Marshall Memo 237

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
June 2, 2008

In This Issue:

1. Cultural shifts to launch successful professional learning communities
2. The seven stages of teacher teamwork
3. Five key conditions of PLCs
4. Judith Warren Little on effective teacher teams
5. Freeing up principals to be instructional leaders
6. How can educators make their meetings more effective?
7. Developing self-regulation in elementary school students
8. CD-ROM storybooks in the classroom
9. Short items: (a) Turnaround schools; (b) Spanish sayings, tongue-twisters, and riddles; (c) Online language learning; (d) French slang; (e) Latin "Mad Glibs"

Quotes of the Week

"Principals can't and shouldn't do it all."
Holly Holland (see item #5)

"This is not something you can just do. It's something you practice."
Mark Shellinger on principals' instructional leadership (*ibid*.)

"They are hungry for evidence of student learning, and they use that evidence both to respond to students who need additional time and support as well as to inform and improve their professional practice. Their focus shifts from inputs to outcomes and from intentions to results."
Robert Eaker and Janel Keating (see item #1)

"What commitments are we prepared to make to every student who walks into our schools this fall?"
White River Schools, Buckley, Washington (*ibid*.)

"If we are to be a school that ensures high levels of learning for all students, *then* we must commit to monitor each student's learning on a timely basis using a variety of assessment strategies and create systems to ensure they receive additional time and support as soon as they experience difficulty in their learning."
Mountain Meadow Elementary School, Washington (*ibid*.)

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1. Cultural Shifts to Launch Successful Professional Learning Communities

In this thoughtful *Journal of Staff Development* article, PLC experts Robert Eaker and Janel Keating say that some schools claim to have "professional learning communities" but haven't made certain cultural changes necessary for them to be a reality. Eaker and Keating suggest the following to get a school's culture – its assumptions, beliefs, expectations, and habits – ready for truly effective teacher collaboration:

• *A shift to high expectations* – "This shift is seismic," says the authors. "When schools passionately and sincerely adopt the mission of ensuring high levels of learning for all students, they are driven to pursue fundamentally different questions and work in significantly different ways."

• *A shift to collaboration* – Teachers working in isolation simply won't bring about major gains in student achievement. "A teacher's world can change when the school shifts from a culture of isolation to a culture of collaboration," write Eaker and Keating.

• *A shift to results* – Teachers in authentic professional learning communities are "hungry for evidence of student learning, and they use that evidence both to respond to students who need additional time and support as well as to inform and improve their professional practice. Their focus shifts from inputs to outcomes and from intentions to results."

Educators in the White River School District in Buckley, Washington (where Keating is deputy superintendent) have worked to make these shifts. They asked one another what it would look like to embrace learning as their fundamental purpose, build a collaborative culture, and respond to student needs and improve practice. "What commitments are we prepared to make to every student who walks into our schools this fall?" district leaders asked. "What commitments are we prepared to make to one another as we attempt to create a professional learning community?"

One elementary school in the district answered these questions by making a commitment that "the children *most in need* will receive the *most help* from the *most skilled staff*." To fulfill this commitment, teacher teams reviewed formative assessment results and developed plans to give additional time and support to struggling students within the school day. They also began reporting progress to parents every week. "These practices," write the authors, "represented a seismic cultural shift from the days when students most in need received help from paraprofessionals who had minimal training and little direct guidance from a classroom teacher or when parents only received formal progress reports every nine weeks."

Eaker and Keating distinguish between collective commitments and the standard school vision statement. The vision is a description of "an attractive future for the organization… 'someday we hope our school will be a place where…'" Collective commitments, on the other hand, are specific, stating how each individual can contribute to the work: "This is what I can do today to help create the school we want." Such commitments are a series of "if-then" statements, say the authors, for example:

- *If* we are to be a school that ensures high levels of learning for all students, *then* we must commit to monitor each student's learning on a timely basis using a variety of assessment strategies and create systems to ensure they receive additional time and support as soon as they experience difficulty in their learning.
- *If* we are to create a collaborative culture, *then* we must commit to be positive, contributing members to our collaborative teams and accept collective responsibility for the success of our colleagues and our students."

Collective commitments don't guarantee success, say Eaker and Keating, but they create a different dynamic between principals and their colleagues by putting the leader in "the role of promoter and protector of the shared vision the staff has created and the pledges people have made to one another to make that vision a reality." When there's a transgression, the principal can refer to the commitments: "Here are the promises we have made to one another, I need you to honor them." This is far more effective than pulling rank – "I'm the boss" – or saying "the district policy says you must do this."

"A Shift in School Culture" by Robert Eaker and Janel Keating in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer 2008 (Vol. 29, #3, p. 14-17), no e-link available; the authors can be reached at reaker@mtsu.edu and jkeating@whiteriver.wednet.edu.

Back to page one

2. The Seven Stages of Teacher Teamwork

In this intriguing *Journal of Staff Development* article, North Carolina educators Parry Graham and Bill Ferriter say the work of teacher teams moves through predictable developmental stages. They describe each stage and suggest what school leaders might do to help teams become authentic professional learning communities:

• *Stage 1: Filling the time* – Novice teams sometimes don't have enough to talk about in their meetings ("What exactly are we supposed to do?"), or they tackle too many tasks and get overwhelmed. Principals can help their teams skip this stage by giving clear direction – for example, identifying essential objectives and common assessments – and providing basic structures, norms, and roles.

• *Stage 2: Sharing classroom practices* – Talking about instructional strategies and ideas is helpful, but some teams never move beyond this stage to the kind of work that deeply affects student achievement. Principals can help by asking teams to arrive at collaborative decisions around curriculum, assessment, or instruction, shifting the focus from individual

efforts to a collective exploration of what works – for example, creating a shared mini-lesson that all teachers will deliver to address a particular learning problem.

• *Stage 3: Planning, planning, planning* – Teams often discover that they can save time and avoid duplicative work by teaching the same material in the same time-frame and collectively planning units and lessons. But teams can get stuck at this stage and fail to focus on results. "Unless challenged," say Graham and Ferriter, "team attention remains centered on teaching rather than learning." Principals can help teachers get off the dime by asking questions like: "Are your students learning what you want them to learn? How do you know?"

• *Stage 4: Developing common assessments* – Novice teams tend to avoid writing common assessments because that involves difficult conversations about exactly what students should know and be able to do, how to assess learning, and what mastery looks like. Principals may need to sit with teams as they do this work, moderating the debates and providing help with assessment-writing strategies so that interim assessments provide useful data for the real work of PLCs.

• *Stage 5: Analyzing student learning* – After students take common assessments, teacher teams face the most challenging question: *Are students learning what we taught them*? At this stage, teachers need technical support to make sense of the data and emotional support dealing with often disappointing results. "Common assessment data will reveal varying levels of student success across classrooms," say Graham and Ferriter, "leading to feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and defensiveness. Teachers are put in the delicate position of publicly facing what they will inevitably – yet inaccurately – view as individual successes and failures. This intensely personal reaction is understandable from invested professionals confronted with hard evidence."

It's important that school leaders model a low-stakes approach and reassure teachers that data analysis is about improving outcomes, not judging individuals. "When handled properly," say the authors, "analysis of student learning can lead to rich conversations about effective instruction. As teachers spot patterns in the data, they can work as a unit to respond productively. On highly functioning teams, collective intelligence provides a never-ending source of solutions for addressing shared challenges."

• *Stage 6: Differentiating follow-up* – Teacher teams that have mastered Stage 5 will naturally want to respond instructionally with their students. School leaders can help by providing time for reteaching and resources to supplement teachers' efforts (e.g., funding for after-school tutoring; using counselors, secretaries, teaching assistants, media specialists, assistant principals, literacy coaches, and other school staff to help struggling students; and forging partnerships with sister schools with similar student populations). Principals can also help by asking teachers the right questions, including:

- What concepts do your students struggle with?
- Are your students able to apply knowledge to novel problems?
- Which instructional practices are the most effective across your team?

"By posing provocative questions and demonstrating flexibility as teams pursue various approaches for intervention and enrichment," say Graham and Ferriter, "school leaders encourage the professional ownership that defines accomplished educators."

• *Stage 7: Reflecting on instruction* – Real professional learning communities will eventually ask one final question: *Which practices are most effective with our students?* "This question brings the process of professional learning team development full circle," say the authors, "connecting learning back to teaching. Teams at this point are engaged in deep reflection, tackling innovative projects such as action research or lesson studies." At this stage, principals should encourage and facilitate the process of reflection, perhaps getting teachers observing each other's classes and providing release time to independent projects, and encouraging cross-team conversations, "creating opportunities for practices and perspectives to migrate schoolwide."

"One Step at a Time" by Parry Graham and Bill Ferriter in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer 2008 (Vol. 29, #3, p. 10-13), no e-link available; the authors can be reached at parrygraham@hotmail.com and wferriter@hotmail.com.

Back to page one

3. Five Key Conditions for PLCs

In this *Journal of Staff Development* article, researcher Shirley Hord says that most people agree on the following points:

- The purpose of schools is *student learning*.
- The most significant factor in student learning is the *quality of teaching*.
- Teaching quality is best improved through *continuous professional learning*.
- The best vehicle of professional learning is the *professional learning community*.

It was not always thus. "For much of the history of education," says Hord, "teachers worked in what were architecturally characterized as egg crate schools… Cell-like classrooms and cultures promoted insulation and isolation from other staff, leaving classroom teachers as self-employed individuals, doing their own thing, whatever that was."

Then in the 1980s, team teaching and open classrooms came into vogue, and schools began to schedule grade-level and department meetings. But the conversations in these meetings were often about ordering books and supplies, scheduling field trips, bringing in visiting speakers, and talking about successful classroom activities.

Then state curriculum standards were introduced and there was another shift. Teachers got the clear message that all students in increasingly diverse schools were expected to reach proficiency, which pushed teacher teams to engage in more focused work. At their best, professional learning communities focus on multiple sources of student data to see where students are doing well and where they are struggling, and use the information to try different approaches and improve the performance of all students.

"We still have much to learn about how to initiate and develop a professional learning community in a school," says Hord. But she believes the following components are key:

• *Shared beliefs, values, and vision* – Staff members have a common purpose and reach agreement on the changes and improvements needed to boost student learning.

• *Distributed leadership* – Teachers become actively involved in the enterprise, reaching a higher level of professionalism. The principal is still the key initiator, but develops the leadership potential of colleagues and becomes the collaborative "guide on the side" rather than the authoritarian "sage on the stage."

• *Supportive conditions* – Teacher teams have time to meet, and norms and ground rules guide effective collegial work. "Trust is a significant factor for the community," says Hord, "and leaders should take steps to build this important capital."

• *Data-driven instruction* – Grade-level and department teams, and the staff as a whole, look at assessment results to identify areas where students need help, and then follow up with new practices and professional development to sharpen staff skills. "They plan precisely what they will learn, how they will engage in their learning, and the resources needed," says Hord. They reach out to colleagues in the school, at other schools, in the district office, and in universities and elsewhere. "The mastery of this learning and its implementation in classrooms is followed by another cycle of reflection, discussion, assessment, and consideration of new professional learning that contributes to staff's effectiveness with students. The process is continuous."

• *Shared personal practice* – "Teachers are invited to visit each other's classrooms to observe, take notes, and share observations," says Hord. "When this component is developed well in the professional learning community, staff members are honest and open about what the teacher knows and doesn't know, and what he or she needs to learn."

How can we tell if a school has these practices in place? There are more elaborate assessment tools, but Hord suggests these quick questions for teachers:

- What are you learning?
- Why are you learning that?
- How are you learning it?

These go to the core purpose of the group's work: "intentional professional learning for the purpose of improved student learning."

"Evolution of the Professional Learning Community" by Shirley Hord in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer 2008 (Vol. 29, #3, p. 10-13), no e-link available; the author, who is the National Staff Development Council's scholar laureate, can be reached at shirley.hord@nsdc.org.

Back to page one

4. Judith Warren Little on Effective Teacher Teams

In this *Journal of Staff Development* interview, UCLA/Berkeley professor Judith Warren Little shares her wisdom about professional learning communities. Some points:

• Teacher teams need common learning goals and shared curricular resources to anchor their conversations. Teachers also need to observe one another's classrooms and have enough team time to get beyond day-to-day logistics to thoughtful reflection on student learning.

• The principal's leadership role with teacher teams is tricky. On the one hand, teams can become dysfunctional without clear direction and leadership from the principal. On the other hand, if all the direction is coming from above and teachers have no ownership, meetings can feel like "contrived collegiality."

• Meetings have to produce tangible benefits for teachers. "If working as a community doesn't carry valued-added over what teachers are able to accomplish independently," says Little, "then it won't be worth the transactional costs, the investment in time, and the competition with what teachers feel that they have to do individually."

• When teacher teams don't have enough time and are pressed with other business, they tend to react superficially when someone raises a real classroom concern. It gets deflected or turned into a joke, there are comments like, "Oh, don't worry, this happens to all of us" or "I had one like that," or a quick piece of advice is dispensed. But when teams have time and develop trust and caring, colleagues listen and ask questions and probe and examine their own assumptions and practices.

• Pedagogical content knowledge is very important in teacher teams. "Groups that don't have the means to unpack and resolve their problems can only get so far in having a discussion, especially by themselves," says Little. This is where the principal, district staff, or consultants can be most helpful.

• Teachers tend to shy away from taking leadership in teams because of the tradition of egalitarianism in the profession. Little makes a pitch for "informed initiative" in which there can be several leaders in a group, all contributing their insights and questions.

"Declaration of Interdependence" – An interview with Judith Warren Little by Tracy Crow in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer 2008 (Vol. 29, #3, p. 53-56), no e-link available; Little can be reached at jwlittle@berkeley.edu.

Back to page one

5. Freeing Up Principals to Be Instructional Leaders

In this Wallace Foundation policy paper, freelance writer Holly Holland explores one solution to the perennial problem of principals living from one interruption to the next and spending most of their time on school management. The idea, being tested in the LaRue County, Kentucky schools and eight other districts, is to assign a trained School Administration Manager (SAM) to a school, whose mission is to take almost all administrative tasks off the principal's desk. *Principals can't and shouldn't do it all*, is the watchword of this experiment; the goal is to get principals out of their offices and into classrooms. "Student achievement is the focus," says LaRue superintendent Sam Sanders, "but the only way you're going to move student achievement up is if you allow principals to get directly involved in instruction and assessment. Other than that, they'll be putting out fires every day."

The SAM project, which originated in the Jefferson County Schools in Kentucky and is supported by the Wallace Foundation, has three components: (a) Hiring a new person to take care of administration, or reallocating the duties of an existing building administrator to focus on school operations (most districts have hired midlevel managers from the business

community at about $35,000 a year; some have split off part of an assistant principal's job for these tasks; still others have hired teachers with an eye to grooming them for the principalship); (b) Tracking the principal's time to ensure that more is going into instruction and learning; and (c) An outside coach working with the principal once a month to support more effective and reflective leadership. "This is not something you can just do," says Mark Shellinger, coordinator of the project. "It's something you practice."

Within a few months of getting her SAM, LaRue elementary principal Penny Cecil was spending about 70 percent of each day in classrooms (up from 40 percent pre-SAM). The following year, she knew almost all of her 589 students by name and was in classrooms so much that teachers and students barely noticed when she walked in. Getting to know students well has been invaluable; she can alert teachers to learning problems and suggest solutions that worked in the past. Being familiar with teachers' classroom performance allows her to plan professional development to meet common needs, as well as talking to individual teachers about particular teaching issues.

Cecil's SAM is Tammy Harding, a former office manager and substitute teacher, who delights in handling items that used to drive the principal crazy. On a typical morning, Harding created a diagnostic test schedule for students, distributed paychecks to staff members, intercepted a phone call from a textbook sales rep, and scheduled a fire drill for the following week. She also checked with the principal's computerized time-tracker to remind her of planned meetings and objectives.

For some principals in SAM schools, finally having time to get into classrooms is a challenge, because they don't have much training or experience observing and coaching teachers. "[T]hey are more accustomed to periodic and passive classroom walkthroughs or scheduled evaluations that may determine teachers' tenure but not promote their professional growth," writes Holland. The program coaches principals on having deeper conversations with teachers, shifting from an evaluative to a more collegial and supportive role. They get better at providing effective feedback, motivating teachers, and knowing when to pull back. They also learn how to grade students' work and become more aware of what proficient work should look like at each grade level.

SAM coordinators have found that they need to provide explicit training to help principals deflect the constant barrage of questions and issues from staff members and parents ("Got a minute?"). Trainers conduct role-plays and give principals helpful lines, for example, "You're worth more than a minute! Please see the SAM with this issue and she'll take care of it right away."

Not everyone agrees with the SAM approach. Joe Burke, outgoing superintendent of the Springfield, Massachusetts schools, thinks developing teacher leadership is a better solution. "The SAM's strategy is that the principal has to much to do and they can't be an effective instructional leader, so we'll hire a manager to take all the nitty-gritty from them, and everything will be wonderful," he said. "Well, if our teachers are still not engaged in the change process in meaningful ways, it's not going to work that effectively." Burke has initiated a program to identify and train teacher leaders to coordinate professional development and

guide school improvement plans. "I think what we need to do is look at the deeper changes that need to occur in instruction, classroom by classroom," said Burke. "It's my firm belief that if you're going to rely on one leader in the school to do that, you're not going to get the leverage points you really need."

Lois Adams-Rodgers of the Council of Chief State School Officers disagrees. She thinks that SAM-enhanced principals are creating leadership teams and involving teachers in the instructional dialogue. "It's not an either/or [situation]. It's what combination does it take to run a successful school," she says. "It means the principal might lead professional development or identify the best teachers to serve as coaches, in addition to teaching."

"Out of the Office and Into the Classroom" by Holly Holland, a policy paper for the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, 2007, http://www.wallacefoundation.org/ELAN/TR/KnowledgeCategories/Improving+Conditions/Roles+Responsibilities+And+Authority/roles_out.htm

Back to page one

6. How Can Educators Make Their Meetings More Productive?

In another thoughtful *Journal of Staff Development* column, California-based professor/consultant Robert Garmston provides tools for making meetings more helpful to a school's success:

• *Asking naïve questions* – This simple technique is a surprisingly effective way for a group member to get a dysfunctional meeting back on track. "Naïve questions have an intonational quality of child-like inquiry, posing questions that are truly open-ended," explains Garmston. "To communicate naïvely is to speak with innocence, to be artless, unaffected, and neutral… They develop awareness about process and alert leaders who may have overlooked such questions in planning." Two examples: "Who will communicate this decision?" and "Who will be informed about this?"

• *Knowing who decides* – Groups are more successful when they know the answers to the following questions up front and trust the process:

- Who is making this decision?
- What processes will we use?
- What is our role in this decision?
- Are we to inform, recommend, or decide?

• *Knowing whose turf you're on* – In schools, jurisdictions overlap and groups need clarity on what their purview is: Within the classroom or the school? State law or district policies? Members need answers to these questions up front:

- Should we be talking about this?
- What parts of this issue live on our turf?
- What other stakeholders are involved?
- What are the roles of other groups in making decisions on this topic?
- What limitations, if any, are we bound by?

• *Working with clear ground rules* – Garmston and his colleagues have found that deciding on certain standards for meetings is tremendously helpful. Here are his favorite four, with naïve questions that might be raised when each is violated:

- *One topic at a time*. "Excuse me, I thought we were talking about X. Are we on a new topic now?"
- *One process at a time*. "What process are we using now? I've lost track. Are we done brainstorming?"
- *Balance participation* and encourage all voices since diversity of perspectives forms stronger ideas. "Sally, I don't think we've heard from you. Anything to add?" "Can we take a couple of minutes to buzz on this?"
- *Engage cognitive conflict*, since disagreement about ideas is necessary for sound decision-making. "I see it a different way." "Here is another idea." (Not "Yes, but!")

"Members Skilled in Questioning Technique Can Keep the Group Work on Track" by Robert Garmston in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer 2008 (Vol. 29, #3, p. 45-46), no e-link available; the author can be reached at FABob@aol.com.

Back to page one

7. Developing Self-Regulation in Elementary School Students

"Is it possible to design literacy instruction that prepares students to pass high-stakes tests *and* that empowers and motivates students to take charge of their learning?" asks University of North Carolina/Greensboro researcher Seth Parsons in this article in *The Reading Teacher*. Most teachers think it's impossible to do both, and stick with textbooks and scripted literacy programs. Parsons disagrees – and presents ACCESS, an approach to instructional planning that he believes can do it all.

The rationale behind this approach is that being self-regulated gives students important long-range advantages, as well as equipping them to pass state tests. Here is Parsons's list of the attributes of self-regulated learners (from Perry et al., 2006, and Zimmerman, 2000):

- They are aware of their academic strengths and weaknesses.
- They believe that ability is incremental.
- They focus on personal progress and deep understanding.
- They have high efficacy for learning.
- They attribute outcomes to factors they can control.
- They are strategic in approaching challenging tasks.
- They are proactive.
- They are adaptive.

Parsons then presents the six components of ACCESS – Authentic, Collaborative Challenging, End-product required, Self-directed, and Sustained – with an example of an assignment given to a fourth-grade class: creating a newspaper about historical events they were studying in their textbook.

• *Authentic* – The project students are asked to do has a purposeful, real-world feel to it, which increases their interest and motivation. The newspaper project helps the textbook come alive.

• *Collaborative* – Students work in groups to decide what to do and how to do it, which researchers have repeatedly found increases involvement, self-concept, and achievement. On the newspaper project, student teams can take on different parts of the challenge – reporters, editors, photographers, etc.

• *Challenging* – An appropriate level of challenge is one of the cornerstones of good instruction, and tailoring projects to be a little above students' current levels gets results. In the newspaper project, the teacher orchestrated different projects that were at the right level of difficulty for different students.

• *End product required* – Producing a product brings authenticity and meaning to students' work. In this case, it was a finished newspaper.

• *Self-directed* – The more ownership students have, the more they throw themselves into the work and the more they get out of it. In the newspaper project, students decided on the main content of their articles, the division of labor, and the format, with occasional advice from the teacher.

• *Sustained* – Tasks that keep students engaged for several days or weeks definitely improve self-regulation. Too many literacy assignments require brief attention to isolated skills, says Parsons. The newspaper project lasted for several weeks, stretching students' attention span and tenacity.

Parsons closes by pointing out ways that using the ACCESS approach can help teachers by improving communication, differentiating instruction, and bridging different subject areas:

- ACCESS promotes a common language for reaching the goal of self-regulation.
- It promotes differentiated instruction by getting students working cooperatively in authentic situations.
- It leaves the door open for explicit instruction for particular students, as needed.
- It promotes interdisciplinary instruction because it is flexible enough to include skills and knowledge from different subject areas.
- It helps teachers deal with the time crunch by combining skills and content from different subjects in unifying projects.

"Providing All Students ACCESS to Self-Regulated Literacy Learning" by Seth Parsons in *The Reading Teacher*, May 2008 (Vol. 61, #8, p. 628-635), no e-link available; the author can be reached at saparson@uncg.edu.

Back to page one

8. CD-ROM Storybooks in the Classroom

In this article in *The Reading Teacher*, Missouri State University professor Cathy Pearman reports on a study of second graders to see if interactive CD-ROM storybooks improved reading comprehension. Pearman found that the storybooks were helpful for struggling readers because they decreased or eliminated the need for students to focus on

decoding, allowing them to concentrate on constructing meaning from the text. The computer-based books also provided rich multi-sensory context and provided individualized assistance, allowing students to feel in control of their reading and improve vocabulary. Students who used CD-ROM storybooks in conjunction with a classroom reading program were able to familiarize themselves with the books' content and improved their performance when they had to read the same books in a whole-class situation with more proficient peers.

"Independent Reading of CD-ROM Storybooks: Measuring Comprehension with Oral Retellings" by Cathy Pearman in *The Reading Teacher*, May 2008 (Vol. 61, #8, p. 594-602), no e-link available; the author can be reached at CathyPearman@missouristate.edu.

Back to page one

9. Short Items:

a. Turnaround schools report – This 2007 report by Public Impact for the Center on Innovation and Improvement synthesizes research on how organizations in a variety of sectors brought about rapid improvements. The full title is "School Turnarounds: Cross-sector Evidence on Organizational Improvement", and it's available at http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Turnarounds-Color.pdf.

"Turnaround Schools" in Snapshots in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer 2008 (Vol. 29, #3, p. 63)

Back to page one

b. Spanish sayings, tongue twisters, and riddles – This website has lists of Spanish sayings (*dichos*), tongue twisters (*trabalenguas*), and riddles (*adivinanzas*). See: http://web.mac.com/pconley3/iWeb/Site/Home.html.

Spotted in *The Language Educator*, January 2008 (Vol. 3, #1, p. 60)

Back to page one

c. Online language learning – Mango is a website offering free color-coded translations, audio of native speakers, and real conversations in the target language. Free registration is required to access material in Brazilian Portuguese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, and Spanish. Courses in English for Polish and Spanish speakers are also available. http://www.mangolanguages.com.

Spotted in *The Language Educator*, January 2008 (Vol. 3, #1, p. 60)

Back to page one

d. French slang – This BBC website is the essential guide to young French people's slang, divided into categories, including Argument, Going Out, Money, Moods, and Politics: http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/cool.

Spotted in *The Language Educator*, January 2008 (Vol. 3, #1, p. 61)

Back to page one

e. Latin "Mad Glibs" – This online application makes Latin Mad Libs. The user enters the correct form of parts of speech and the application generates a story. http://www.madglibs.com/showglib.php?glibid=101.

Spotted in *The Language Educator*, January 2008 (Vol. 3, #1, p. 61)

Back to page one

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Do you have feedback? Is anything missing?

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

About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly memo is designed to keep principals, teachers, superintendents, and others very well-informed on current research and 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
<u>ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews</u>
Atlantic Monthly
Catalyst Chicago
CommonWealth Magazine
Ed. Magazine
EDge
Education Digest
<u>Education Gadfly</u>
<u>Education Next</u>
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Edutopia
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
<u>Journal of Staff Development</u>
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
<u>New York Times</u>
<u>New Yorker</u>
<u>Newsweek</u>
<u>PEN Weekly NewsBlast</u>
Phi Delta Kappan
Principal
Principal Leadership
Principal's Research Review
Reading Research Quarterly
Reading Today
Rethinking Schools
<u>Review of Educational Research</u>
Teacher Magazine (online)
Teachers College Record
TESOL Quarterly
<u>The Language Educator</u>
<u>The Reading Teacher</u>
Theory Into Practice
Tools for Schools/<u>The Learning Principal</u>