

Marshall Memo 429

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

March 26, 2012

In This Issue:

1. [Leadership lessons from Steve Jobs](#)
2. [How the most effective teams communicate and work together](#)
3. [What happens to team performance when the heat is on](#)
4. [Undermining the teaching of evolution](#)
5. [Ten keys to getting reluctant readers reading](#)
6. [Teaching difficult books](#)
7. [Principals as social-justice leaders](#)
8. [Online young-adult literature](#)
9. Short item: [Angela Lee Duckworth TED talk on “grit”](#)

Quotes of the Week

“[T]he people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do.”
Steve Jobs (see item #1)

“If I’d asked customers what they wanted, they would have told me, ‘A faster horse!’”
Henry Ford (quoted in item #1)

“The most valuable form of [team] communication is face-to-face. The least valuable forms of communication are e-mail and texting.”
Alex Pentland (see item #2)

“This isn’t just a Bible Belt issue. Even the bluest states don’t expect their students to know that humans and apes share ancestry.”
Paul Gross (see item #4)

“I owe a refund to the first 8th graders I taught.”
Carol Jago (see item #6)

“In too many schools, teachers have stopped assigning homework reading altogether, principally because students have stopped doing it. This is the path to perdition for literature study. If a teacher reads *Lord of the Flies* aloud to a class of 10th graders, the only person becoming a better reader is the teacher.”
Carol Jago (*ibid.*)

1. Leadership Lessons from Steve Jobs

In this thoughtful *Harvard Business Review* article, Steve Jobs biographer Walter Isaacson asks us to see beyond Jobs's legendary roughness with people and appreciate the leadership qualities that made him one of the most successful innovators of our time. "The essence of Jobs, I think, is that his personality was integral to his way of doing business," says Isaacson. "He acted as if the normal rules didn't apply to him, and the passion, intensity, and extreme emotionalism he brought to everyday life were things he also poured into the products he made. His petulance and impatience were part and parcel of his perfectionism." Here are Jobs's deeper leadership qualities. How many of them apply to K-12 education?

- *Focus*. When Jobs returned to embattled Apple in 1997, the company was working on a random array of computers and peripherals, including a dozen different versions of the Macintosh. "Stop!" shouted Jobs at the end of a series of product-review meetings. "This is crazy." He grabbed a Magic Marker, drew a grid on a whiteboard, and reset the company's direction:

Desktop computer for consumers	Desktop computer for pros
Portable computer for consumers	Portable computer for pros

The company focused on making four computers, and all other projects were cancelled. This saved the company. From then on, Jobs hosted an annual brainstorming session with his "top 100" people. After much discussion, they would agree on the ten things Apple should be doing next – and then Jobs would cross off the bottom seven. "We can only do three," he'd say.

- *Simplify*. Jobs zeroed in on the essence of each product and eliminated unnecessary components. He learned this playing Atari's Star Trek game as a college dropout; the only instructions were: (1) Insert quarter, and (2) Avoid Klingons. "It takes a lot of hard work to make something simple," he said, "to truly understand the underlying challenges and come up with elegant solutions."

- *Take responsibility end to end*. Jobs insisted on integrating proprietary Apple products with each other for a smoother, simpler experience. He believed the more-open Microsoft and Google approach was a recipe for inferior products. "Sometimes it's nice to be in the hands of a control freak," says Isaacson.

- *When you're behind, leapfrog.* At one point, PC users were ahead of Apple, downloading and swapping music and burning their own CDs. So Jobs created iTunes, the iTunes Store, and the iPod, blowing the competition out of the water. Then he cannibalized the iPod by integrating it into the iPhone.

- *Put products before profits.* Jobs's instructions to the team designing the first Macintosh were to make it "insanely great." "Don't compromise," he said. "Don't worry about price, just specify the computer's abilities." At first, the Mac was too expensive, but ultimately, he believed, it "put a dent in the universe." When a businessman (John Sculley) ran Apple from 1983 to 1993, the company declined. Jobs believes this was because sales and profits became the priority. When Jobs returned, he shifted the focus back to innovative products, and profits followed. [Could the analogy in education be focusing on test scores rather than on teaching and learning?]

- *Don't be a slave to focus groups.* Jobs liked to quote Henry Ford: "If I'd asked customers what they wanted, they would have told me, 'A faster horse!'" "Instead of relying on market research," says Isaacson, "[Jobs] honed his version of empathy – an intimate intuition about the desires of his customers."

- *Bend reality.* The joke at Apple was that Jobs created a Reality Distortion Field, frequently pushing people to do the impossible. "It was a self-fulfilling distortion," says Debi Coleman, a Mac team member who regularly stood up to Jobs. "You did the impossible because you didn't realize it was impossible."

- *Impute.* Jobs believed the packaging of Apple products was really important – opening up the box in which an iMac or iPhone arrived set the tone for the product itself. People really do judge a book by its cover, he believed.

- *Push for perfection.* With Pixar's *Toy Story* and with several products, Jobs stopped the design process at the last moment and made major changes. *Toy Story* became less edgy, the case of the iPhone less masculine, and the iPad had its bottom edge rounded to make it easier to scoop up. Jobs even insisted that the innards of computers (inaccessible to customers) be aesthetically designed. He learned this lesson as a boy when he and his father were building a fence around their house. His father took just as much care on the part behind the house as on the part facing the street. "Nobody will ever know," said Jobs. "But you will know," replied his father.

- *Tolerate only 'A' players.* Jobs was tough on people around him because he wanted to prevent "the bozo explosion" – his term for what happens when managers are so polite that mediocre people feel comfortable sticking around. "I don't run roughshod over people," he said, "but if something sucks, I tell people to their face. It's my job to be honest." "Was all his stormy and abusive behavior necessary?" asks Isaacson. "Probably not. There were other ways he could have motivated his team." But Jobs was who he was, and the rough edges came with passion and inspiration. Looking back, his colleagues at Apple believe the products would have been much less impressive if he had been nicer about mediocre performance, and very few of them left the company of their own accord. "I've learned over the years that when you have

really good people, you don't have to baby them," said Jobs. "By expecting them to do great things, you can get them to do great things."

- *Engage face-to-face.* Jobs hated formal presentations ("People who know what they're talking about don't need PowerPoint," he said) but loved freewheeling in-person weekly meetings, usually without an agenda. "Creativity comes from spontaneous meetings, from random discussions," he said. "You run into someone, you ask what they're doing, you say 'Wow,' and soon you're cooking up all sorts of ideas." He insisted that the layout of the Pixar office building require people to encounter each other frequently in a central atrium.

- *Know both the big picture and the details.* Jobs grasped the overall strategy (the idea of the "cloud", for example) as well as the minutest details of the iMac's color and design.

- *Combine the humanities with the sciences.* Jobs saw himself standing at the intersection of these two fields. Other individuals were better technologists or better artists than he was. "But no one else in our era could better firewire together poetry and processors in a way that jolted innovation," says Isaacson.

- *Stay hungry, stay foolish.* Jobs combined his hippie roots with the technocratic world of Silicon Valley, and as he became fabulously successful, he kept a foot in the world of his adolescence. "While some see them as the crazy ones, we see genius," he said. "Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do."

"The Real Leadership Lessons of Steve Jobs" by Walter Isaacson in *Harvard Business Review*, April 2012 (Vol. 90, #4, p. 92-102), no e-link available; there's another article on leadership lessons from Jobs in Marshall Memo 401.

[Back to page one](#)

2. How the Most Effective Teams Communicate and Work Together

In this *Harvard Business Review* article, Alex Pentland says he and his colleagues in the Human Dynamics Laboratory at MIT have identified the elusive group dynamics of high-performing teams – the "buzz" of energy, creativity, and shared commitment that sets successful teams apart from others. "These dynamics are observable, quantifiable, and measurable," says Pentland. "And, perhaps most important, teams can be taught how to strengthen them."

Pentland and his group used electronic recording devices to gather data on teams in a variety of workplaces – hospital post-op wards, call centers, backroom operations, innovation teams, and others. They noticed these patterns in the most productive teams:

- Everyone on the team talked and listened in roughly equal measure.
- In meetings, members exchanged ideas with each other, not just with the team leader.
- Members faced one another and their conversations and gestures were energetic.
- Members' contributions were short and to the point.
- Members carried on back-channel or side conversations with team colleagues.
- Members interacted informally outside team meetings.
- Members would periodically go exploring outside the team and bring information back.

These were the surface characteristics. Further study revealed three underlying factors that define effective teams' performance:

- *Energy* – The personal voltage in exchanges among team members, for example, a comment followed by a “Yes” or a nod of the head. “The most valuable form of communication is face-to-face,” says Pentland. “The least valuable forms of communication are e-mail and texting.”

- *Engagement* – This measures the distribution of energy among team members. “If all members of a team have relatively equal and reasonably high energy with all other members, engagement is extremely strong,” says Pentland. “Teams that have clusters of members who engage in high-energy communication while other members do not participate don't perform as well.”

- *Exploration* – This is communication outside the team. “Exploration essentially is the energy between a team and the other teams it interacts with,” says Pentland. “Higher-performing teams seek more outside connections, we've found... Successful teams, especially successful creative teams, oscillate between exploration for discovery and engagement for integration of the ideas gathered from outside sources.”

How can this research be put to work? Pentland suggests three steps: (a) Observing and charting a team's interactions, for example, how equally team members are participating in meetings; (b) giving team leaders and members graphic feedback on their interactions and using it to spur more successful practices – for example, the team leader ensuring more equal participation, stressing the importance of face-to-face communication, or bringing in new team members; and (c) measuring results in the team's productivity.

What are the characteristics of ideal team members? Pentland lists the following: they are democratic with their time, communicating with everyone equally and making sure all team members get a chance to contribute; they feel comfortable approaching other people; they listen as much as or more than they talk; they're very engaged with whomever they're listening to – “energized but focused listening”; they connect their teammates with one another and spread ideas around; and they are appropriately exploratory, seeking ideas from outside the group – but not at the expense of group engagement.

“The New Science of Building Great Teams” by Alex “Sandy” Pentland in *Harvard Business Review*, April 2012 (Vol. 90, #4, p. 60-70), no e-link available

[Back to page one](#)

3. What Happens to Team Performance When the Heat Is On

In this *Harvard Business Review* article, Harvard Business School professor Heidi Gardner shares her research on what happens when teams are under high-stakes pressure. *No pressure, no diamonds* is the old saying, but Gardner has found there are counterforces that often undermine the quality of work when people are under pressure. “This is profoundly counterintuitive,” she says. “Shouldn't pressure to do your best work spur you to do your best work?” At first, that's true, but then, imperceptibly, the quality of work declines. Here's why:

- Pressure breeds anxiety, and as the stakes get higher, people become risk-averse.

- They opt for approaches they can easily defend with narrowly defined performance metrics.
- They drive toward consensus in ways that shut down access to critical information.
- “Rather than continuing to build on new ideas, team members seek reassurance that others’ suggestions are valid...” says Gardner. “Enthusiasm for innovation and improvisation gives way to concern for strict professionalism and for covering all the bases.”
- Team members discourage further effort with comments like, “Keep up the debate and we’ll be here all night.”
- Everyone unwittingly begins to defer to authority, defaulting to traditional hierarchical roles and not listening to team members with valuable contributions.
- Everyone values shared knowledge more than unique expertise. This tendency is always there, says Gardner, but in high-pressure situations it becomes more pronounced and can rob the team of talented individuals’ ideas and expertise.

What can be done about this tendency for teams to do less well under pressure? Here are Gardner’s suggestions:

- Make sure there’s relevant expertise on the team. This may mean bringing in new team members.
- Make clear up front what everyone is supposed to contribute. One idea is setting up “contribution scorecards” at the first meeting to highlight which team members have relevant expertise and experience to contribute.
- Check to see that everyone is actually contributing. This is the team leader’s job, or might be delegated to one key team member. “Teams cannot have diffuse responsibility because it just evaporates,” says Gardner.
- If the team gets off track, take the time to “reset” and get back on track, even if this feels like backtracking.
- Make unique knowledge more acceptable to the group. “Those with rare expertise can take steps to avoid becoming marginalized...” says Gardner. “Presenting idiosyncratic information in the context of more-general frameworks can help their anxious teammates make sense of and value their contributions.”

“Coming Through When It Matters Most” by Heidi Gardner in *Harvard Business Review*, April 2012 (Vol. 90, #4, p. 82-91), no e-link available

[Back to page one](#)

4. Undermining the Teaching of Evolution

In this pointed article in the conservative-leaning *Education Gadfly*, University of Virginia emeritus professor Paul Gross bemoans the way the teaching of evolution has been weakened in numerous states’ science standards. Gross believes evolution is one of the 30 or so topics that students *must* learn to be scientifically literate. “It is central to all life science and one of the its most active fields,” he says. Yet it’s presented “weakly, incompletely, even erroneously” in many classrooms.

“Particularly dismaying,” Gross continues, “is how rarely state standards indicate that evolution has anything to do with us, *Homo sapiens*. Even states with thorough coverage of evolution, like Massachusetts, avoid linking that controversial term with ourselves. Only four states – Florida, New Hampshire, Iowa, and Rhode Island – discuss human evolution in their current standards. This isn’t just a Bible Belt issue. Even the bluest states don’t expect their students to know that humans and apes share ancestry.”

Why the failure to teach evolution thoroughly and accurately? Gross believes some politicians have turbo-charged biblical literalism (held by a small minority of Americans) into a red-meat conservative issue. In 2011, bills were introduced in six state legislatures to undermine the teaching of evolution – often under the guise of “scientific alternatives” and “critical thinking.” The Tennessee Senate recently passed a bill that would allow teachers to help students “understand, analyze, critique, and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories” like evolution. Last month, the Indiana Senate approved a measure that would allow the teaching of creationism.

Such measures often fail to become law, but even public discussion of them can affect textbook and content selection and classroom teaching. “All this *political* activity and the sense of popular support that it engenders can easily discourage teachers from teaching evolution, or from giving it proper emphasis,” says Gross, “if only by signaling that it’s a highly controversial subject. Teachers, understandably, fear controversy and potential attack by parents.”

But haven’t objections been raised to Darwin’s theory? “The primary scientific literature has disposed of them all,” says Gross, “as any serious reader can discover. Their real purpose is simply to cast doubt on evolution as a shaper of life forms. But there is no reasonable doubt that Earth is four billion years old and that life’s diversity emerged over eons in steps, usually small, driven by such (evolutionary) mechanisms as genetic change and natural selection.”

One way to put the objections to evolution in perspective is to consider the fact that for many years, people thought the Earth was flat. Gradually, the evidence made clear that our planet is spherical – but then scientists discovered that the Earth is not a perfect sphere: it bulges slightly at the equator and flattens slightly at the poles. “But it would obviously be absurd to think or teach that a spherical Earth is *as wrong* as a flat Earth,” says Gross. “That would be dismissing reality with a triviality. Nibbling with trivial arguments at the heels of evolution is similarly absurd. But it does tend to undermine science education... Meanwhile, for this and many other reasons, science performance of our children against their overseas peers remains average to poor.”

“Still Dissin’ Darwin” by Paul Gross in *The Education Gadfly*, Mar. 22, 2012, <http://bit.ly/GRHkKx>; for the Thomas B. Fordham Institute’s report, *The State of State Science Standards 2012*, click here:

<http://www.edexcellence.net/publications/the-state-of-state-science-standards-2012.html>

[Back to page one](#)

5. Ten Keys to Getting Reluctant Readers Reading

(Originally titled “Taming the Wild Text”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, author and literacy expert Pam Allyn, who has worked for ten years at a New York City residential school for foster children, suggests these ways to create a reading culture:

- *Don't judge the reader.* “[T]he key to lifelong reading is reading frequently and ingesting a high number of words,” says Allyn. We should ask students to describe times when they felt good reading and what they were reading at those times – and encourage that kind of reading. Award-winning books are great, but there’s nothing wrong with students reading below their age reading level, reading about sports, reading websites, reading manuals – as long as it’s building fluency, skills, and stamina.

- *Offer a range of materials.* “Students may be reluctant readers not because they lack basic skills, but because they haven’t been exposed to materials suited to their interests, ability, and temperament,” says Allyn. Teachers should search far and wide – websites, catalogues, colleagues, librarians – for books, graphic novels, and other texts that will hook students.

- *Let readers read at their comfort level.* It’s important to assess children’s independent reading level and guide them toward “just right” texts – as well as those a little lower and a little higher to build fluency and skills. “Students should never be locked into one level,” says Allyn.

- *Provide time for dialogue.* This includes traditional class discussions, but also opportunities for students to talk about (or Tweet about) what they’re thinking as they read and what they’re hoping will surprise them. Allyn also suggests literature circles and one-on-one chats.

- *Dive deep.* Struggling readers need to sink their teeth into books that have serious, thoughtful content – for example, *Fox* by Margaret Wild. Sometimes asking them to describe their favorite passages gets them thinking. So does communicating with other students, either in person or electronically.

- *Give readers a tool kit.* “Our struggling readers often feel defenseless around print,” says Allyn. “Let’s arm them with everything they need.” This includes word walls, alphabet charts, word boxes, clusters of challenging words, and electronic devices with reading apps.

- *Value browsing and rereading.* These are legitimate activities for all readers. Rereading builds comprehension because people read differently every time they come back to a text. It’s also fun to read the same story by different authors.

- *Build stamina.* Students can do this by reading books they’re passionate about – cars, for example. It’s also helpful to use a timer to encourage students to do “quick reads” to build confidence.

- *Teach students to curate their own reading.* Students should sample widely across genres and keep book lists and other information on what they’re reading.

- *Remember, joy matters.* “Most reluctant readers have experienced a great deal of anxiety and stress around reading in their lives,” says Allyn. “Let’s create a world for all readers that’s full of the joy of discovery, imagination, and information. The only way to do

this is to make the world come alive with stories students will love and texts that connect to their passions.”

“Taming the Wild Text” by Pam Allyn in *Educational Leadership*, March 2012 (Vol. 69, #6, p. 16-21), <http://www.ascd.org>; Allyn can be reached at pam.litlife@gmail.com.

[Back to page one](#)

6. Teaching Difficult Books

(Originally titled “Opening the Literature Window”)

“I owe a refund to the first 8th graders I taught,” says Carol Jago in this thoughtful *Educational Leadership* article. She filled her classroom with short, funny, easy-to-read books on surfing, skateboarding, and other enticing topics, but it didn’t work. Students still hated reading.

Jago realized that she was confusing independent reading (which mirrors and validates students’ real-life experiences) with literature study (which opens windows to other worlds, other cultures, and other times, posing intellectual challenges and demanding that students stretch and grow). “If students can read a book on their own, it probably isn’t the best choice for classroom study,” she says. She began to heed the advice of Lev Vygotsky: “[T]he only good kind of instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it.”

Jago began to teach books that had aesthetic splendor, cognitive power, and wisdom and developed ways to make them accessible to her students. Her suggestions:

- *Stop telling students that reading is fun.* Serious reading can’t compete in the “fun” department with video games and other activities that are easier and have more obvious appeal. “If students groan, ‘I can’t do it. This is too hard’ as you distribute copies of a 300-page novel, agree with them that it may be hard, but reassure them that with effort and your help they will be able to do it,” says Jago.

- *Tap students’ prior knowledge.* For example, to prepare students to read *Antigone*, have them write about a time they stood up to authority.

- *Address, don’t avoid, academic vocabulary.* Help students meet the challenge of new words and figurative language head on. Introduce a few key words in a meaningful context, not in isolated word lists.

- *Teach students how to negotiate complex syntax.* “Reading long, complicated sentences is a challenge for everyone, but particularly for students in the habit of skimming and scanning Facebook updates,” says Jago. “Teachers need to help students slow the pace of their reading for literature and develop the habit of rereading when a sentence doesn’t seem to make sense... We can’t do the work for students. They must do it for themselves.” Jago suggests choosing a few important sentences and having pairs of students translate them into everyday language.

- *Hold students accountable for their reading.* “In too many schools, teachers have stopped assigning homework reading altogether, principally because students have stopped doing it,” says Jago. “This is the path to perdition for literature study. If a teacher reads *Lord of*

the Flies aloud to a class of 10th graders, the only person becoming a better reader is the teacher.” There are ways to get students to do the reading at home.

- *Teach cognitively powerful works*. Jago salutes the Common Core State Standards for listing suggested books that are rigorous and challenging.

“Opening the Literature Window” by Carol Jago in *Educational Leadership*, March 2012 (Vol. 69, #6, p. 40-43), <http://www.ascd.org>; Jago can be reached at cjago@caroljago.com.

[Back to page one](#)

7. Principals As Social-Justice Leaders

In this article in *Principal’s Research Review*, Rhonda Barton and Rob Larson of Education Northwest focus on what principals can do to meet the moral challenge faced by U.S. schools: raising the achievement of all students while narrowing the gap between the lowest- and the highest-achieving. Barton and Larson identify four areas in which principals can have an impact:

- Curriculum interpretation – Principals need to:
 - Encourage colleagues to talk about issues of diversity, values, and social justice – This means developing a shared mission and having potentially uncomfortable discussions about diversity and fairness.
 - Model equity beliefs in daily interactions with colleagues, students, and parents, confronting racist language and stereotypes.
 - Clarify misconceptions about equity – “Principals must expose and refute misconceptions and take a moral stand that all students have the fundamental right to participate in all school activities,” say Barton and Larson.
 - Create a safe, affirming school environment – All students must feel welcomed and valued, and there need to be support networks for students who may be subject to harassment.
- Instructional practices – Principals need to:
 - Hire with social justice in mind.
 - Help teachers provide the support students need – This includes culturally relevant lessons, partnerships among teachers to provide extra scaffolding for students in need, and opportunities for teachers to visit other schools and access helpful resources.
 - Provide all students with access to the whole curriculum – This includes higher-order conceptual understanding and access to computers and cultural activities.
 - Recognize the potential for bias in special-education identification – “Principals can help teachers be aware of the potential for – and dangers of – placing racial and cultural minority students in low curricular tracks,” say Barton and Larson.
 - Support research-based instructional practices – This includes access to effective comprehensive school reform models, lesson study, and instruction that addresses disparities in student performance.
- Assessment and evaluation – Principals need to:

- Monitor progress toward achievement-gap reduction – Looking at evidence of student learning during the year is the key to continuously improving classroom instruction so all students are achieving.
- Use appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities – Principals can help teachers match students to the right accommodations so they can do their best work on tests.
- Discourage strategies that involve gaming the accountability system – “The practice of manipulating test procedures to inflate scores works against reducing achievement gaps,” say Barton and Larson. “Principals should guard against excluding certain types of students in reporting results and engaging in inappropriate test preparation.”
- Celebrate all achievement gains – Principals should avoid focusing on the “bubble kids” and recognize the efforts of students who make progress but don’t meet state standards.
- Increase the reliability of assessments – Tests and test procedures should ensure that the true achievement of all students is measured.
- Avoid cultural, linguistic, and gender bias in tests – “Students should not be penalized by test items that call for background knowledge that may be lacking in certain groups,” say Barton and Larson.
- Community involvement – Principals need to:
 - Recognize the expertise of parents and community members – This includes tapping their experience and encouraging teachers to learn about students’ home culture and religion and find ways to use that knowledge to scaffold instruction.
 - Create partnerships with parents to support learning – This means getting parents involved in home activities that support learning, as well as working with social service agencies to maximize service learning in the community.

“Leadership for Equity” by Rhonda Barton and Rob Larson in *Principal’s Research Review*, March 2012 (Vol. 7, #2, p. 1-7); the authors can be reached at Rhonda.barton@educationnorthwest.org and rob.larson@educationnorthwest.org.

[*Back to page one*](#)

8. Online Young-Adult Literature

(Originally titled “Reading Remixed”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, school librarians Joyce Kasman Valenza and Wendy Stephens suggest these resources for online young-adult literature:

- <http://www.dk.co.uk/static/cs/uk/11/about/future.html> - The Future of Publishing Video by DK Books; this one has quite an arresting video on its home page.
- <http://www.fanfiction.net> - Fanfiction Net
- <http://guyslitwire.blogspot.com> - Guys’ Lit Wire
- <http://jameskennedy.com/90-second-newbery> - James Kennedy’s 90-Second Newbery
- <http://readergirlz.com> - Readergirlz
- <http://www.readingrants.org> - Reading Rants!

- <http://skypeanauthor.wetpaint.com> - Skype-an-Author Network
- <http://booktrailersforall.com> - Teresa Schauer's Book Trailers for All

“Reading Remixed” by Joyce Kasman Valenza and Wendy Stephens in *Educational Leadership*, March 2012 (Vol. 69, #6, p. 75-78), <http://www.ascd.org>; the authors can be reached at joycevalenza@gmail.com and wendysteadmanstephens@gmail.com

[Back to page one](#)

9. Short Item:

Angela Lee Duckworth TED talk on grit – In this *Educational Leadership* article, Thomas Hoerr writes about the need to build students’ ability to deal with failure and develop “grit.” He recommends this delightful lecture by Angela Lee Duckworth on the subject:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaeFnxSfSC4>.

“Got Grit?” by Thomas Hoerr in *Educational Leadership*, March 2012 (Vol. 69, #6, p. 84-85), <http://www.ascd.org>

[Back to page one](#)

© Copyright 2012 Marshall Memo LLC

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.marshall48@gmail.com

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 43 years' experience as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and writer, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their "designated reader."

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 44 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than a hundred articles each week, and selects 5-10 that have the greatest potential to improve teaching, leadership, and learning. He then writes a brief summary of each article, pulls out several striking quotes, provides e-links to full articles when available, and e-mails the Memo to subscribers every Monday evening (with occasional breaks; there are about 50 issues a year).

Subscriptions:

Individual subscriptions are \$50 for the school year. Rates decline steeply for multiple readers within the same organization. See the website for these rates and information on paying by check or credit card.

Website:

If you go to <http://www.marshallmemo.com> you will find detailed information on:

- How to subscribe or renew
- A detailed rationale for the Marshall Memo
- Publications (with a count of articles from each)
- Article selection criteria
- Topics (with a count of articles from each)
- Headlines for all issues
- What readers say
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
- A free sample issue

Marshall Memo subscribers have access to the Members' Area of the website, which has:

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

Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Better Evidence-Based Education
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
New York Times
Newsweek
PEN Weekly NewsBlast
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Rethinking Schools
Review of Educational Research
Teachers College Record
Teaching Children Mathematics
The Atlantic Monthly
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Language Educator
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
The School Administrator
Theory Into Practice