

Marshall Memo 105

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
October 3, 2005

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Quotes of the Week

"Our motto is to learn, laugh, and love again... When they come to us kicking and screaming, I just hold them. That's what they need."

Jacqueline MacDonald, East Baton Rouge elementary school principal
(*Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 28, 2005, spotted in *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*)

"Numerous factors affect student learning, many lying beyond classroom walls and outside of teachers' control... Nevertheless, the impediments to learning in students' environments outside of school should never become a basis for lowering expectations about what can be done to help them learn well in school."

Thomas Guskey (see item #1)

"Every time they administer an assessment, grade a paper, or evaluate students' learning, teachers communicate to students what is most important to learn."

Thomas Guskey (*ibid.*)

"For students to respond to assessment results in ways that keep them trying, they need to know that they are important assessment users, what the learning target is, how the assessment relates to those expectations, what the results mean, and how they can use those results to their own advantage."

Rick Stiggins and Stephen Chappuis (see item #2)

"Student achievement is not just about test scores, but it is demonstrated, in part, by successful performance on standardized tests."

Stephen White in *NASSP Bulletin*, Sept. 2005, p. 103

1. Benjamin Bloom's Mastery Learning – Is It Relevant Today?

In this article, Thomas Guskey argues that one of the most powerful strategies for closing the achievement gap was developed by Benjamin Bloom in the 1970's: mastery learning. Extensive research over the decades has shown that mastery learning can have exceptionally positive effects on student learning. A research meta-analysis in 1990 concluded: "Few educational treatments of any sort were consistently associated with achievement effects as large as those produced by mastery learning." (Kulik, Kulik, and Bangert-Drowns) It has also been suggested that the impressive math achievement of Japanese students in recent decades is largely explained by classroom practices that strongly resemble mastery learning. In addition, researchers have found that mastery learning can improve students' confidence, attendance, engagement, and attitudes toward learning (Guskey and Pigott, 1988).

What *is* mastery learning, and why is Guskey writing about it now? Here's a capsule summary, highlighting the striking links between Bloom's theory and the current focus on formative assessments.

University of Chicago professor Benjamin Bloom is best known for his taxonomy of learning, but in his research in the 1960's, he had another powerful insight. Most teachers, he observed, taught all of their students pretty much the same stuff within the same blocks of time. This worked just fine for some students and they learned a lot. Others who were exposed to the same instruction learned somewhat less. And a third group of students learned very little. In other words, the same teaching delivered in the same amount of time produced huge variations in student learning – the familiar bell-shaped curve of achievement. Over time, Bloom noted, this pattern produces an ever-widening achievement gap.

Bloom also noticed that when teachers gave tests at the end of a curriculum unit, they usually recorded the grades and moved on to the next unit, rarely following up with feedback and guidance or helping students improve. These summative unit tests did little more than catalogue the typical pattern of unequal learning in most classrooms: some students got it, some sort of got it, and some didn't get it at all.

Bloom was troubled by these gap-widening classroom practices and compared them to two situations where learning goes well:

- One-on-one tutoring (perhaps the ideal setting for learning) – When the student makes an error, the tutor immediately points it out (feedback) and follows up by explaining and clarifying (correctives) until the student gets it.
- Academically successful students – When these students make a mistake on a quiz or a test, they do not sulk or blame it on bad luck. They ask the teacher for help, look up the

answer in the textbook or encyclopedia, or go back to the problem and figure out what they did wrong.

Bloom took these insights and figured out a way to apply them to regular classrooms of 25-30 students – mastery learning. This was his plan:

- At the end of each curriculum unit, the teacher gives a brief *formative* assessment and uses the results to give students immediate feedback on their learning so far.
- Students who show mastery on this test (80% or above) go into an enrichment or extension loop involving special projects, reports, academic games, or complex problem-solving tasks.
- Students who are below mastery get individualized corrective instruction and/or are directed to textbook pages, learning kits, and other forms of correctives to straighten out their misconceptions and confusion.
- After one or two class periods working on these correctives, the below-mastery students take another formative test (with different questions) to see if they have mastered the concepts or skills.

Bloom argued that this tailored, “just-in-time” approach would bring the advantages of the one-on-one tutorial and the good habits of high-achieving students into regular classrooms, allowing teachers to nip learning problems in the bud and prevent minor difficulties from accumulating and developing into chronic low achievement. Mastery learning, Guskey explains, “gives teachers a practical means to vary and differentiate their instruction to better meet students’ individual learning needs. As a result, many more students learn well, master the important learning goals in each unit, and gain the necessary prerequisites for success in subsequent units... This, in turn, would drastically reduce the variation in students’ achievement levels [and] eliminate achievement gaps,” squeezing the bell-shaped curve higher and to the right.

During the 1970’s and 80’s, mastery learning was widely adopted in the U.S. and other countries and (as noted above) produced impressive results. Guskey believes that programs that were true to Bloom’s ideas had four essential ingredients:

- *Feedback* – Mastery learning requires regular, formative classroom assessments that give students diagnostic, prescriptive feedback on what they have learned well and what they need to learn better. These assessments can be short pencil-and-paper quizzes, essays, compositions, projects, reports, performance tasks, skill demonstrations, or oral presentations.

- *Correctives* – Since no single method of instruction works best for all students, it’s essential that teachers follow up on formative assessments with differentiated instruction. “To be optimally effective,” Guskey writes, “correctives must be qualitatively different from the initial teaching. They must provide students who need it with an alternative approach and additional time to learn.” This is challenging for teachers, but it’s possible if schools provide time and encourage teacher teams to share ideas, materials, and expertise. The good news is that there are many more options now than there were thirty years ago: CD’s, computer games, web-based activities, etc.

- *Enrichment* – Students who master the initial formative assessment should be challenged to go further in enrichment and extension activities. As with correctives, there are rich resources available to today’s teachers.

There are several ways to handle the management challenge of the correctives and enrichment phase of mastery learning. The two groups can pursue their different learning agendas in the same classroom, or two teachers can divide the groups between two classrooms. A third approach is to divide students into heterogeneous groups and have them work cooperatively until all students master the material.

- *Instructional alignment* – Guskey argues that for mastery learning to be effective, there must be a tight alignment between standards and learning goals, instruction, and assessment. If standards call for higher-order thinking and fluent writing and the teacher covers only lower-order skills and assesses with a multiple-choice test, even the best application of mastery learning will fail to produce high achievement. “Every time they administer an assessment, grade a paper, or evaluate students’ learning,” writes Guskey, “teachers communicate to students what is most important to learn. Using mastery learning simply compels teachers to make these decisions more thoughtfully, intentionally, and purposefully.”

Guskey concludes by touching on some of the ways mastery learning has been misunderstood over the years. A frequent objection is that the corrective/enrichment phase will take too much time and teachers will not be able to cover the curriculum. Guskey agrees that teachers using mastery learning will move more slowly through the first few units. Students need to be introduced to the process and the correctives/enrichment loop takes additional time. But once students are familiar with the process, mastery learning classrooms typically move along at a brisker pace than other classes: students do better on formative assessments, less time is required for feedback and correctives, and all students move into subsequent units with stronger foundational skills and can therefore learn more quickly and efficiently.

“A Historical Perspective on Closing Achievement Gaps” by Thomas Guskey in *NASSP Bulletin*, September 2005 (Vol. 89, #644, p. 76-89), no e-link available

2. Involving Students in Formative Assessments

In this important article in the October *Principal Leadership*, Rick Stiggins and Stephen Chappuis argue that formative (during-the-year) assessments are a far better tool for improving student learning than summative (end-of-the-year) assessments. Summative tests, they write, “aren’t likely to affect specific day-to-day, week-to-week, or even month-to-month instructional decisions. Summative tests typically fail to provide a picture of student learning with sufficient detail to tell teachers how to help individual students.”

Okay, you already knew that. But Stiggins and Chappuis bring a new perspective to the discussion of formative assessments. They argue that it’s not enough to give tests during the year (for example, common assessments, benchmark tests, end-of-course exams, publishers’ quarterly or monthly formative standardized tests, old state tests, and tests assembled from item

banks). They also argue that it's not enough to build data warehouses that more efficiently accumulate, summarize, analyze, and report student assessment results.

All this can help, say Stiggins and Chappuis, but the real key to accelerating achievement is *involving students* in formative assessments. They call this *assessment for learning* and lay out its key components:

- Students know what they are expected to learn from the outset.
- Students partner with their teacher to monitor and adjust their own progress.
- Students play a role in communicating evidence of their learning to others.

“Assessment for learning,” say Stiggins and Chappuis, “rests on the understanding that students are data-based instructional decision-makers, too – a perspective all but ignored in our assessment legacy and in previous approaches to school improvement... Student success does not hinge on more-frequent testing, what teachers and principals do with the results, or how efficiently data are managed, although these things can and do contribute to improved learning. Success also rests, at least in part, on what students themselves do with and about those results.”

Stiggins and Chappuis believe that the psychology of students' reaction to formative tests is all-important. “[Students'] ultimate success at learning,” they say, “will be determined by their emotional reaction to the assessment results. That response can be optimistic or pessimistic. An optimistic response leaves the learner ready to keep trying and informs him or her of what to do next. The learner has the desire to put forth the effort to keep trying. A pessimistic response leaves the learner feeling that the target remains beyond reach and that it's hopeless for him or her to continue trying to learn.”

What can teachers do to increase the likelihood that students will have an optimistic reaction and keep trying? Stiggins and Chappuis suggest the following:

- *Communicate clear learning targets.* Achievement expectations closely aligned with state standards need to be spelled out in clear, student-friendly language and made available to students, teachers, and parents.

- *Show exemplars.* Curriculum goals must be accompanied by models of strong and weak student work. Students need to know what success looks like.

- *Show the road ahead.* Everyone should see a curriculum map that describes the ascending levels of achievement through which students will move within each grade and from grade to grade. Each achievement target should be labeled in terms of knowledge, reasoning, performance skill, or product and linked to its corresponding standard.

- *Measure learning as it happens.* Teachers and students should use assessments to track continuous progress to inform instructional decisions.

- *Give students helpful feedback.* Teachers shouldn't just give grades or scores but should provide focused guidance keyed to the learning target. Teachers and students need to know where they are on the continuum of learning so they can diagnose needs, set goals, plan how to get there, and track progress. The process is cyclical for both teachers and students: assessment, goal-setting, learning, assessment, reflection.

- *Use accurate assessments.* Teachers should use valid assessments appropriate to the kind of learning, e.g., selected response, written response, performance assessment, and direct personal communication to measure student gains in knowledge, reasoning, skills, or products.

- *Share results with teachers, students, and parents.* Data should be collected, stored, retrieved, summarized, and communicated in timely and understandable ways; data should describe student performance to students, teachers, and parents in ways that relate that performance to the intended learning. For students, assessment results should show growth and improvement over time and encourage self-reflection and goal-setting.

“Putting Testing in Perspective: It’s for Learning” by Rick Stiggins and Stephen Chappuis in *Principal Leadership*, October 2005 (Vol. 6, #2, p. 16-20), no e-link available

3. Why the Norfolk, Virginia Schools Won the 2005 Broad Prize

The \$500,000 Broad Prize in Urban Education went to Norfolk, Virginia this year. The 36,000-student district beat out three other finalists based on its impressive gains in student achievement and significant closing of the racial achievement gap: the percentage of African-American fifth graders who met state standards in reading went from 40 to 77 between 1998 and 2005; white fifth graders went from 67 to 90 percent.

Norfolk school officials attributed their student achievement gains to a number of factors, including:

- *Curriculum clarity* – The district teased back Virginia state standards through the grades and wrote clear statements of what students need to know in every subject by the end of each year.

- *Vertical accountability* – The expectation is that each grade will deliver students to the next grade fully prepared.

- *Interim assessments* – Frequent during-the-year tests check on how individual students are learning and whether teaching and curriculum need to be adjusted.

- *Teacher teamwork* – Teachers collaborate in grade-level and subject-matter teams to analyze interim assessment data and plan their teaching.

- *Communities of learners* – School staffs are encouraged to read and discuss books that inform their theory of action on teaching and learning.

“Norfolk, Va., Wins Urban Education Prize” by Catherine Gewertz in *Education Week*, Sept. 28, 2005 (Vol. 25, #5, p. 3), no free e-link available

4. Using the Grow Report in New York City

In this article, a team of researchers describes how New York’s schools contracted with the Grow Network to provide Grow Reports (user-friendly data on annual standardized tests with access to learning resources) to educators and parents throughout the city. Interviews and surveys documented that teachers, principals, and parents took advantage of the information to get a fix on student achievement at the beginning of the school year, plan curriculum, tap into learning resources, differentiate instruction for diverse learners, support collegial

conversations, shape professional development, identify areas of need, target resources, and support self-directed learning.

Researchers noted one limitation of the Grow Report: it relies on a single standardized test. [It also provides only summative data from the previous year, not formative data on learning during the current school year.] Researchers also noted with some concern the way many New York educators use Grow data to identify and give special attention to “bubble” students – those on the cusp of moving from achievement Level 2 to 3 – in order to improve their school’s test scores (which are reported as the percent scoring at Level 3 and 4). However, the article’s overall conclusion was that Grow reports were helpful to educators and parents.

“Linking Data and Learning: The Grow Network Study” by Cornelia Brunner, Chad Fasca, Juliette Heinze, Margaret Honey, Daniel Light, Ellen Mandinach, and Dara Wexler in the *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk* (Vol. 10, #3, 2005, p. 241-267), no e-link available

5. Is DIBELS the Answer for Early Reading Assessment?

This front-page article in the current *Education Week* reports on the controversy surrounding the early-elementary reading assessment known as DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). Developed at the University of Oregon (see <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>), this K-3 reading skills inventory is used in more than 40 states to screen students for potential problems, monitor their progress, and hold schools accountable. Several states mandate the DIBELS for all schools.

The U.S. Department of Education favors DIBELS and consultants for the Reading First program aggressively promote it; as a result, it has become the *de facto* national reading assessment for Reading First and is used in most of the 4,800 schools in the program, as well as thousands of others. The assessments can be downloaded for free, but there is a charge for a data-management system marketed by Wireless Generation in New York and for DIBELS products and training sold by Sopris West, a Colorado company.

How does DIBELS work? It is administered individually to primary-grade students, takes 1-5 minutes per student, and assesses whether students can recognize letters, sound out words, and read aloud fluently. Students are asked to do different assessment tasks as they progress through the grades; for example, kindergarten students must identify as many randomly-listed upper-case and lower-case letters as they can in a minute; K-2 students decode pseudo-words such as “lol” and “tob” as quickly as they can for a minute; grade 1-3 students read a text passage to see how many words they can read accurately in a minute. Software is available to enter students’ responses into hand-held PDA’s that do quick analysis of how many students meet their grade-level benchmarks. *Education Week* quotes teachers who say the test is easy to administer, gives them accurate information, and is not stressful for students.

Virginia is one of the few states that has received permission to use a different assessment – the PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening). Virginia has used this assessment, which was developed at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, in all 135

districts statewide for the last eight years and swears by its classroom usefulness. A small number of other states have permission to use the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) and the Texas Primary Reading Inventory.

Why has DIBELS had the upper hand? *Education Week* notes a close philosophical affinity between the test's developers in Oregon and federal officials who put together the Reading First initiative. "We were all reading the same research and committed to following the evidence and the data," writes Roland Good III, who developed DIBELS. *Education Week* notes that Good was on the assessment committee that evaluated 29 early-literacy tests, including his own product. Good says that his influence on Reading First has been "negligible" and credits other researchers for guiding the feds to favor his assessment.

What are the substantive criticisms of DIBELS? These are the main points noted by *Education Week*:

- *Speed versus comprehension* – "If you want a test of whether kids can read fast with low comprehension, then DIBELS is great," says Michael Pressley, a professor of education at Michigan State University in East Lansing and a former editor of the *Journal of Educational Psychology*.

- *Nonsense words as poor predictors* – Some researchers, including David Pearson, the dean of education at the University of California, Berkeley, question whether children's speed reading nonsense words has anything to do with the ultimate goal of comprehension.

- *Not emphasizing higher-level reading skills* – Michael Pressley is completing a technical report on DIBELS and says that so far, he is finding that DIBELS is an accurate predictor of students' performance on high-stakes state reading tests but does not tell teachers if their students are developing higher-level reading skills, including vocabulary and comprehension.

- *Transparency and utility* – Marcia Invernizzi, the director of the rival PALS assessment, says that DIBELS does not give teachers a clear sense of the underlying reading processes or give them classroom-useful information. Natalie Rathvon, a Maryland consultant and author of *Early Reading Assessment: A Practitioner's Handbook*, agrees: she believes that DIBELS doesn't give teachers clear answers for designing instruction around students' needs. For example, DIBELS tells only if a student does or does not meet that grade's benchmark and doesn't pinpoint the student's actual reading level.

- *Distortion of instruction* – Critics cite the tendency of teachers to teach to what DIBELS measures and give those types of skills [which are correlates of test performance but not the steppingstones that students need to get to higher-level reading proficiency] too much weight as they teach. "These [tested skills] become your end goal," Pressley says. "DIBELS is leading some teachers to infer the wrong end goal, which is to read the words fast."

- *Insufficient research* – "It is not as well developed as the claims that are being made," said Pressley. Pearson agrees, saying that DIBELS has not been studied enough to justify its widespread use in Reading First. Natalie Rathvon, who is generally supportive of DIBELS, calls it "a work in progress."

“National Clout of DIBELS Test Draws Scrutiny” by Kathleen Kennedy Manzo in *Education Week*, Sept. 28, 2005 (Vol. 25, #5, p. 1, 12), no free e-link available

6. Doing the Right Thing in High-School Special Education Classes

In this trenchant article, Greg Conderman and Theresa Pedersen of Northern Illinois University list the challenges that high-school special educators face. They must somehow:

- Prepare their students for employment;
- Teach functional life skills so students can function independently;
- Help students succeed in general-education classes;
- Foster independence by teaching learning strategies;
- Develop collaborative relationships through consultation and co-teaching.

Conderman and Pedersen argue that many high-school special education teachers fail to meet these challenges because they follow an elementary model. “Many teachers,” they write, “get caught in the tutoring trap, which is a costly error because it may be done at the expense of teaching valuable strategies that will enable students to function independently in their content classes... Special educators who spend a great deal of their time tutoring students may create student dependency and develop IEPs aimed only at helping the student earn passing grades in classes or pass the required graduation test rather than systematically considering what students need to function successfully as adults.”

Conderman and Pedersen encourage high-school principals to push their special educators to use more effective practices, including:

- *Mnemonic strategies* – Tricks for enhancing memory using keywords, “pegwords,” and letter strategies.
- *Cognitive behavior modification* – Ways of teaching self-control through increased awareness of cognitive processes and knowledge of how behavior affects academic and behavioral outcomes.
- *Formative evaluation* – Informal, frequent assessments that directly test what is being taught in the school curriculum.
- *Direct instruction* – Explicitly presenting skills in an effective and efficient manner by sequencing the components and subcomponents in a logical way.
- *Learning strategies* – Teaching students steps, rules, and procedures that organize their approach to a task.
- *Metacognitive reading comprehension strategies* – Helping students summarize, understand the ways ideas are organized, use story maps, self-question, and self-monitor.
- *Peer-mediated instruction and intervention* – Having students act as assistants to classmates, either tutoring or modeling academic and/or interpersonal skills.
- *Conflict resolution* – Getting students to work together to resolve minor disputes, resulting in fewer isolated and angry students and a safer classroom.

“Promoting Positive Special Education Practices” by Greg Conderman and Theresa Pedersen in *NASSP Bulletin*, September 2005 (Vol. 89, #644, p. 90-98), no e-link available

7. Middle Schools' "Organizational Health" and Student Achievement

This study of ten Tennessee middle schools found that there was a correlation between student achievement and the "organizational health" of a school. "It is easier to improve the health of middle level schools," the authors wrote, "than it is to change the socioeconomic status of students." Using the middle-school Organizational Health Inventory, researchers measured each school's status on six indicators and found that the first three were most strongly linked to academic achievement.

- *Academic emphasis* – The extent to which the school is driven by a quest for academic excellence. Teachers set high but achievable goals for students, the environment is orderly and serious, teachers believe in their students' ability to achieve, and students work hard and respect those who do well academically.

- *Teacher affiliation* – Teachers are committed to and feel good about each other, their job, and their students and carry out their jobs with enthusiasm.

- *Resource support* – Classroom supplies and instructional materials are readily available.

- *Collegial leadership* – The principal is friendly, supportive, open, and guided by norms of equality. At the same time, the principal sets the tone for high performance by letting people know what is expected of them.

- *Principal influence* – The school's leader is not impeded by the bureaucratic structure and is good at getting what the school needs from his or her superiors.

- *Institutional integrity* – Teachers are protected from unreasonable community and parental demands.

The authors conclude by making a number of recommendations to middle-school educators:

- Assess your school's organizational health by administering the middle school Organizational Health Inventory, use this as baseline data, and track changes over time.
- Evaluate current improvement plans and ask to what degree they contribute to academic emphasis, teacher affiliation, and resource support.
- If you haven't already done so, start a tradition of academic awards ceremonies to show students that you value academic performance.
- Have faculty discussions about what is meant by "high but achievable goals" and an "orderly learning environment," and probe teachers on their true beliefs about their students' ability to achieve and what classroom practices produce the best gains.

"Organizational Health and Student Achievement in Tennessee Middle Level Schools" by Christopher Henderson, Alison Buehler, William Stein, John Dalton, Teresa Robinson, and Vincent Anfara, Jr. in *NASSP Bulletin*, Sept. 2005 (Vol. 89, #644, p. 54-75), no e-link available

8. Short Items:

- a. *Online children's books* – The technology column in this month's *Phi Delta Kappan* explores several websites that give teachers access to children's books:

- The International Children’s Digital Library (ICDL), a project of the University of Maryland’s Human-Computer Interaction Lab: <http://www.icdlbooks.org>. This site has about 800 international books in nine languages for children 3 to 13. Books cannot be downloaded.
- Gayle Gosh Online Library – Books on this site can be printed and shared, and some, like *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, have vintage illustrations: <http://www.bygosh.com>.
- Enchanted Learning is a “user-supported site.” For an annual fee of \$20, teachers can download and print over 17,000 pages, including some excellent non-fiction books. It’s at <http://www.childrensbooksonline.org>.
- Fairy Tales, including Tales of Wonder (scroll way down to get to this entry). This award-winning site has tales and folklore from 15 countries and includes Native American sources. It’s at <http://childrensbooks.about.com/od/fairytales>.
- Kids Stuff Canada has many of the same fairy tales but also has interesting line drawings and coloring-book pages that depict characters like Little Red Riding Hood and characters from Hans Christian Andersen: <http://www.kidstuffcanada.com/en>.

“Online Children’s Books” by Royal Van Horn in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2005 (Vol. 87, #2, p. 103, 169), no e-link available

b. History websites – These websites, collected by *Phi Delta Kappan*, provide history teachers with a wealth of information. The sites are often interactive and have primary source documents, news from around the world, and educational games on historical events:

- <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com> - This website is rich in content and has discussions of historical events, links to other websites for particular topics, glossaries, maps, coverage of current events, and Internet games.
- <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/index.html> - This interactive site lets users examine history through the eyes of those who lived it and integrates primary source documents and multimedia components into classrooms.
- <http://www.authentichistory.com> - A collection of artifacts on American societal values from the antebellum period through 9/11 – photos, audio files, and written works.
- <http://www.teacheroz.com> - Hundreds of links to websites on history and social studies topics from ancient times to the present.
- <http://www.historyforkids.org> - An online reference for elementary and middle levels with project and activity suggestions for teachers and parents on Europe, Asia, and Africa before 1500.
- <http://www.newseum.org> - Access to more than 400 newspapers from 44 countries, also interactive quizzes for all educational levels and interviews with photographers.
- <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/default.htm> - An online museum for teachers and students featuring active learning projects, multimedia components, virtual exhibitions, and resource guides for the study of American history; it includes an online textbook.

- <http://americanhistory.si.edu> - Designed by the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, this site allows users to visit the museum's collections and study American history. It has an interactive timeline, games, classroom activities, and teacher guides.
- <http://www.ushmm.org> - This is the website of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and includes text, historical photos, maps, images of artifacts, and audio clips for teaching and studying the Holocaust at the secondary level. It also reflects on current issues of genocide.
- <http://www.members.aol.com/MrDonnHistory/World.html> - An expansive research tool for students focusing on world history with links to online quizzes, lesson and unit plans for teachers, worksheets, and posters.
- <http://search.eb.com/women> - A multimedia encyclopedia for the study of women in American history, including online study guides and classroom activities.
- <http://ellisland.org> - The site of the Ellis Island Foundation; visitors can search for a relative in the Passenger Arrival Records. Also has personal stories of immigration, collections of historical photographs, and an interactive timeline on which you can click on a period of history and read about the forces driving immigration during that time. Also a guide to conducting a family history and genealogy.

“Making History Come Alive Through Technology” by Kevin Buchholtz and Matthew Helming in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2005 (Vol. 87, #2, p. 174), no e-link available

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Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

If you have comments or suggestions, if you saw an article or web item in the last week that you think should have been summarized, or if you would like to suggest additional publications that should be covered by the Marshall Memo, please e-mail: kim.marshall8@verizon.net

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and best practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 35 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and writer, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 39 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through scores of 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 (with occasional breaks; there were 50 issues in 2003-04).

Subscriptions:

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Website:

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- All back issues (also in PDF or Word)
- A database of all articles to date, searchable by topic, title, author, source, level, etc.
- How to change access e-mail or password

Publications covered:

(those read this week are underlined)

American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American School Board Journal
ASCD SmartBrief
Atlantic Monthly
Bay State Banner
Boston Globe
CommonWealth Magazine
District Administration
Ed. Magazine (Harvard School of Education)
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Update (ASCD)
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Harper's
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
Journal of Staff Development
Middle School Journal
NABE News
NASSP Bulletin
New York Times
New Yorker
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal Magazine
Principal Leadership
Psychology Today
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
Teacher Magazine
Teachers College Record
Theory Into Practice

E-links will be provided whenever possible.