Marshall Memo 157

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
October 23, 2006

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Boredom will not be tolerated in science class."

Chris Rodegerdts and Joe Godfrey, two veteran Oregon science teachers in "The Wall of Wonder and Other Befuddlements" in *Middle Ground*, October 2006

"Artificial efforts to inflate test scores are now so ubiquitous that improved scores don't always mean improved reading… Of all the problems in a big city school system, this 'sacrifice reading instruction to improve test results' mentality may be the most insidious."

Timothy Shanahan (see item #2)

"I see no excuse… for many popular test-score raising approaches, such as only helping those students who are nearly meeting standards (dragging them across a nearby finish line as fast as possible, while ignoring the learning needs of the kids who can't quickly make us look good) or spending weeks or months on practice test exercises."

Timothy Shanahan (*ibid.*)

"We firmly believe that the most effective approaches to vocabulary instruction are ones that are integrated with the curriculum and include attention to word learning throughout the day and across subject areas."

Camille Blachowicz, Peter Fisher, Donna Ogle, and Susan Watts-Taffe (see item #1)

"What draws readers to a text is a sense of connection and curiosity."

Gay Ivey and Douglas Fisher (see item #4)

"Most of all, have fun with words!"

Margaret Ruurs (see item #6)

1. What the Research Says About Good Teaching of Vocabulary

In this thoughtful article in *Reading Research Quarterly*, a team of mid-western researchers answers eight questions about vocabulary learning in the classroom:

• *What do we know about student vocabulary knowledge?* First, we know that vocabulary knowledge is one of the most significant predictors of reading comprehension; a small vocabulary is strongly correlated with poor school performance and vice-versa.

Second, economically disadvantaged children enter school with much smaller vocabularies than their more advantaged peers, and this gap persists through the years.

Third, most English language learners have smaller English vocabularies than their native-speaking peers (despite often having impressive vocabularies in their native language), and this gap accounts for much of the reading achievement gap between the two groups.

Finally, a strong vocabulary is much more important to school achievement in science, social studies, and mathematics than it is for reading stories and literature; "academic" vocabulary in the content areas consists of words with precise meanings that are often central to content area achievement and often differ from general meanings of the same terms.

• *What do we know about good vocabulary instruction?* First, it takes place in a language- and word-rich environment that produces incidental learning of new words and fosters what has been called "word consciousness" – an awareness of words and their meanings, an awareness of the way meanings change and grow, and an interest in learning new words. Word-rich classrooms have lots of books and other reading materials, both narrative and expository, on a wide variety of topics and at many different reading levels, and promote constant reading. Teachers read aloud from books that have extensive vocabularies. In readalouds and classroom discussions, teachers draw attention to sophisticated words and discuss them with students every day, creating a climate of excitement and curiosity about new words and encouraging students to be playful with words.

Second, good vocabulary instruction includes intentional teaching of selected words, providing multiple types of information about each new word (including graphic organizers linking words to similar and opposite words) as well as opportunities for repeated exposure, use, and practice. Active student involvement in generating word meanings is important, as is making links to prior knowledge and building categories of words and concepts (rather than having students passively memorize lists of unrelated words).

Third, good vocabulary instruction includes word-learning strategies. Students learn generative elements of words (prefixes, suffixes, and roots) and tools (dictionary, thesaurus, and online resources) in ways that give them the ability to learn new words independently.

Finally, the authors say, "We firmly believe that the most effective approaches to vocabulary instruction are ones that are integrated with the curriculum and include attention to word learning throughout the day and across subject areas."

• *Which words should be taught?* This question has several answers: focusing on words that students haven't learned and that they will encounter frequently in the future; teaching words that are important to current reading matter; and choosing words that are generative – that is, they help students learn other similar words. The authors suggest several word lists as possible resources:

- The Fry Instant Word List contains 75% of the words that students will encounter in their reading material. These words are especially helpful for ELL students and students with small vocabularies.
- The Living Word Vocabulary (Dale and O'Rourke, 1976) lists school-age vocabulary and is still valid today.
- The General Service List of English Words was developed in England (West, 1953) and still has real utility for ELL students.
- Content-area lists have been updated by Marzano, Kendall, and Paynter (2005) and provide a helpful resource for science, social studies, and mathematics.

• *Who should choose the words to be taught?* There is intriguing research on the efficacy of having students select the words they should study, rather than the teacher deciding the words. One study of fourth graders found that when students were asked to pick the words they needed to learn, they picked almost exactly the same words as their teachers, but had more ownership and interest in studying them. This approach complements reciprocal teaching, where students work in pairs or teams and help each other with parts of texts they are finding difficult.

• *What approaches can bridge the early vocabulary gap?* Reading children's books aloud to young students can build vocabulary and conceptual knowledge – provided that it is accompanied by discussions of words and story elements and teachers (or caregivers) scaffold children's learning by asking questions, adding information, or prompting students to describe what they have heard.

• *What specific strategies or approaches can help ELL students?* The approaches described above are effective for English language learners, with the following additions: First, a command of the 2,000–2,500 most-frequently used, basic English words is essential for ELL students. Second, when learning "academic" vocabulary, it's often helpful to have ELL students relate English words to words in their native language that may have similar cognates. Third, ELL students benefit from a multi-prong approach that involves students in seeing, hearing, spelling, and using strategies to analyze word structure and meaning.

• *Can technology be used to enhance vocabulary learning?* The authors say the research supports the use of electronic texts as long as they are accompanied by "adult mediation" – in other words, a teacher or other adult working with students as they interact with texts and word games on the computer.

• *What do we know about vocabulary assessment?* The authors say that conventional reading tests do not do a very good job of measuring improvements in vocabulary, and much work needs to be done in this area. However, it's clear that good vocabulary instruction improves overall reading achievement as measured by standardized tests.

"Vocabulary: Questions from the Classroom" by Camille Blachowicz, Peter Fisher, Donna Ogle, and Susan Watts-Taffe in *Reading Research Quarterly*, October/November/December 2006 (Vol. 41, # 4, p. 524-539), no e-link available

2. Self-Defeating Literacy Practices in the Name of Higher Test Scores

In this article in *Reading Today*, University of Illinois education professor Timothy Shanahan (who is president of the International Reading Association) expresses concern that some literacy teachers are narrowing their focus to boost student performance on high-stakes tests. "Artificial efforts to inflate test scores are now so ubiquitous that improved scores don't always mean improved reading," he says. "Of all the problems in a big city school system, this 'sacrifice reading instruction to improve test results' mentality may be the most insidious." The best way to tell if this is happening in a particular state, says Shanahan, is if there is a discrepancy between students' scores on state literacy tests and scores on the NAEP, which is a more authentic measure of reading comprehension.

Shanahan makes a telling analogy to mathematics instruction. If the standard is for students to master single-digit addition, teachers would ideally help students become proficient on all the 100 combinations of digits from 0 + 0 to 9 + 9. But if teachers know in advance that the test assesses only 20 combinations, there is a strong temptation to teach only those 20 (why waste time on the tricky 8 + 7 if it isn't going to be tested?). "The kids would score better on the test," says Shanahan, "but would they actually know addition since 80% of the possible problems were ignored." He argues that a similar narrowing of reading instruction is taking place as teachers zero in on particular sub-skills of reading that are assessed in certain tests.

Shanahan also sees some teachers warping their instruction to raise student performance on low-stakes, formative classroom tests like the DIBELS, PALS, TPRI, and ISEL. "This is why you see kids reading like race cars these days instead of trying to make text sound like language – they are trying to squeeze out higher DIBELS scores, instead of higher reading fluency," he writes. "The two things are related, like X-rays and tumors, but they're not the same thing, and it's malpractice to confuse them."

Shanahan says that good reading instruction doesn't have to look exactly like a high-stakes or formative test to produce better student performance on both kinds of assessments. For example, spending time working on reading fluency in primary-grade classes might seem like a waste of time if the high-stakes test doesn't measure oral reading. But Shanahan argues that improved oral fluency is one of the best ways to improve silent reading comprehension, which is at the core of high achievement on high-stakes tests. Skimping on oral reading fluency is therefore a short-sighted, self-defeating policy, and constantly drilling students on test-like passages actually hurts their performance on state tests.

Is all test prep bad? No, says Shanahan. "There is nothing wrong with intensifying instruction in an area of difficulty or increasing the amount or quality of instruction overall in order to improve test performance," he writes. "Nor is there anything wrong with familiarizing children with a test format a day or two before a test is administered in order to help kids feel more comfortable with such testing.

"I see no excuse, however, for many popular test-score raising approaches, such as only helping those students who are nearly meeting standards (dragging them across a nearby finish line as fast as possible, while ignoring the learning needs of the kids who can't quickly make us look good) or spending weeks or months on practice test exercises. (Not all reading practice is equally effective, and there is no evidence that this kind of practice helps much.)"

"Did You Hear the One About…?" by Timothy Shanahan in *Reading Today*, October/ November 2006 (Vol. 24, #2, p. 18), no e-link available

3. Making Literacy Skills an Integral Part of Content-Area Instruction

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, University of Pittsburgh researcher Lauren Resnick and six colleagues describe the dilemma faced by many middle- and high-school content teachers: they're under pressure to teach literacy skills along with their math, science, history, etc., but there's so much content to cover that they worry about diluting disciplinary rigor. Resnick's group says that the answer to this dilemma is *disciplinary literacy*, which is based on the idea that "students can develop deep conceptual knowledge in a discipline only by using the habits of reading, writing, talking, and thinking which that discipline values and uses." Developed at the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh in 2002, disciplinary literacy is based on five principles for designing rigorous, inquiry-based instruction that integrates academic content and discipline-appropriate habits of thinking:

• *Principle 1: Knowledge and thinking must go hand in hand.* To build students' literacy in a specific discipline, say Resnick and her colleagues, students need to read, reason, investigate, speak, and write about the overarching concepts of the discipline. For example, a 10th-grade U.S. history teacher in Providence, Rhode Island begins a unit on immigration with two essential questions:

- What are some of the forces pushing people away from their homelands and pulling people to immigrate to the U.S.?
- How did people in the U.S. feel about immigration in different historical periods?

These questions drive students' intellectual work for several weeks, pushing them to go beyond lectures and textbook material and use multiple sources to construct their own answers. The teacher asks students to investigate four periods of immigration – the 1890s, the 1920s, the 1960s, and the 1990s – and points them toward newspaper articles, public records, political cartoons, oral histories, and other source materials. She listens carefully as students pull out evidence of pushes (e.g., war, poor living conditions, lack of food) and pulls (e.g., job opportunities, freedom, a desire to join family members) and adjusts her unit plan to provide

scaffolding and other support that students need to produce a written response to the big questions by the end of the unit.

• *Principle 2: Learning is apprenticeship*. Secondary students need to go through the steps that scientists, historians, and mathematicians use, but with appropriate scaffolding. For example, a seventh-grade science teacher in St. Paul, Minnesota guides her students to create an experiment with mealworms that will help students understand the effect of the environment on organisms and vice-versa. Students design an experiment following the steps they had figured out earlier in the unit: Start with "what" or "how", not with "why"; include something to compare; and include something to measure. The teacher built a bridge between students' prior knowledge and the scientific terms and processes she wanted them to learn as part of answering the unit's essential questions.

• *Principle 3: Teachers mentor students*. For example, in the Rhode Island classroom studying immigration, the teacher has students sit in pairs and read a text about a Cuban immigrant who arrived in the U.S. in 1980. She then has the whole class share their thoughts about the pushes and pulls on this individual, encouraging them to give specific examples from the text. This teacher models the process of gathering evidence to support an argument in the study of history, leading students toward self-sufficiency.

• *Principle 4: Instruction and assessment drive each other*. "To make disciplinary literacy work," says Resnick's team, "teachers must conduct ongoing formative assessment of each student's understanding, skills, and interests using multiple sources of data (such as conferences, discussions, quick-writes, and quizzes). This informs instruction and guides students to deeper levels of understanding." For example, a seventh-grade math teacher in St. Paul is working with her students on discounts and asks students to figure out whether two consecutive discounts (first 20% off, then 10% off) are better than a single discount of 30%. As students wrestle with the problem, the teacher circulates, asks probing questions, and sees that most students don't understand the underlying principle, even though some of them are coming up with the right answer. This leads her to backtrack and explain the math concept and the mathematical terms more carefully so that all students understand.

• *Principle 5: Classroom culture socializes intelligence*. "In classrooms striving for disciplinary literacy," write the authors, "teachers treat students as capable thinkers, readers, and writers who expect to take risks, solve problems, and reflect on their learning." For example, a Los Angeles seventh-grade English teacher culminates a six-week unit on "Reading and Thinking Like a Reporter" by having students select their own topics for the final research papers, interview someone in the community about a historical even, and use the information to come up with their own research question. To learn how to formulate a good research question, students look at a model student research article as an example of good questions and exposition.

Content knowledge and literacy development can go hand in hand, conclude Resnick and her colleagues. It's possible to have rigorous, assessment-driven content-area classes in classroom cultures that build students' disciplinary literacy from the academic ground up.

"Task, Text, and Talk: Literacy for All Subjects" by Stephanie McConachie, Megan Hall, Lauren Resnick, Anita Ravi, Victoria Bill, Jody Bintz, and Joseph Taylor in *Educational Leadership*, October 2006 (Vol. 64, #2, p. 8-14)
http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/template.MAXIMIZE/menuitem.459dee008f99653fb85516f762108a0c/?javax.portlet.tpst=d5b9c0fa1a493266805516f762108a0c_ws_MX&javax.portlet.prp_d5b9c0fa1a493266805516f762108a0c_journaltypeheaderimage=%2FASCD%2Fimages%2Fmultifiles%2Fpublications%2Felmast.gif&javax.portlet.prp_d5b9c0fa1a493266805516f762108a0c_viewID=article_view&javax.portlet.prp_d5b9c0fa1a493266805516f762108a0c_journalmoid=2649f3563ba0e010VgnVCM1000003d01a8c0RCRD&javax.portlet.prp_d5b9c0fa1a493266805516f762108a0c_articlemoid=2f69f3563ba0e010VgnVCM1000003d01a8c0RCRD&javax.portlet.prp_d5b9c0fa1a493266805516f762108a0c_journalTypePersonalization=ASCD_EL&javax.portlet.begCacheTok=token&javax.portlet.endCacheTok=token

4. Developing Critical Thinking In Struggling High-School Readers

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, education professors Gay Ivey and Douglas Fisher propose four solutions to the perennial problem of trying to teach high-school content to students who are 3-7 years behind in reading skills. How can teachers bring these students up to speed? The most common response is to use "back to basics" programs that focus on discrete skills. The assumptions behind such programs seem to be that (a) students didn't "get" the basics in lower grades, and (b) students must learn the basics before they are ready for higher-level reading and writing. Basic programs have students sound out long vowels, identify the sequence of events in a story, use similes and metaphors, and make inferences. Some programs are heavily scripted, directing the teacher to guide students word by word or sentence by sentence through meaningless passages.

The problem, say Ivey and Fisher, is that such programs don't engage students intellectually and have very little chance of developing lagging students into independent readers and thoughtful citizens. "Like all readers," they say, "older struggling readers want to know about their world, understand the events around them, and engage with topics on their minds…" On the contrary, teenagers, even those with very low reading levels, have a vast knowledge base and a desire – and ability – to think critically. Low-level programs insult this intelligence and are an ineffective way to boost reading achievement. "[W]e know of no evidence," conclude Ivey and Fisher, "that proves that an approach focused on the technical aspects of literacy helps students become more sophisticated in their reading or score higher on tests created independently of the programs being used."

The authors propose four strategies for teaching students with low reading skills in higher-level content:

• *Use accessible texts with rich concepts*. The key, say Ivey and Fisher, is to find books that truly stimulate the minds of low-level readers – "make them laugh, puzzle, empathize, question, or reconsider previously held notions." Teachers have to find the *grabbers* for these students since "What draws readers to a text is a sense of connection and curiosity." Ivey and Fisher suggest books with a satirical edge, since students enjoy the *Saturday Night Live* style of wit – books like *The Happy Hocky Family* and *Squids Will Be Squids*. Struggling students are also likely to be drawn to books that comment on current social problems, including *The House That Crack Built* – a picture book that details the creation, distribution, and harmful effects of crack cocaine – and *The First Part Last* – a manageable book on the hardships of becoming a teen parent. Some high-school teachers have also been successful using websites, picture

books, and newspaper and journal articles, learning to make sophisticated judgments about texts, content, and authors.

• *Use alternative texts to spur critical reading*. It makes no sense, say Ivey and Fisher, to try to teach comprehension and strategic reading skills using books that are way above some students' reading levels. Graphic novels, anime, comics, and easy-to-read texts supported by compelling graphics and photographs are much better platforms for teaching these reading skills. Because of their high-interest content, they can even be used in heterogeneous classrooms. However, caution Ivey and Fisher, teachers should check to make sure books don't contain content and language that might be offensive.

• *Use read alouds and think alouds*. Secondary students enjoy listening to high-interest material, and teachers can get even more from reading aloud by "thinking aloud" as they read, modeling the kinds of questions and observations they are making to themselves as they read. "Listening to teachers reflect on sophisticated texts helps struggling readers and writers keep their eyes on the prize," say Ivey and Fisher. "An even more crucial benefit is that it helps students glean vocabulary and sophisticated concept knowledge that may not be contained within the kind of books that students can read alone… For this reason, we consider regular teacher read alouds across the content areas a nonnegotiable activity."

• *Use writing to tap critical thinking*. "When teachers connect reading and writing to the cultural knowledge that students bring to school," say Ivey and Fisher, "they not only help increase writing fluency, but they also help students think critically about course topics." They describe teachers who successfully blend readalouds of high-interest texts with frequent student "quick-writes", which help develop skills and also give the teacher formative feedback on how well students understand and are processing the information in the text.

A sidebar in Ivey and Fisher's article lists a selection of books suitable for high-level teaching to low-level readers:

<u>Accessible books with sophisticated concepts:</u>

• *Eyewitness: Force and Motion* by Peter Lafferty (1999)
• *The First Part Last* by Angela Johnson (2003)
• *Galileo's Universe* by Patrick Lewis and Tom Curry (2005)
• *Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case* by Chris Crowe (2003)
• *The Happy Hocky Family* by Lane Smith (1993)
• *The House That Crack Built* by Clark Taylor and Jan Thompson (1992)
• *Out From Boneville* by Jeff Smith (2004)
• *Squids Will Be Squids* by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith (1998)
• *Still I Rise: A Cartoon History of African Americans* by Roland Owen Laird, Jr., Taneisha Nash Laird, and Elihu Bey (1997)

<u>Graphic novels for the secondary classroom:</u>

• *Capote in Kansas* by Ande Parks and Chris Samnee (2005)
• *City People Notebook* by Will Eisner (1989)

• *Dignifying Science: Stories About Women Scientists* by Jim Ottaviani, Donna Barr, Mary Fleener, and Ramona Fradon (2003)
• *Fallout: J. Robert Oppenheimer, Leo Szilard, and the Political Science of the Atomic Bomb* by Jim Ottaviani, Janine Johnston, Steve Lieber, Vince Locke, Bernie Mireault, and Jeff Parker (2001)
• *The Four Immigrants Manga: A Japanese Experience in San Francisco, 1904-1924* by Henry Kiyama (1999)
• *Franz Kafka's The Metamorphosis* by Peter Kuper (2004)
• *The Murder of Abraham Lincoln* by Rick Geary (2005)

"When Thinking Skills Trump Reading Skills" by Gay Ivey and Douglas Fisher in *Educational Leadership*, October 2006 (Vol. 64, #2, p. 16-21), no free e-link available

5. Teen Readers' Book Choices

Every year, the International Reading Association issues *Young Adults' Choices*, a list of books that U.S. teen readers vote the most popular. This year's 30 top-rated titles were all published in 2004 and were chosen from titles submitted by 50 publishers. To be considered for the list, each book has to have at least two positive reviews from recognized sources. An annotated list of this year's selections will be on the IRA website in November at: http://www.reading.org. Here are the books:

• *Alosha* by Christopher Pike
• *Are We Alone? Scientists Search for Life in Space* by Gloria Skurzynski
• *Backstage Pass* by Gaby Triana
• *The Beckoners* by Carrie Mac
• *The Boy Who Couldn't Die* by William Sleator
• *The Burn Journals* by Brent Runyon (winner of the IRA Children's Book Award)
• *Can't Get There From Here* by Todd Strasser
• *Contents Under Pressure* by Lara Zeises
• *Crank* by Ellen Hopkins
• *Cruise Control* by Terrry Trueman
• *Dragon Rider* by Cornelia Funke
• *The Dragon's Son* by Margaret Weis
• *Emako Blu*e by Brenda Woods (winner of the IRA Children's Book Award)
• *Fighting the Current* by Heather Waldorf
• *Going for the Record* by Julie Swanson
• *Guitar Girl* by Sarra Manning
• *How My Private Personal Journal Became a Bestseller* by Julia DeVillers
• *Jude* by Kate Morgenroth
• *Leap Day* by Wendy Mass
• *Midnighters: The Secret Hour* by Scott Westerfeld
• *Nothing to Lose* by Alex Flinn

- *One of those Hideous Books Where the Mother Dies* by Sonya Sones
- *Princess in Pink* by Meg Cabot
- *Remember D-Day: The Plan, the Invasion, Survivor Stories* by Ronald Drez
- *The Schwa Was Here* by Neal Shusterman
- *So B. It* by Sarah Weeks
- *Vegan Virgin Valentine* by Carolyn Mackler
- *Who Am I Without Him?: Short Stories About Girls and the Boys in Their Lives* by Sharon Flake
- *Worlds Afire* by Paul Jeneczko
- *The Year of the Secret Assignments* by Jaclyn Moriarty

"Young Adults' Choices: Books Teens Love" in *Reading Today*, October/November 2006 (Vol. 24, #2, p. 48), no e-link available

6. Ideas To Stimulate Poetry-Writing in the Classroom

In this "Write Away!" column in *Reading Today*, author Margaret Ruurs offers some tips for getting students writing their own poems:

• Before students do any writing, read aloud a wide variety of poetry and encourage kids to share poems they like. Ruurs suggests the following:

- *Oh, The Places You'll Go* by Dr. Seuss (1990)
- *The Eleventh Hour: A Curious Mystery* by Graeme Base (1989)
- *Something Big Has Been Here* by Jack Prelutsky (1990)
- *The D-Poems of Jeremy Bloom: A Collection of Poems About School, Homework, and Life* by Gordon Korman (1992)
- *The Last-Place Sports Poems of Jeremy Bloom: A Collection of Poems About Winning, Losing, and Being a Good Sport (Sometimes)* by Gordon Korman and Bernice Korman (1996)
- *The Cremation of Sam McGee* by Robert Service (2006)
- *Huge Harold* by Bill Peet (1974)
- *Sleeping Dragons All Around* by Sheree Fitch (1992)
- *Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories* by Dr. Seuss (1958)
- *The Sign of the Seahorse: A Tale of Greed and Adventure in Two Acts* by Graeme Base (1998)

• Get students playing with alliteration by having them write their first name, jot as many words starting with the same letter as they can (for example, Jason: jellybeans, jaguar, jiggle, jump, January, etc.), having students check to see if they have nouns, adjectives, and verbs, and then having them write a silly sentence about themselves using as many of the words as possible (for example, "Jason jumped for joy when he ate yellow jellybeans in January in Japan!").

• Take alliteration a step further by creating personal or class alphabet books on any topic: transportation, school, your city or state, animals, the Arctic, etc.

"Poetry need not rhyme to be poetry!" says Ruurs and urges teachers to liberate students from this misconception by having them write a short story about a topic of their own choosing in short, poetic sentences without rhyming.

"Most of all, have fun with words!" she concludes.

"Write Away! Practical Tips for Helping Young Writers: Writing Poetry" by Margaret Ruurs in *Reading Today*, October/ November 2006 (Vol. 24, #2, p. 45), no e-link available

7. Short Items:

a. Best practices website – A new website created by the Center for Data-Driven Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University has *Consumer Reports*-type ratings of programs as well as research papers best practices. See http://www.bestevidence.org for details. Current listings include a summary of ratings of elementary math programs, technology in reading and math, reading for ELL students, comprehensive school reform program ratings (elementary and secondary), and a summary of education services providers.

b. History and current events websites – *Middle Ground* compiled the following websites for professional development and classroom enrichment:

• U.S. history audio files – This searchable multimedia database has recordings useful in American history classes: http://www.hpol.org

• Historical treasure chests – Primary and secondary resources through online and printable activities: http://www.k12science.org/curriculum/treasure

• Globalization – some key questions on its impact on education and educators: http://www.infed.org/features/index.htm

• Dining with historical figures – A printable PDF worksheet asks students to choose six dinner guests and prepare questions for them: http://go.hrw.com/resources/go_ss/teacher99/toolkit/TOOLKT08.pdf

"Hot Links" by Brenda Dyck in *Middle Ground*, October 2006 (Vol. 10, #2, p. 16)

c. U.S. history website – *Adventures in the Past* is a website created by the Bureau of Land Management in Washington, D.C. It provides lessons, activities, and articles for teaching about history, archaeology, and paleontology in North America and has information on railroads, the Gold Rush, the Oregon Trail, evergreen forests, caves, fossils, the Colorado Plateau ecosystem, early explorers, Puebloan farmers, and more: http://www.blm.gov/heritage/adventures.

"News to Use" in *Middle Ground*, October 2006 (Vol. 10, #2, p. 6)

d. Website on afterschool science resources – *The Consumers Guide to Afterschool Science Resources* has information on high quality, hands-on science content for afterschool

programs, reviewed by a panel of afterschool and science content experts. The site covers semester- and year-long curriculum materials, activity kits, instructor guides, and websites: http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/guide/science.

"News to Use" in *Middle Ground*, October 2006 (Vol. 10, #2, p. 6)

e. Free classroom posters on writing – The Answers.com website provides free classroom posters on correct citations, etymology, and tips for effective writing, geared to secondary and college students: http://www.teachers.answers.com/main/posters.jsp

"News to Use" in *Middle Ground*, October 2006 (Vol. 10, #2, p. 7)

f. Teaching with movies website – "Teaching With Movies" is a website with ideas for lessons in history, science, health, ethics, and other subjects. Subscribers pay $11.99 a year and get links to 270 movies, from classics like *To Kill a Mockingbird* to more recent films like *October Sky*. The links bring up articles on historical and other topics raised by each movie, as well as reviews and analyses of the film. All movies have been screened for content and include warnings about sex and language. The site is http://www.teachwithmovies.org.

"Web Site Offers Lessons Drawn from the Movies" by Sean Cavanagh in *Education Week*, October 18, 2006 (Vol. 26, #8, p. 11), no free e-link

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 effective practices in K-12 education. Kim Marshall, drawing on 36 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 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 2004-05).

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- What readers say
- About Kim Marshall (including links to articles)
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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 Educator
American School Board Journal
ASCD SmartBrief
Atlantic Monthly
Boston Globe
CommonWealth Magazine
District Administration
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Update
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Jimmy Kilpatrick
Journal of Staff Development
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