Marshall Memo 210

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
November 19, 2007

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Throughout history and in cultures around the world, education rightly conceived has had two great goals: helping students become smart and helping them become good."

Matthew Davison, Thomas Lickona, and Vladimir Khmelkov (see item #9)

"It doesn't matter if you say it wrong. If only you dare to say it, you're so great."

A Chinese elementary teacher to a student (see item #4)

"Our conclusion from observing classrooms that foster an environment in which errors are commonplace – and some are even good – is that students' self-esteem does not suffer and they are better able to correct mistakes and learn more mathematics than when errors are discouraged."

Meg Schleppenbach, Lucia Flevares, Linda Sims, and Michelle Perry (*ibid.*)

"[I]n planning professional development, we must include some mechanism whereby those responsible for implementation can gain evidence of success from their students rather quickly – within the first month of implementation."

Thomas Guskey (see item #7)

"We don't spend enough time letting kids marinate in correctness, the correctness of well-written effective prose. Let the kids look again at the flowing sentences of E. B. White rather than an error-filled fix-a-thon."

Jeff Anderson (see item #6)

"I don't have a problem. Seventeen hours a day online is fine."

Lee Chang-Hoon, 15, a South Korean student at a camp for compulsive Internet users
New York Times, Nov. 18, 2007 (p. 6)

1. Early Behavior Problems Do Not Doom a Child to Failure

It's not very often that an educational research story is the lead article on page one of the *New York Times*, but that's what happened last Tuesday. The article, by reporter Benedict Carey, cited two recent studies that put the lie to the common supposition that children who have emotional and academic problems in kindergarten are almost certain to fail in the upper grades.

• The first study of 16,000 children by an international research team (published in *Developmental Psychology*) found that kindergarteners with behavior problems – those who interrupted their teachers, defied instructions, and picked fights – ended up doing as well academically in fifth grade as well-behaved kindergarten peers with the same abilities. "For kindergarten," said Greg Duncan of Northwestern University, the lead author, "it appears teachers are able to work around these behavior problems in a way that enables kids to learn just as much as other kids with equal levels of ability." This is a tribute to teachers' skills and schools' mental-health services – and a reassuring message to teachers and parents wrestling with challenging behavior in the early grades.

• The second study by researchers from the National Institute of Mental Health and McGill University (published in *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*) used brain-imaging equipment to determine that children with attention-deficit disorders have about a three-year *delay* in brain development, not an unfixable flaw. "The basic sequence of development in the brains of these kids with A.D.H.D. was intact, absolutely normal," said Philip Shaw, a psychiatrist on the team. "I think this is pretty strong evidence we're talking about a delay, and not an abnormal brain." This study helps explain why three out of four children grow out of A.D.H.D. in middle school or later, often after taking stimulant medications to improve concentration in the earlier grades.

"I think these may become landmark findings, forcing us to ask whether these acting-out kinds of problems are secondary to the inappropriate maturity expectations that some educators place on young children as soon as they enter classrooms," said Sharon Landesman Ramey, director of the Georgetown University Center on Health and Education.

"Studies on Pupils Say Bad Behavior is Not Dooming" by Benedict Carey in the *New York Times*, Nov. 13, 2007 (p. 1)
http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/13/health/13kids.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

Back to page one

2. Effective Vocabulary Teaching in Kindergarten

In this *Elementary School Journal* article, University of Maryland professor Rebecca Silverman discusses the most effective ways to close the vocabulary gap between disadvantaged and privileged kindergarten children. As they enter school, low-SES students know half as many of words as their higher-SES peers, and this is directly linked to reading comprehension in the upper elementary grades. Unless schools intervene effectively, the entering achievement gap inexorably widens as children move through school.

Storybook read-alouds are the best medium for introducing and explicitly teaching new vocabulary to children aren't yet readers, and this is particularly important for sophisticated words that children don't encounter in everyday conversations. But not all vocabulary teaching methods are equally robust and long-lasting. Silverman analyzed three approaches:

- *Contextualized* – Teachers draw attention to new words and have students think about their meaning in the context of the story and their links to background knowledge and life experiences;
- *Analytic* – Teachers go beyond the story and students' experiences and talk about the meaning of new words in new and varied contexts and have students compare and contrast new words to other words they know;
- *Decoding* – Teachers have students look at the letters and sounds of each new word, paying attention to their spelling and structure.

Silverman studied short-term gains in vocabulary knowledge, and then returned six months later to see how well students (now first graders) had remembered the words they'd learned.

Silverman found that using the first approach – discussing new words in the context of the story and children's experiences – was not enough. Students whose teachers used all three approaches did significantly better; they learned more words and remembered more of them six months later. [See the excellent article on this subject by Isabel Beck et al. summarized in Marshall Memo 167.]

Silverman stresses, however, that even this one-two-three punch is not enough. To close the vocabulary gap, she says, "teachers should read books that expose children to many more words than are directly taught, and teachers should also include wide reading of books to children for various purposes on other days of the week and at other times of the day. The read-aloud experience is rich with opportunity for early development of comprehension and socioemotional communication skills."

"A Comparison of Three Methods of Vocabulary Instruction During Read-Alouds in Kindergarten" by Rebecca Silverman in *Elementary School Journal*, November 2007 (Vol. 108, #2, p. 97-113) no e-link available

Back to page one

3. Genes, Race, and Intelligence

This front-page *New York Times* article reports that recent breakthroughs in the study of the human genome are stimulating bogus claims about racial differences in intelligence. Genetic mapping provides important insights on ancestry and disease prevention, writes

reporter Amy Harmon, but the genetic revolution "may also be giving long-discredited racial prejudices a new potency. The notion that race is more than skin deep… could undermine principles of equal treatment and opportunity that have relied on the presumption that we are all fundamentally equal." Says Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr., "We are living through an era of the ascendance of biology, and we have to be very careful. We will all be walking a fine line between using biology and allowing it to be abused."

Case in point: a 40-year-old software engineer in Manhattan (author of the Half Sigma blog) recently told his readers about a study that linked several snippets of DNA to high intelligence. He claimed that two of the snippets were found more often in people of European and Asian ancestry than in people of African ancestry, from which he concluded that the egalitarian theory that all races are equal "is proven false."

This provoked a stinging response from Harmon: "No matter that the link between I.Q. and those particular bits of DNA was unconfirmed, or that other high I.Q. snippets are more common in Africans, or that hundreds of thousands of others may also affect intelligence, or that their combined influence might be dwarfed by environmental factors."

A reader responding on the Half Sigma blog added, "If I were to believe the 'facts' in this post, what should I do? Should I advocate discrimination against blacks…? Should I not hire them to my company…? Stop trying to prove that one group of people are genetically inferior to your group. Just stop."

Americans "somehow fixate on genetics, even if the influence is very small," said David Altschuler, director of the Program in Medical and Population Genetics in Cambridge, Mass. "I've spent the last 10 years of my life researching how much genetic variability there is between populations. But living in America, it is so clear that the economic and social and educational differences have so much more influence than genes."

"To say that [genetic] differences aren't real is to stick your head in the sand and go blah blah blah blah blah until the band marches by," says Perry Clark, a retired Kansas neonatologist. "Regardless of any such genetic variation, it is our moral duty to treat all as equal before God and before the law."

In a letter to the *New York Times* a week after Harmon's article, Miriam Hecht, an emeritus math professor at Hunter College, wrote, "One thing we know: within any racial or ethnic group, there is a vast range of abilities, intellectual and otherwise. Individuals presenting themselves – whether for job, college, elected position or simply socially – come not as points on a statistical curve, but as unique human beings. The statistical findings are irrelevant. All that matters is this one person, with his or her unique configuration of strengths and weaknesses."

"In DNA Era, New Worries About Prejudice" by Amy Harmon in the *New York Times*, Nov. 11, 2007, and a Nov. 18, 2007 letter by Miriam Hecht.
http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9405E6D71130F932A25752C1A9619C8B63

Back to page one

4. How American and Chinese Teachers Respond to Their Students' Errors

In this thoughtful *Elementary School Journal* article, a team of four Midwestern researchers compared how American and Chinese elementary teachers responded when their students made math mistakes. Using videotapes and transcriptions of 46 elementary lessons on place value and fractions and follow-up interviews with the teachers, the authors found that U.S. and Chinese students made about the same number of errors – but teachers responded to those errors in strikingly different ways.

Analyzing the lessons, the researchers found that teachers' responses to students' math mistakes fell into two categories:

Statements:

- Telling the student the answer is wrong;
- Giving students the correct answer;
- Giving an explanation or direction;
- Ignoring the error;
- Students spontaneously correcting themselves.

Questions:

- Asking the question again;
- Clarifying the question;
- Asking the student to say more;
- Asking the student to explain;
- Asking if the student is sure;
- Asking if other students agree;
- Redirecting the question to another student.

In general, the study found that most American teachers responded to students' errors with statements and most Chinese teachers responded with questions. Chinese teachers more often directed their questions to the student who made the error, whereas American teachers more often directed questions to other students.

The researchers believe that there are four elements in the most effective Chinese and American classrooms:

• *A climate that doesn't discourage errors* – "Without this environment," say the authors, "students may miss a critical aspect of schooling: students come to school because they do not know everything and, by uncovering and then correcting their errors, they will learn." But in many classrooms, students believe the teacher sees errors as screw-ups, evidence of not *listening*, or a sign that they have not practiced their number facts well enough. Many teachers, especially in the U.S., discourage, hide, or prohibit errors. "In these classrooms," write the researchers, "the assumed, intended atmosphere seems to be telling students, 'You're so smart, you don't even make any mistakes!' This sort of atmosphere, in turn, should lead students to feel good about themselves and about how smart they are in mathematics. Although teachers may have good intentions when fostering such an environment, this atmosphere could lead students to become afraid to make mistakes for fear of being seen as stupid."

Teachers with this belief system tended to address easy questions to struggling students so they wouldn't make mistakes, in a misguided effort to boost their math achievement and self-esteem. The researchers flatly disagree: "Our conclusion from observing classrooms that foster an environment in which errors are commonplace – and some are even good – is that students' self-esteem does not suffer and they are better able to correct mistakes and learn more mathematics than when errors are discouraged."

The researchers believe the most effective approach is for teacher to communicate to students that: (a) errors are acceptable and not a reason for embarrassment or ridicule; (b) you should speak freely and not be afraid of making mistakes; (c) errors help me measure what you know; and (d) it's important that we detect errors. In an interview, one Chinese teacher said, "It doesn't matter if you say it wrong. If only you dare to say it, you're so great. In this way all the students can fully express themselves, and their problems can be exposed and resolved in a timely manner." Although a number of teachers on both sides of the world held these beliefs, only Chinese teachers explicitly told their students their positive orientation toward errors.

• *Making instructional use of "good" mistakes* – The researchers found that most effective teachers planned lessons in such a way that students would make certain mistakes that could then be used to explain common math misconceptions or traps. For example, one Chinese teacher asked students what 1/2 plus 1/3 was, anticipating that the "obvious" response, 2/5, would allow her to launch into a lesson on unlike denominators. The researchers found that Chinese teachers were much more systematic about planning lessons to "set up" students to make "good" mistakes that could serve as springboards for inquiry. Some American teachers had this approach in mind, but the researchers said they tended to take a "bug analysis" approach – anticipating mistakes as problems to be diagnosed and eradicated. Chinese teachers, on the other hand, were strategic about using errors to enhance students' thinking about a concept and help them consider why common errors "make sense."

• *Helping students work through errors* – The researchers believe that the most productive teacher response to errors is directing questions back to the student who made the error and pushing him or her to think it through until the correct approach emerges. Chinese teachers did this much more frequently and skillfully than American teachers, and used a wider repertoire of questions (see the list above). The researchers believe that simply asking students to explain a mistake ("Why?" questions) is not the only way to query students successfully about an error. "By varying the types of questions," they write, "and not relying solely on questions that request explanations, teachers give students the opportunity to become aware of multiple ways of examining a mathematical problem and to potentially engage with the problem at different levels."

The hardest thing for American teachers to escape, say the researchers, is the long-standing belief that errors are "bad" and must be avoided or immediately wiped out. There's a fine line, they write, between letting a student know that an error has been made and pouncing on it with an immediate correction. They recommend that teachers "think carefully about giving students the opportunity to work through their errors but… also ensure that students leave the conversation with the correct answer and process in mind."

• *Review, review, review* – Effective teachers clearly understood the importance of students going over material again so they were left with the "right concept" instead of the "original wrong one."

"Teachers' Responses to Student Mistakes in Chinese and U.S. Mathematics Classrooms" by Meg Schleppenbach, Lucia Flevares, Linda Sims, and Michelle Perry in *Elementary School Journal*, November 2007 (Vol. 108, #2, p. 131-147) no e-link available

Back to page one

5. A Structure for Mastering Middle-School Math Vocabulary

In this article in *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School*, Rheta Rubenstein, a math professor at the University of Michigan/Dearborn, provides a helpful way to attack tricky math vocabulary. Here are her categories, with examples from four strands of math (number sense, geometry/measurement, algebra, and data analysis/probability) and teaching suggestions for each area:

• *Words shared with everyday English, sometimes with distinct meanings:*
  - Examples: Fraction, product, power, prime, similar reflection, acute, variable, function, origin, relation, mode, average, median.
  - Suggestions: Distinguish the technical from the everyday meanings and alert students to the potential for confusion; explain what is shared between two domains and how the math meaning is different.

• *Words shared with science or other disciplines:*
  - Divide (as in continental), degree, prism, altitude, vertex, power, degree, experiment.
  - Suggestions: Similar to the above

• *Words found only in math:*
  - Examples: Denominator, percent, isosceles, hypotenuse, integer, polynomial, outlier, histogram.
  - Suggestions: Help students see the root words and origins; point out common English words with the same root and help students see how the roots build the mathematical meaning.

• *Words that have multiple meanings in math:*
  - Examples: Round (in numeration and geometry), square and cube (in geometry and algebra), tangent and range (also in strands areas).
  - Suggestions: Alert students to the multiple usages and use context clues to know which meaning is intended; help them see why a word makes sense in each context.

• *Words that come in pairs that often confuse students:*
  - Examples: factor and multiple; at most and at least; radius and diameter; complement and supplement; area and perimeter; domain and range; horizontal and vertical; associative and commutative; solve and simplify; dependent and independent; combination and permutation; horizontal and vertical (in data/probability).

- Suggestions: If possible, have students learn one word before attacking the second; use word origins and relations to each other and each word's relationship to everyday English words; acknowledge the challenge and have students double-check one another when they use the words.

• *Words that sound like others (homonyms and near homonyms):*

- Examples: Sum and some; two, two, and to; hundreds and hundredths; pi and pie; plane and plain; complement and compliment; theorem and theory; intercept and intersect; leaf and leave.
- Suggestions: Say the word clearly; spell each word; distinguish the words; use each in its particular context.

• *Modifiers that change word meanings in critical ways:*

- Examples: Fraction, improper fraction; denominator, common denominator; factorization, the prime factorization; bisector, perpendicular bisector; polygon, regular polygon; trapezoid, isosceles trapezoid; linear equation, linear equation in slope-intercept form; number, random number; deviation, standard deviation; score, standard score.
- Have students explore the unmodified term, the modifier, then the full phrase; help them see the broad category as well as the specific case within it.

"Focused Strategies for Middle-Grades Mathematics Development" by Rheta Rubenstein in *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School*, November 2007 (Vol. 13, #4, p. 200-207), no e-link available; many thanks to Marshall Memo reader Emily Gould for flagging this article.

Back to page one

6. Teaching Students to Write

In this interview in *EdNews*, teacher/author Jeff Anderson share insights about teaching writing. Some excerpts:

• *On teaching students to edit* – "Sometimes all we do in American schools is practice errors. What do I mean? Well, instead of teaching the concept of, say, apostrophes in depth, we teach it with a worksheet where kids mindlessly pepper them in, or we put a sentence on the board with apostrophes in the wrong places and ask kids to fix them. It seems reasonable: practice fixing errors and you will become proficient at creating prose without errors. But do we start history class with all the wrong dates and names on the board and ask kids to fix them? What about learning the concepts first? What if we could learn concepts like apostrophes and commas deeply before we started looking at wrongness all the time? We don't spend enough time letting kids marinate in correctness, the correctness of well-written effective prose. Let the kids look again at the flowing sentences of E.B. White rather than an error-filled fix-a-thon… And just pause for a moment and think at what staring at all those wrong sentences is doing to kids' visual memory. What looks right, huh? By rehearsing error rather than using punctuation to shape meaning and play with effect, we miss an opportunity to make editing about creating meaning rather than avoiding error."

• *On too much red ink* – "I have taught both middle and elementary school and I would say the joy of writing sort of gets beaten out of them… By third grade kids tend to say they 'hate writing' or they 'can't write' or they veil their disdain or lack of confidence behind 'I can't think of anything to write.' This comes from being 'red penned.' Teachers feel a duty to edit a kid's paper – every last bit. Teachers do this out of love and the hope that correcting will teach them. But we know better. Kids don't look at a marked-up paper and think about all the opportunities they have for improvement. Instead, they start to identify with an 'I can't write' persona. In fact, in their minds they have empirical evidence. 'Look at all the marks. I can't write.' If we listen, kids can teach us a lot about our teaching – good and bad."

• *On feedback* – "Encouragement is a huge part of the writing process. In fact, some researchers say (Johnston, Purkey) that if a child doesn't feel he has a chance of success at something, he won't engage in a process. And we know when kids don't engage, they don't learn."

• *On mentor texts* – "A mentor text is a well-written text – often writing by a professional author – that can teach us something we need to know about writing. The wonderful thing about well-crafted prose is that we can learn endless things, from the craft of writing to the craft of editing. And we can do it all at once, see how the author uses grammar and sensory detail to reveal character or setting… It's about asking kids to pay attention in new ways, to read like writers. I can put a lovely sentence by Andrew Clements or Maya Angelou on the board and ask the kids, 'What do you notice?' And we marinate on all its power, soaking up craft and grammar so we can become intimately familiar with it. When we do that, we start a process of noticing that can flow into their words and inspire them to create beauty and clarity as well – like their mentors."

"An Interview with Jeff Anderson" by Michael Shaughnessy in *EdNews*, Oct. 2, 2007
http://www.ednews.org/articles/17831/1/An-Interview-with-Jeff-Anderson-About-Everyday-Editing/Page1.html.
Back to page one

7. Thomas Guskey on Effective Professional Development

In this 2006 interview in *The Evaluation Exchange*, University of Kentucky professor Thomas Guskey shares three important insights about professional development:

• First, professional development should be planned backward from desired student achievement results. Guskey says we should begin by asking, "What improvements in student learning do we want to attain and what evidence best reflects those improvements?" In other words, what we want to accomplish with students should drive everything we do.

• Second, it's almost impossible to provide *proof* that a particular professional development initiative was responsible for gains in student achievement. That would require "a level of experimental rigor that is hard and often impossible to attain in practical school settings," says Guskey. But he goes on to say that all policymakers, legislators, and school leaders want is *evidence* – improvements in test scores, better attendance, fewer discipline

problems, or lower dropout rates. It's easier to produce evidence than it is to produce proof – but educators don't talk enough about results, the bottom line of all professional development.

• Third, it's often said that when we embark on a PD initiative, it will be two or three years before we know if it's been successful. "But when teachers are experimenting with new approaches to instruction or a new curriculum," says Guskey, "they need to gain evidence rapidly to show that it's making a difference. If they don't see such evidence, they quite naturally revert back to the tried and true things they've done in the past. This isn't because they are afraid of change. Rather, it's because they are so committed to their students and fear that the new approach might lead to less positive results. So, in planning professional development, we must include some mechanism whereby those responsible for implementation can gain evidence of success from their students rather quickly – within the first month of implementation."

"Questions and Answers: A Conversation with Thomas R. Guskey" by H. Kreider and S. Bouffard in *The Evaluation Exchange*, Winter 2005/2006 (Vol. XI, #4), no e-link available; many thanks to Memo reader Mark Murphy for bringing this interview to my attention.

Back to page one

8. Character Education Done Wrong – and Right

In this article in *Education Week*, veteran educator Peter Greer lists seven ways that character education is being taught in ways "that require little effort and have no lasting impact:"

• *The virtue-of-the-month strategy* – For example, RESPECT for September and FRIENDSHIP for January. Greer believes this approach is superficial and prevents teachers from drawing links between different virtues – for example, friendship involves courage, respect, self-control, wisdom, and responsibility.

• *The signage strategy* – Some schools have beautiful posters exhorting students with slogans like, *Your character is your destiny* – but if teachers and students aren't constantly discussing and thinking about the signs, says Greer, they will become "eyewash for students."

• *The service strategy* – "Schools give students the impression that if one merely does community service from time to time, good character is bound to follow," writes Greer. He believes that this approach often ignores the vital components of understanding the virtues and then practicing good deeds until they become habits.

• *The fragmentation strategy* – A school may tout its comprehensive character program, but if it doesn't give students regular feedback along with subject grades, they (and their parents) won't know how things are going.

• *The celebrity strategy* – "Inviting a former drug addict, a famous athlete, or a noted singer to talk to students about character becomes an event, not a lesson that sticks," says Greer. "What is the purpose of such an event, if there are no substantive student discussions with teachers before and after it?"

• *The case-study strategy* – This approach reminds Greer of the discredited values-clarification fad of the 1960s and '70s. He believes that asking students to make character-

based decisions using hypothetical case studies is useless if students don't first understand what virtue and character are all about.

• *The teacher-proof strategy* – Buying a packaged character curriculum and having teachers follow a script usually runs into trouble, says Greer, "when students begin asking tough questions the script did not anticipate… [Teachers] may be able to draw helpful ideas from the packaged programs, but they know instinctively that character lessons that stick come from much deeper sources."

Greer believes that to have a lasting impact on students' beliefs and actions, character education must stand on these four pillars:

- School as life – Students should focus on the kind of people they are becoming while they're in school, not just after graduation. Staff need to be on the lookout for teachable moments in all subject areas, in the halls, in the cafeteria, and on the playground and athletic fields.
- Professional development – "Teachers and support-staff members must know something… in order to prepare effective lesson plans," writes Greer. This will happen "when teachers have studied the virtues and tried to make themselves their exemplars." Then, he says, "they gain the ability to reflect on these matters and teach the subject with passion and confidence."
- Aristotle is your friend – Greer says the work of Aristotle and Plato is still relevant today and can be adapted for all grade levels.
- Quality standards – If a school is serious about helping students form good character, says Greer, it should adopt the "11 Principles" of the Character Education Partnership (http://www.frsd.k12.nj.us/teachers/Dept%20of%20curr&instruc/Character%20Educ/11principles.htm).

"Character Education on the Cheap" by Peter Greer in *Education Week*, Nov. 14, 2007 (Vol. 27, #12, p. 40, 32); you can read this and one other article free at http://www.edweek.org (pull down the "Browse archived issues" menu near the top right-hand corner of the website and go to 11/14/07, then Commentary at the very bottom).

Back to page one

9. "Smart and Good" – Integrating Character and Performance Goals

"Throughout history and in cultures around the world," write a team of character education experts in *Education Week*, "education rightly conceived has had two great goals: helping students become smart and helping them become good." In contemporary America, they say, character education has happened mostly in elementary schools – but some high schools are getting into the act – and stretching the definition of character education from just being kind and honest to working hard, developing talents, and striving for excellence.

The authors – Matthew Davidson, Thomas Lickona, and Vladimir Khmelkov – visited 24 exemplary high schools and produced a report for the John Templeton Foundation, *Smart and Good High Schools: Integrating Excellence and Ethics for Success in School, Work, and Beyond* (2006). Here are the eight character strengths posited in the report:

- Critical thinker
- Diligent and capable performer
- Socially and emotionally skilled person
- Ethical thinker
- Respectful and responsible moral agent
- Self-disciplined person
- Democratic citizen
- Spiritual person engaged in crafting a life of noble purpose.

The authors say these strengths fall into two broad categories: *performance character* – qualities that enable us to achieve to our highest potential in classrooms or workplaces, including determination, organization, creativity – and *moral character* – qualities that enable us to be our ethical best in relationships and our roles as citizens, including integrity, humility, and a sense of justice.

The authors believe that these two areas interact synergistically to produce the highest achievement:

• Students need performance character (including initiative, self-discipline, perseverance, teamwork) to do their best academic work.

• Students develop their performance character, including the ability to take satisfaction in a job well done, as they rise to the challenges of their schoolwork.

• Students need moral character (including respect, fairness, kindness, honesty) to build the relationships that make for a positive learning environment.

• Students develop their moral character by participating in well-designed cooperative learning; bringing out the best work in fellow students through guided critique; examining ethical issues in literature, history, science, and other areas; and carrying out service learning projects that help solve real-world problems.

The authors recommend four key components to developing character education in schools:

- Self-study – Self-assessment and goal-setting;
- Studying others – Learning from the good and bad examples of other people;
- Public performance – Making goals and work public;
- Community expectations – Supporting and challenging students to do their work and behave ethically, and holding everyone accountable to high standards.

"If we want to unlock the full power of character education," they say, "we must conceive of it as the integration of doing our best work and doing the right thing in every phase of school life – from classroom learning to the Friday night football game."

"Smart and Good Schools: A Paradigm Shift for Character Education" by Matthew Davidson, Thomas Lickona, and Vladimir Khmelkov in *Education Week*, Nov. 14, 2007 (Vol. 27, #12, p. 40, 31); you can read this and one other article free at http://www.edweek.org (pull down the "Browse archived issues" menu near the top right-hand corner of the website and go to 11/14/07, then Commentary at the very bottom).

Back to page one

10. Short Items:

a. Professional Learning Community website – This site has a plethora of information about teacher teams working effectively with interim assessment data and student work: blogs and discussions, evidence of effectiveness, inspirational case studies, tools and resources: http://www.allthingsplc.info.

Many thanks to Gerry Leader, Marshall Memo reader, for passing along this link.

Back to page one

b. Video archive online – ARKive, a free online repository of video clips on endangered species, can be accessed at: http://www.arkive.org.

"Advent of Digital Video Triggers Shifts in School Market" by Andrew Trotter in *Education Week*, Nov. 14, 2007 (Vol. 27, #12, p. 10)

Back to page one

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 37 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).

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Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educator
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Atlantic Monthly
Catalyst Chicago
Chronicle of Higher Education
CommonWealth Magazine
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
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Elementary School Journal
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Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
NASSP Bulletin
New York Times
New Yorker
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
Teacher Magazine (online)
Teachers College Record
TESOL Quarterly
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools