see us that way… We must never accept a static understanding of who they are, where they come from, or where they want to go… It's about developing substantive, honest relationships with our students, so that we can trust each other in the work that lies ahead."

"Confronting Inequity: Learning the Language" by Matthew Kay in *Educational Leadership*, September 2019 (Vol. 77, #1, pp. 90-91), https://bit.ly/2munqCv; Kay is the author of *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom* (Stenhouse, 2018).

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3. Unexpected Insights from "Underperforming" Students

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, veteran literacy educator Cynthia Ballenger describes two students, Darius and Cesar, who didn't seem "with" her as she taught reading, who fooled around, whom she corrected a lot, and whom other teachers said were not performing well. Ballenger made a practice of taking notes as she worked with students in small groups, so she has a detailed record of her interactions with these students – and how they ended up surprising her with previously unseen strengths. "I do not want to accuse anyone else," she says. "However, as someone who is frequently in and out of many classrooms, I can verify that the sort of thing I will describe happens all the time in many subject areas and in the very best classrooms."

• *Darius* – Ballenger describes working with a group of three fifth- and sixth-grade boys on the Jerry Spinelli book, *Maniac Magee*. Two of the students gave what seemed like the

correct answer to a question she asked, but Darius's response was completely different and seemed wrong. Questioned about another passage, the other boys gave "correct" answers and Darius came up with something completely different, more focused on the smells and sights in the passage (beer and urine) than the inferential meaning Ballenger was looking for (racism). "He seemed to almost be in the smelly room," says Ballenger, puzzled.

"Herein lay the problem," she says. "I knew that Darius was an intelligent student, yet I was likely to stay with my initial assessment that he was missing something. Instead, what I needed to do was to explore the possibility that Darius was responding this way not because there was something better he could not yet do, but because his response was what he found useful, powerful, and compelling. I needed to ask, *Why does he respond the way he does? What does it get him?* Then, perhaps the most important question: *What might I see if I tried his way?*"

Reflecting further, Ballenger realized that she was intent on getting students to see the abstract meanings, the "explanatory principle" of the book, pushing for a "distanced response." Darius resisted because he was so engrossed with the story, including having a crush on Amanda Beale, one of the characters. "It seems to me that there should be a way to join both of these response types," says Ballenger, "that a real appreciation of literature should not privilege the abstract, the distanced, from emotional engagement and, in this particular case, from pain. Darius had a lot to offer all students. His ability to connect with literature was in fact strong and vital; he was able to forge useful and supportive connections to an understanding. Yet, instead, from me (and, I believe, from other teachers), he was receiving a message that his approaches to literature and perhaps in other areas of school were less useful, less powerful than those of others."

• *Cesar* – Ballenger had been working with this boy for several years, and knew that his home situation was not ideal and he was doing poorly in his classes. Teachers frequently sent him to Ballenger when he misbehaved. Ballenger had her class reading Louis Sachar's book, *There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom*, a book about Bradley, a boy who does poorly in school, gets in trouble, has no friends, and develops a close bond with a school counselor. During a discussion about first- and third-person narratives, Cesar raised his hand and asked, "Why doesn't Bradley say I?" Ballenger explained the narrative style of the book, but Cesar was insistent that since Bradley was the protagonist and the story was told from his perspective, the narrative should be first-person. Like Darius, Cesar was deeply engrossed in the story, and for him the lesson about narrative style missed an important critique.

A week or so later, Cesar disagreed with his classmates, saying that *There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom* was nonfiction. "We stopped," says Ballenger. "The other students remonstrated. They told him that it could be real, but it was not. There could be a boy like Bradley, but there was no such boy. They were very nice and very clear, but Cesar did not move an inch. He just disagreed. He said repeatedly that the book was true, nonfiction." Ballenger was stunned and uncertain what to do. Out of curiosity, she picked a private moment and had Cesar sort a few books into fiction and nonfiction piles, and he did so correctly.

Some time later, Ballenger had an epiphany: she remembered reading a book and feeling, "This really happened. This isn't the author's art or imagination. This really happened to the author." That was what Cesar felt about the Louis Sachar book. It turns out that Sachar wrote *There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom* shortly after getting married to a school counselor, and he used his wife's real name, Carla, in the book. "Cesar was on to something," says Ballenger. "Sachar was trying especially hard to be true to something in his life. It may be fiction, but it also appears to be true."

At this point, she concludes, "I had gained a lot of insight into the book from Cesar. He showed me things that I had not seen in it. He also showed me that he knew the conventional definitions of fiction and nonfiction but that there may be nuances I should consider. I had increased respect for the quality and energy of his reading… Cesar was determined to tell us, when he refused to accept that the book was fiction, that the author was writing what felt true. What made Cesar feel that? How did he know this about Sachar's writing in this book? I wish I had discussed all this with him and then with the class. We could also have wondered with Cesar why Bradley did not say I. Why was this book not written in the first person? Cesar could have led us into many areas of literary discussion. He deserved to shine."

"Reframing the Achievement Gap: Lessons from Puzzling Students" by Cynthia Ballenger in *The Reading Teacher*, September/October 2019 (Vol. 73, #2, pp. 141-147), available to ILA members or for purchase at https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/trtr.1810; Ballenger can be reached at cindyballenger@gmail.com.

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4. What Makes a Teaching Assignment Challenging?

(Originally titled "A Tough Assignment")

In this *Educational Leadership* article, former teacher Paul Bruno reports on a study he did with University of Southern California colleagues on new teacher assignments in Los Angeles public schools. Here's what they found:

• *Working conditions* – Professional realities within a school are key to all teachers' success, and there are four dimensions:

- Instructional load: the challenges posed by class size, number of preps, and students' achievement and language needs;
- Homophily: shared characteristics with students and co-workers;
- Colleague quality: teachers' and supervisors' qualifications, skills, and attendance;
- Professional culture: degree of autonomy and productive relationships with administrators, colleagues, and parents.

These factors are critically important to teaching and learning, especially for rookies.

• *Inequitable placements* – On all four of these dimensions, rookies get more challenging placements than veteran teachers. This reduces the chances that new teachers will be successful, and increases the probability that students with the greatest needs will have teachers who are inexperienced and less effective. Why is this pattern so common? Largely because teachers with more seniority are able to choose what they consider more-desirable

placements, and their definition of "desirable" very often means working with less-challenging students and more-sympatico colleagues. Bruno suggests that collective bargaining agreements that give seniority preference might be revised, or, at the very least, novice teachers might be steered toward assignments that increase their chances of success.

• *A rising tide* – "Since higher levels of instructional load are associated with lower student achievement growth no matter what the teacher's level of experience," says Bruno, "just moving novices out of (and veterans into) placements with higher instructional load might do little to improve overall working conditions and student achievement." The challenge for district and school leaders is improving working conditions for *all* teachers so assignments aren't a zero-sum game. Some considerations:

- Schoolwide improvements in school culture, student discipline, and attendance can mitigate instructional load in all classrooms.
- A teaching assignment that is very difficult for one teacher may be do-able for another.
- Effective professional development can help novice teachers navigate a difficult assignment successfully.

"A Tough Assignment" by Paul Bruno in *Educational Leadership*, September 2019 (Vol. 77, #1, pp. 72-76), available to ASCD members or for purchase at https://bit.ly/2kBNawd

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5. The Wrong and Right Way to Teach Mechanics and Usage

In this *Cult of Pedagogy* article, Jennifer Gonzalez channels the frustration of educators who spend hours teaching capitalization, punctuation, spelling, parts of speech, and grammar, only to see students continuing to make the same mistakes. "Their teachers' voices rise in chorus," says Gonzalez: "I taught you this! We went over this! Don't you remember?"

Gonzalez shares the takeaway from decades of research: "Grammar taught in isolation, outside the context of meaningful writing, has been found to have no significant impact on the quality of student writing; in fact, excessive drills can have a detrimental impact on it." In an exhaustive 1984 study, George Hillocks went a step further: "School boards, administrators, and teachers who impose the systematic study of traditional school grammar on their students over lengthy periods of time in the name of teaching writing do them a gross disservice that should not be tolerated by anyone concerned with the effective teaching of good writing."

So what should teachers do instead? Gonzalez summarizes the best thinking on effective ways to teach mechanics and usage:

• *Give students plenty of time to read and write*. Building daily lessons around some form of reading and writing workshop is a good place to start, using real books, articles, and other texts that will foster a love of reading. "Regular exposure to lots and lots of good writing," says Gonzalez, "will naturally improve the correctness of students' writing. This is much less likely to happen with scripted reading programs or day after day of reading passages that have no meaningful context." Writing can be informal (journal entries and free-writes) and formal pieces that go through the full writing process. Taking the leap of faith to abandon traditional grammar lessons will free up the time for all this.

• *Curate a database of quick grammar lessons*. Students should have ready access to high-quality, self-instructing worksheets, YouTube videos, or quick online lessons to address specific errors they're making – for example, your/you're, there/their/they're. See the article link below for suggestions on Grammar Gap Fillers for common errors students make.

• *Have students do individual lessons as needed*. Students can be directed to these resources as needed – or direct themselves as they notice or get feedback on specific errors they're making in their daily writing.

• *Understand that this is a process*. "You will never, ever be able to teach in such a way that all students are error-free," says Gonzalez, "and even students who understand the rules will occasionally mess up. Spend 10 minutes on social media and you'll see that most adults are still constantly making grammar errors. So rather than try to fix it once and for all, get your students reading and writing as much as possible and help them develop a personalized, proactive approach to producing correct writing."

"How to Deal with Student Grammar Errors" by Jennifer Gonzalez in *The Cult of Pedagogy*, July 30, 2017, https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/grammar-spelling-errors/

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6. Advice Jujitsu

In this *Character Lab* article, Angela Duckworth (University of Pennsylvania) says many parents feel like they're "shouting into the wind" when they give advice to their teens:

- *Did you know that you'd be able to concentrate better if you got more sleep?*
- *If you put your keys in the same place every day, you'd be less likely to lose them.*
- *Try making a to-do list at the start of the weekend; it will help you manage your time.*

"Shouting into the wind is, of course, part of the job description for parents, teachers, and anyone else who genuinely cares for the well-being of young people," says Duckworth. "After all, there are some things we know that they don't." But the advice is rarely taken.

Duckworth's colleague, Lauren Eskreis-Winkler, suggested a different approach: having teens give advice to younger students. In a recent study by Eskreis-Winkler and others, high-school students who were asked to give younger peers advice on study strategies and other ways to do better academically improved their own report card grades.

"Don't underestimate the power of kids mentoring kids," says Duckworth. "Young people are wiser than we think, and both sides may benefit." Some prompts: *Your sister is a little stressed about final exams. What can she do to manage that?* and *I know some people feel worse about themselves after scrolling through their Instagram feed. What do you think they should do to feel better?*

"Give and You Shall Receive" by Angela Duckworth in *Character Lab*, September 15, 2019, https://thriveglobal.com/stories/how-to-help-teenagers-prioritize-well-being-angela-duckworth/
Duckworth can be reached at aduckworth@characterlab.org.

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7. Maximizing the Impact of Those Who Supervise and Evaluate Principals

In this article in *Phi Delta Kappan*, Rebecca Thessin (George Washington University) and Karen Seashore Louis (University of Minnesota) share three recommendations for getting the most from the vitally important role of principal supervisors:

• *Build trust*. In the business world, executive coaches usually work outside the chain of command, but principal supervisors combine supervision, coaching, and evaluation. "For this kind of tricky professional partnership to succeed," say Thessin and Louis, "supervisors and principals must first establish a relationship built on a strong sense of trust, in which they share an equal commitment to reflecting on their work, giving honest feedback, and refining their practice as instructional leaders."

• *Maximize stability*. Districts often move principal supervisors around as they reorganize the hierarchy, which undermines relationship-building with school leaders. When a supervisor-principal relationship is working well, it should be left in place for a period of years.

• *Keep growing*. Those who supervise principals "need to advocate for and lead their own learning by serving as mentors for each other and by seeking coaching from their own supervisors," say Thessin and Louis.

"Preparing Effective Principal Supervisors" by Rebecca Thessin and Karen Seashore Louis in *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 2019 (Vol. 101, #1, p. 48), https://bit.ly/2l2AQFA; the authors can be reached at rthessin@gwu.edu and klouis@umn.edu.

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8. Being Selective with Online Materials

In this article in *Social Education*, Jennifer Gallagher (East Carolina University), Katy Swalwell (Iowa State University), and Elizabeth Bellows (Appalachian State University) remember being told, when they were social studies teachers, to "beg, borrow, and steal" curriculum materials and not feel they had to create every lesson from scratch. Lots of teachers follow this advice, scouring the Internet (Pinterest, Teachers Pay Teachers) for resources they can download or adapt for their classrooms.

There's lots of good material out there, say Gallagher, Swalwell, and Bellows, but with little quality control, "these sites can act as turbocharged conduits for bad ideas disguised as 'cute' lessons… If we are not careful, teachers can inadvertently send problematic and mixed messages about the social world through curriculum from all different disciplines." Teachers need "critical literacy habits" to pick material that is high-quality, multicultural, and justice-oriented. Here are the authors' suggestions for critically appraising online curriculum materials (Yes, Maybe, or No for each, with comments)

• Purpose:

- Does the activity, resource, or idea support my inquiry question, standards, or learning objectives?
- Is it appropriately challenging for my students? Does it require critical thinking?
- Does it purposefully support students becoming global, democratic citizens?
- Is the learning goal commensurate with how much time and resources it will take?

• Reliability:
  - Is the content accurate? Can it be corroborated with other credible sources?
  - Does the author have expertise in the discipline, in pedagogy, or in my context?
  - Are the representations of people and communities authentic and nuanced?
  - Is the content up to date?
• Perspective:
  - Does the content reflect my students' cultures or contexts?
  - Does the content give my students windows into new cultures or contexts?
  - Does it help my students question dominant ideas about what is normal or good?
  - Am I sure that this activity, resource, or idea will not harm students – especially those with marginalized identities and/or backgrounds?

"'Pinning' with Pause: Supporting Teachers' Critical Consumption on Sites of Curriculum Sharing" by Jennifer Gallagher, Katy Swalwell, and Elizabeth Bellows in *Social Education*, September 2019 (Vol. 83, #4, p. 217-224); for NCSS members at https://bit.ly/2maMq1n; the authors can be reached at gallagherj17@ecu.edu, swalwell@iastate.edu, and bellowsme@appstate.edu.

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9. Books to Broaden the Canon

In this article in *Ed. Magazine*, Jill Anderson advocates for the continued relevance of the literary canon with books that stand the test of time and are taught well. In a sidebar, Pamela Mason and Adrienne Almeida (Harvard Graduate School of Education) and Jabari Sellars (a Washington, D.C. middle-school English teacher) suggest some additions:

- *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang
- *America: The Life and Times of America Chavez* by Gabby Rivera
- *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz
- *Born Confused* by Tanuja Desai Hidier
- *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi
- *Finding Langston* by Lesa Cline-Ransome
- *Hey, Kiddo* by Jarrett Krosoczka
- *It's Not Like It's Secret* by Misa Sugiura
- *Kindred and Kindred*, a graphic novel adaptation by Octavia Butler
- *Miles Morales: Spider-Man* by Jason Reynolds
- *Prince of Cats* by Ron Wimberly
- *Some People, Some Other Place* by California Cooper
- *Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller
- *Swing* or *Rebound* by Kwame Alexander
- *Tales of the Mighty Code Talkers* by various authors
- *The 57 Bus* by Dashka Slater
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston

- *This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality* by Jo Ann Allen Boyce and Debbie Levy
- *Toil and Trouble* by Mairghread Scott
- *Your Black Friend* by Ben Passmore

"Hooked on the Classics" by Jill Anderson, Pamela Mason, and Adrienne Almeida in *Ed. Magazine*, Fall 2019 (#164, pp. 28-35), no e-link available

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10. Short Items:

a. Virtual classroom visits – Author Kenneth Davis (*Don't Know Much About History*) is offering a limited round of free virtual visits for middle- and high-school classes to discuss democracy and dictatorships. To have your class considered, fill out the contact form at https://dontknowmuch.com/for-teachers with your school location, grade level, and class size.

"Democracy Is Not a Spectator Sport: The Role of Social Studies in Safeguarding the Republic" by Kenneth Davis in *Social Education*, September 2019 (Vol. 83, #4, p. 180-187)

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b. Online discussions on the Constitution – Teachers can sign up to have their classes discuss constitutional issues with other classrooms. Discussions will be moderated by judges and legal experts. Check it out at https://constitutioncenter.org/learn/constitutional-exchanges.

Spotted in *Social Education*, September 2019 (Vol. 83, #4, p. 210-11)

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c. More debunking of "summer slide" – This *Phi Delta Kappan* article by Megan Kuhfeld (NWEA) reinforces the points made in last week's article #6 from *Education Next*: https://www.kappanonline.org/rethinking-summer-slide-the-more-you-gain-the-more-you-lose/

"Surprising New Evidence on Summer Learning Loss" by Meghan Kuhfeld in *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 2019 (Vol. 101, #1, pp. 25-29); the author can be reached at meghan.kuhfeld@nwea.org.

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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 50 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 Teacher
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