

Marshall Memo 355

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

October 11, 2010

In This Issue:

1. [Suggestions for an effective teacher evaluation process](#)
2. [Collaborative problem solving to deal with chronic discipline problems](#)
3. [Developing executive skills in “lazy” students](#)
4. [Teaching students to argue in science classes](#)
5. [Improving student achievement in algebra](#)
6. [What the research says about extending the school day and year](#)
7. [How effective leaders communicate their ideas](#)
8. [Project-based learning in a Pennsylvania classroom](#)
9. [How much foreign language should be used in language classes?](#)
10. Short items: (a) [Gallup online student poll](#); (b) [Teaching about the Day of the Dead](#)
(c) [French phonetic exercises](#); (d) [Interactive French exercises](#)

Quotes of the Week

“Allowing teachers to learn at children’s expense is unethical. We must build a system for ensuring that new teachers have the requisite professional skills and know how to use them.”
Deborah Loewenberg Ball and Francesca Forzani in “What Does It Take to Make a Teacher?” in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2010 (Vol. 92, #2, p. 8); this article can be purchased at <http://www.kappanmagazine.org/content/92/2/8.full>

“If teachers are surprised by their summative evaluation rating, something is wrong with the evaluation process.”
The New Teacher Project (see item #1)

“The behaviorally challenging students being sent with great regularity to the office aren’t the only frequent flyers in the building. The teachers sending them are frequent flyers too.”
Ross Greene (see item #2)

“The longer I teach, the more important it is for me to see that my students are curious, hardworking, and happy in my classroom.”
Pennsylvania sixth-grade teacher David Rockower (see item #8)

“A curriculum is more than a collection of activities: It must be coherent, focused on important mathematics, and well articulated across the grades.”
NCTM 2000 Report (quoted in item #5)

1. Suggestions for an Effective Teacher Evaluation Process

In its widely discussed 2009 report, *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness*, The New Teacher Project said that in most districts, teacher evaluations are:

- Infrequent – Many teachers, especially those with experience, aren't evaluated annually.
- Unfocused – Evaluation doesn't take into account whether students are learning.
- Undifferentiated – Binary ratings (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory) don't distinguish mediocre from highly effective teaching, and 99 percent of teachers get high ratings.
- Unhelpful – Few teachers say that evaluations give them useful feedback.
- Inconsequential – Evaluation results are rarely used to make important decisions about development, compensation, tenure, or promotion.

The result is that teachers are treated as interchangeable parts – widgets – rather than as individual professionals.

In a thoughtful new report, The New Teacher Project proposes six guiding principles for a better teacher evaluation system:

- All children can master academically rigorous material, regardless of their socioeconomic status.
- A teacher's primary professional responsibility is to ensure that students learn.
- Teachers contribute to student learning in ways that are mostly observable and measurable.
- Evaluation results should be used to remove persistently underperforming teachers and build a thriving teacher workforce.
- Evaluations should play a major role in important employment decisions.
- No evaluation system is perfect, but we can develop systems that are much better than what exists now in most districts, and should continuously improve what we put in place.

The report then presents six design standards for an ideal teacher evaluation process:

- *Annual evaluations* – Every teacher should be evaluated at least once a year, says the report. This will ensure that all teachers get something all professionals deserve – ongoing feedback on their performance. Annual evaluations also provide a way for the district to hold school leaders accountable for helping all teachers grow and develop.

- *Clear, rigorous expectations* – Evaluation rubrics should include explicit standards of instructional excellence with student learning as the priority. A negative and positive example:
 - Poorly constructed: “Teacher makes a thoughtful and accurate assessment of the level of student understanding throughout the lesson.”
 - Clear and rigorous: “Student work during the lesson (e.g., Do-Nows, checks for understanding, guided and independent practice, exit slips) shows that nearly all students at all skill levels mastered the lesson objectives.”

Each district’s evaluation instrument should be continuously refined and revised, discarding elements that aren’t directly related to student achievement.

- *Multiple measures* – Evaluations should consider several measures of performance that are clearly spelled out in advance, with heavy emphasis on the teacher’s impact on students’ academic growth. Value added should be judged using reliable measures – i.e., a district-wide writing prompt scored with a consistent rubric would be better than a teacher-designed take-home essay.

- *A differentiated rating scale* – Evaluations should use four or five rating levels to describe differences in teacher effectiveness. With a four-point rating scale, the report suggests the following actions for teachers at different levels of experience:

Years of Experience	Ineffective	Needs Improvement	Effective	Highly Effective
1	Renew if improving rapidly	Renew if improving	Renew	Renew
2	Do not renew	Renew if improving	Renew	Renew
3	Deny tenure	Extend probationary period	Grant tenure	Grant tenure
4+	Dismiss or counsel out	Retain if Effective previous year, otherwise dismiss or counsel out	Retain	Retain and reward

- *Regular feedback* – Teachers should be observed frequently and get constructive feedback in regular conversations in which performance and student progress are discussed. “Teachers and instructional managers should come away from these conversations with a shared understanding of what the teacher needs to focus on in the short term and how the instructional manager can help,” says the report. “If teachers are surprised by their summative evaluation rating, something is wrong with the evaluation process.” The report goes on to say, “Feedback is useless if instructional managers and teachers view development conversations as chores instead of opportunities to talk openly and constructively about instruction. Districts should hold instructional managers accountable for the *quality* of the feedback and support teachers receive, not just the quantity...”

• *Significance* – “An evaluation process must have meaningful implications, both positive and negative, in order to earn sustained support from teachers and school leaders and to contribute to the systematic improvement of the teacher workforce,” says the report. This includes decisions on tenure, compensation, development, hiring, promotion, and dismissal. On the other hand, districts should not blindly follow every bit of evaluation data – for example, the highest-performing math teacher should not automatically be selected as a math coach, and a teacher should not be summarily dismissed based on one negative classroom observation. Professional judgment is always necessary.

“The success of any evaluation system – no matter how solid its design – ultimately depends on how well it is implemented,” concludes the report, and the authors suggest the following questions to use in ongoing self-assessment:

- Are school leaders evaluating teachers accurately?
- Are teachers receiving useful feedback on clear expectations?
- Do teachers believe they are being evaluated fairly?
- Are school leaders getting the support they need to conduct accurate evaluations?
- Are teachers generally improving their performance over time?
- Are schools retaining consistently top-performing teachers at higher rates than consistently low-performing teachers?

“Teacher Evaluation 2.0” by The New Teacher Project, 2010. This 11-page report is available at <http://www.tntp.org/files/Teacher-Evaluation-Oct10F.pdf>; spotted in *PEN Weekly NewsBlast*, Oct. 8, 2010

[Back to page one](#)

2. Collaborative Problem Solving to Deal with Chronic Discipline Problems (Originally titled “Calling All Frequent Flyers”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, Harvard Medical School psychiatry professor Ross Greene describes a visit to a school with huge number of discipline problems. The assistant principal tells him that 20 students – the “frequent flyers” – are responsible for three-quarters of the problems. “If I’m seeing those students constantly,” he said, “then what I’m doing isn’t working.”

To make progress in a situation like this, says Greene, we first have to answer two questions:

• *First, why are these students being so difficult?* Greene believes it’s because they lack the skills *not* to be challenging. “If they had these skills,” he says, “they’d use them.” What are the missing skills? Greene has compiled a one-page Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP), which includes:

- Difficulty handling transitions
- Difficulty doing things in a logical sequence or prescribed order
- Difficulty persisting on challenging or tedious tasks
- Difficulty maintaining focus
- Difficulty considering the likely outcomes or consequences of actions

- Difficulty managing emotional responses to frustration so as to think rationally
- Chronic irritability and/or anxiety that impedes capacity to problem-solve
- Difficulty attending to or accurately interpreting social cues
- Inflexible, inaccurate interpretations (*Everyone's out to get me, Nobody likes me*)
- Difficulty empathizing with others and appreciating others' point of view

(The full ALSUP is available at <http://www.livesinthebalance.org/paperwork>.)

Thinking in terms of missing skills suggests a major attitude adjustment for adults. "For a long time," says Greene, "we've been thinking that challenging behavior was the result of poor motivation or lax parental discipline." This has led schools to use rewards or punishments to try to improve these students' behavior. But if the problem is undeveloped skills, it's obvious why this approach doesn't work – it doesn't teach the missing skills.

• *Second, when do these students misbehave?* Greene says they go off the rails when the environment demands skills they don't have – for example, a second grader having difficulty with circle time. When seen from this perspective, behavior problems are highly predictable; they can be traced to certain antecedents, triggers, or situations because difficult students have a bundle of unsolved problems waiting to explode. Using Greene's one-page ALSUP checklist helps schools identify unsolved problems, predict problem situations, and help students develop the skills to prevent them.

Greene is less interested in elaborately diagnosing students' problems ("Diagnoses *pathologize* kids," he says) than at looking at why and when problem behaviors occur. "The spectrum of looking bad", as he calls it, is the range of behaviors that occur when students' skills aren't up to the demands of the situation. At one end is whining, pouting, sulking, crying, and withdrawing. Toward the other end is screaming, swearing, hitting, spitting, biting, kicking, throwing, or destroying. The extreme is head-banging, cutting, stabbing, and shooting. Greene suggests focusing on *why* the student is acting in a particular way – and *when*. This is the actionable information – we can actually do something with it – as opposed to things we can't do anything about, such as the child's parents being divorced or the father being in jail.

With actionable information, we can begin to solve the problem, which is, of course, the hardest part. Greene says there are three ways adults can proceed:

• Plan A – Imposing the adult's will (often accompanied by consequences). "Unilateral problem solving actually *heightens* the likelihood of challenging behavior in many students," he says. "That's because when someone imposes his or her will on you... it requires skills to handle the situation well – skills that challenging students often lack."

• Plan B – Greene's Collaborative Problem Solving model, which involves gathering information about the situation, defining the problem, and inviting the student to brainstorm solutions. Plan B can work well, but requires courage, practice, continuity, and good communication.

• Plan C – Not trying to solve all the student's problems at once. "This keeps everyone from becoming overwhelmed and helps adults and students focus on a few unsolved problems at a time," says Greene.

Check out this video <http://www.livesinthebalance.org/plan-b-goes-awry-part-1> showing an assistant principal trying to solve a fight on a school bus.

“The behaviorally challenging students being sent with great regularity to the office aren’t the only frequent flyers in the building,” says Greene. “The teachers sending them are frequent flyers too.” He suggests that these teachers need training and support to shift their mindset and use more effective techniques, and concludes, “Transforming school discipline is a team effort that must be led by administrators with vision, energy, focus, perseverance, a willingness to self-reflect, and an ability to bring people along.”

“Calling All Frequent Flyers” by Ross Greene in *Educational Leadership*, October 2010 (Vol. 68, #2, p. 28-34); this article can be purchased at <http://www.ascd.org>

[Back to page one](#)

3. Developing Executive Skills in “Lazy” Students

(Originally titled “Lazy – or Not?”)

In this *Educational Leadership* article, New Hampshire-based psychologist/author Peg Dawson suggests another way of looking at laziness, a label frequently applied to some students. A better way of understanding these supposedly slothful underachievers, she says, is that they lack executive skills – the cognitive processes required to initiate and follow through on tasks, a solid working memory and attention span, skills at performance monitoring, inhibition of impulses, and goal-directed persistence. Dawson says these skills don’t fully mature until age twenty. For children who are behind in developing them, the symptoms are:

- Trouble getting started on tasks
- Easily distracted
- Papers and assignments lost or left behind
- Homework not handed in
- Careless mistakes from rushing through work or dawdling
- Not knowing where to begin with long-term assignments
- Putting off tasks till the last minute, misjudging time
- Disorganized work space and notebooks

These problems tend to become acute in middle school as students deal with multiple teachers and less support.

Dawson recommends an RTI-like framework to helping these students develop their executive skills:

• **Tier 1** – Teachers establish classroom routines, explicitly teach organizational skills, and build fun activities to motivate students:

- Teach routines for writing down assignments, collecting homework, etc.
- Review classroom rules and role-play compliance.
- Use electronic tools so parents and students can access assignments and progress.
- Teach how to organize notebooks.
- Teach how to plan homework sessions and screen out distractions.
- Reward the class, e.g., if 80 percent of the week’s homework is handed in on time.

• Tier 2 – Students who are still struggling with executive skills get more intense interventions, including:

- Break tasks into parts or make them less open-ended.
- Establish an after-school homework club.
- Provide weekly progress reports to parents.
- Ask parents to have at-home incentives tied to daily and weekly progress reports.
- Coach small groups of students how to plan homework, remember things, and organize notebooks.
- Set up peer-tutoring programs or train volunteer tutors.
- Have students come to class during free time or after school to do unfinished work.

• Tier 3 – When Tier 1 and 2 are not enough, parents, teachers, and students need to work together to create an individual support plan:

- Define the target behavior and the criteria for success.
- Identify and implement specific modifications, e.g., a distraction-free homework spot.
- Explicitly teach, model, and rehearse executive skills.
- Give visual reminders.
- Monitor the student’s independent use of skills over time.
- Hire a coach to work with the student.

“Lazy – or Not?” by Peg Dawson in *Educational Leadership*, October 2010 (Vol. 68, #2, p. 35-38); article can be purchased at <http://www.ascd.org>; the author is at pegdawson@comcast.net.

[Back to page one](#)

4. Teaching Students to Argue in Science Classes

In this *Review of Educational Research* article, SUNY Binghamton professor Andy Cavagnetto explores the efficacy of teaching K-12 students to conduct scientific arguments. The way scientists argue, he says, is different from lawyers’ arguments, which tend to be win-lose. Scientists argue to vet ideas as they work toward a common goal of advancing scientific knowledge – “collaboration through critique is a process of negotiating meaning,” he says. In theory, scientific argumentation in classrooms should:

- Develop cognitive and metacognitive processes;
- Develop communication skills;
- Develop critical reasoning skills;
- Support students’ understandings of scientific culture and practice;
- Foster scientific literacy.

But argumentation is used in very few science classrooms, says Cavagnetto: “Historically in school science, the facts or the right answers have been emphasized often to the exclusion of scientific practices and thinking. As such, students often work independently or in pairs with little opportunity to share findings, interpretations, or ideas with peers... Science instruction attempts to replicate the science process using cookbook-style labs that serve as verification of ideas rather than construction and critique of ideas. Such activities focus on surface structures of science – hypotheses, methods, results, and conclusions – rather than the discourse at the

heart of these processes. The lack of argument has led to a conception of science as a collection of static facts about nature and a perception of science as a secular religion.”

Cavagnetto looked at 54 studies and found three approaches to teaching scientific argumentation:

- Understanding arguments that involve the interaction of science and society – for example, moral, ethical, and political issues;
- Getting immersed in scientific argument – for example, students being asked to generate questions, design experiments, interpret data, and construct and defend evidence-based knowledge claims;
- Understanding the structure of a scientific argument – for example, students being asked to evaluate the quality and significance of the evidence and defend a particular theory.

Cavagnetto concludes that the immersion approach does the best job of teaching the cognitive skills listed above *and* scientific literacy. The goal, he says, is not to learn how to argue but rather to understand scientific practice.

“Argument to Foster Scientific Literacy: A Review of Argument Interventions in K-12 Science Contexts” by Andy Cavagnetto in *Review of Educational Research*, September 2010 (Vol. 80, #3, p. 336-371), no e-link available; the author is at acavagne@binghamton.edu.

[Back to page one](#)

5. Improving Student Achievement in Algebra

In this *Review of Educational Research* article, University of Louisville professors Christopher Rakes, Jeffrey Valentine, Maggie McGatha, and Robert Ronau look for explanations of the high failure rate in high-school algebra classes. They identify three learning challenges that many students face:

- Algebra is often the first course in which students are asked to use abstract reasoning and problem-solving.
- Algebra asks students to learn a mathematical language that is “completely foreign” to their previous math experiences.
- It’s difficult for many students to learn the structural characteristics of algebra – for example, the differences between expressions and equations, conceptualizing an equation as a single object rather than a collection of objects, and understanding the meaning of equality.

“The teaching methods used to convey content often exacerbate these algebra learning barriers,” say the authors, “possibly becoming a unique barrier themselves... Teaching methods that focus on skill or procedural levels of cognitive demand fail to address these foundational understandings and therefore fall short of providing students the tools necessary to find their way once they waver from a scripted path.” A common error is not spending enough time connecting arithmetic with algebra before plunging into the abstract, structural concepts of algebra.

Rakes, Valentine, McGatha, and Ronau found five ways of improving algebra achievement:

- Using manipulatives, technology, different instructional methods, and better curriculum materials is effective if it moves away from traditional drill and practice.
- Focusing on conceptual understanding – explicitly targeting the meaning of important ideas in algebra and the connections among those ideas – is far more effective than focusing on procedural understanding.
- Every minute of instructional time counts. Even the few weeks between state testing and the end of the school year are important to student achievement.
- Interventions don't necessarily have to be implemented by a whole department to be effective; a teacher making instructional improvements in isolation still improves his or her students' results. However, a coherent schoolwide effort produces bigger gains. The authors quote the NCTM's 2000 report: "A curriculum is more than a collection of activities: It must be coherent, focused on important mathematics, and well articulated across the grades."
- It's not necessary to conduct randomized experimental studies of different types of algebra teaching to get useful results; quasi-experimental studies produced comparable results.

"Methods of Instructional Improvement in Algebra: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis" by Christopher Rakes, Jeffrey Valentine, Maggie McGatha, and Robert Ronau in *Review of Educational Research*, September 2010 (Vol. 80, #3, p. 372-400), no e-link available

[Back to page one](#)

6. What the Research Says About Extending the School Day and Year

In this *Review of Educational Research* article, Erika Patall of the University of Texas/Austin and Harris Cooper and Ashley Batts Allen of Duke University study the impact of extending the school day and year. They start by distinguishing the different ways in which we can talk about school time:

- *Allocated school time* – the number of days in the school year and hours students are required to attend school;
- *Allocated class time* – the time students are required to be in class;
- *Instructional time* – the time devoted to instruction (versus noninstructional time in the classroom devoted to administrative matters, discipline, etc.)
- *Engaged time* – the time students are paying attention to a learning task and attempting to learn (often called time on task);
- *Academic learning time* – the time in which students are actively engaged and successfully learning.

Most studies of the impact of extra time focus only on the first – allocated school time – based on the assumption that increasing allocated time provides the opportunity to increase academic learning time.

Patall, Cooper, and Allen conducted an exhaustive search of studies on this subject and came to the following conclusions:

- The research in this area is weak and it is difficult to make strong causal inferences; there are no controlled studies that allow us to draw definitive conclusions about what works and how extended time affects student performance over time.

- There is little evidence on the impact of extended school time on non-achievement results such as student motivation, attitudes toward themselves, toward school, or toward coursework, and on student conduct, discipline, attendance, fatigue, or family dynamics.

- However, say the authors, “the research evidence would suggest that extending school time can be an effective means to support student learning, particularly for students who are most at risk of school failure and when considerations are made for how that time is used.”

- Extending school time won’t always improve achievement. “It is only common sense,” say Patall, Cooper, and Allen, “that if additional school time is not used for instructional activities or if additional instruction is poor in quality, it is unlikely to lead to achievement gains.” They cite several schools supported by the Massachusetts 2020 initiative as examples of what’s essential: a focus on teacher quality, strong leadership, rigorous and continuous professional development, a positive school culture, and strong family engagement.

- Parent and staff attitudes toward extended school time are generally positive, while student attitudes are less positive.

- Extra time is “one of many interventions needed to alter the academic success of students, particularly those who enter and continue with disadvantages,” say the authors.

- Where funding for extending school hours and days is not available, the authors say that alternative approaches can be effective, including after-school programs, summer school, and other out-of-school services.

- Furthermore, we don’t know the optimum amount of additional time that balances costs and benefits.

Patall, Cooper, and Allen conclude: “The task now falls on education researchers to conduct well-designed research that will help determine under what conditions, for whom, and when more school time will yield the greatest benefits.”

“Extending the School Day or School Year: A Systematic Review of Research (1985-2009)” by Erika Patall, Harris Cooper, and Ashley Batts Allen in *Review of Educational Research*, September 2010 (Vol. 80, #3, p. 401-436), no e-link available; the authors can be reached at erika.patall@mailutexas.edu, cooperh@duke.edu, and aba8@duke.edu.

[*Back to page one*](#)

7. How Effective Leaders Communicate Their Ideas

In this *Wharton Leadership Digest* item, Wharton professors Richard Shell and Mario Moussa share one of their “Nano Tools” for leaders. Communication is “the real work of leadership,” according to management theorist Nitin Nohria, yet many leaders communicate ineffectively. Why? Because certain psychological issues affect how the leader’s ideas are heard by his or her colleagues, including belief bias (assuming that others share one’s beliefs) and self-interest. Shell and Moussa identify three keys to effective communication:

- *Communicating ideas clearly and simply.* An acronym for simplifying ideas for an audience is PCAN:

- What is the Problem I'm trying to solve?
- What is the Cause of the problem?
- What is my Answer to the problem?
- What is the Net benefit to my audience of my answer?

Former General Electric CEO Jack Welch ran a huge international company but always thought of himself as a “shopkeeper”, which helped him simplify the way he communicated strategic priorities to employees and other stakeholders.

- *Supporting ideas with the right kind of evidence.* Evidence should be expressed in ways that the audience can understand – for example, numbers, vision, or self-interest. Best Buy managers Jodi Thompson and Cali Ressler build support for new ideas by running small-scale pilot programs to demonstrate their effectiveness.

- *Making them memorable.* Ideas will be remembered if they are presented in hands-on demonstrations, stories, puzzles, and other devices that make them “sticky.” [See Marshall Memo 246 for a summary of the book, *Made to Stick*.] Apple CEO Steve Jobs presents new products and ideas in a theatrical setting, using surprise and hands-on demonstrations to grab his listeners' attention.

“Strategic Communication: Making Your Point” by Richard Shell and Mario Moussa in *Wharton Leadership Digest*, September/October 2010 (Vol. 14, #9-10); this article is at <http://executiveeducation.wharton.upenn.edu/wharton-at-work/1010/strategic-communication-1010.cfm>.
[Back to page one](#)

8. Project-Based Learning in a Pennsylvania Classroom

“The longer I teach, the more important it is for me to see that my students are curious, hardworking, and happy in my classroom,” says Pennsylvania sixth-grade teacher David Rockower in this *Education Week* article. The challenge is “bringing children’s interests to the surface,” he continues. “Many don’t know what they want to learn. They’ve been bludgeoned by tasks and assignments. And after years of being told what to do, they find it easier to simply ask, ‘What do I need to do to get an A?’”

Rockower says he makes a point of including one large-scale, hands-on, time-consuming project every year that deepens and extends part of the curriculum. One year his students created a 40-minute iMovie – they helped write the script, act, direct, film, and edit, spending small parts of every day over a five-month period. “The movie was a huge success,” he reports. “Parents and kids were mightily proud.” Another year, in collaboration with a high-school culinary arts teacher, Rockower’s students ran a restaurant – they learned how to prepare and serve food, manage the cash register, and everything else, and in June they served more than 40 parents, grandparents, and siblings.

“I’m not suggesting we do away with the structured curriculum,” concludes Rockower. “But it need not be stifling or suffocating. Curricula need to be written with inspiration in

mind...” His definition of inspiration: *To fill with enlivening or exalting emotion; stimulate to action; motivate. To affect or touch. To breathe life into.*

“Teaching for Inspiration” by David Rockower in *Education Week*, Oct. 6, 2010 (Vol. 30, #6, p. 22-23), <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/10/06/06rockower.h30.html>

[*Back to page one*](#)

9. How Much Foreign Language Should be Used in Language Classes?

In this article in *The Language Educator*, Bowling Green State University professor Brigid Burke says that in most foreign-language classrooms, English is still the dominant language. “How much English is enough?” she asks. “How much English is too much? ... [S]econd language acquisition research shows convincing evidence that the more often students hear the language and are asked to communicate in it, through writing or speaking, the more likely they are to learn the language.” Here are Burke’s suggestions for maximizing target language use in the classroom:

- Post common expressions, for example how to ask to leave the room, get a pencil, and say you forgot your book.
- Have students use the target language for routine verbal interchanges (no English allowed) and then stretch this to total-immersion days.
- Engage in strategy talks and debriefs with students to process language learning, in English at first, then in the target language.
- Evaluate participation by giving weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly participation grades and having students evaluate their own participation.
- Assign authentic assessments outside the classroom – for example, engaging in an online conversation with a classmate in the target language or watching a YouTube video in the target language and writing a short paragraph about it.
- Get ideas from students about activities and assessments.
- Teach explicit grammar lessons in the target language when students get more comfortable using it.
- Integrate language and culture lessons and have students make presentations on cultural information in the target language.
- Use materials and resources from the Internet and other sources.
- Honor students’ learning goals. Most students are far more interested in being proficient in the target language than in learning grammar rules and doing worksheets.

“Promoting Communication in the Target Language With and Among Students” by Brigid Burke in *The Language Educator*, October 2010 (Vol. 5, #5, p. 50-53), no e-link available

[*Back to page one*](#)

10. Short Items:

a. Gallup online student poll – Track the hope, engagement, and well-being of grade 5-12 students by registering your school or district for this year’s poll. This school-based poll can

be completed in less than ten minutes. Scorecards describing the results will be mailed to each school by November 15, 2010. There are two polling windows:

- October 5-22, 2010
- October 12-29, 2010

Register at <http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com>. For more information on the poll, e-mail studentpoll@gallup.com.

“Making Ripples: How Principals and Teachers Can Spread Hope Throughout Our Schools” by Shane Lopez in *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 2010 (Vol. 90, #2, p. 40-42)

[Back to page one](#)

b. Teaching about the Day of the Dead – Between October 31 and November 2, Dia de los Muertos is celebrated in Mexico, Ecuador, Guatemala, and other areas of Central and South America. Here are some websites with resources:

- <http://www.miscositas.com/EI%20Dia%20de%20los%20Muertos.pdf> - a 62-page thematic curriculum unit for Intermediate Spanish students with lesson plans, worksheets, activities, and more.
- <http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tlresources/units/Byrnes-celebrations/Day.html> - a mini-unit with history and a glossary of words about the event and suggestions for art projects, poem writing, a field trip, and Spanish language integration.
- <http://www.dayofthedeath.com/index.php?p=589> - Mexican celebration with traditions, poems, recipes, photos, and other information.

“Web Watch” in *The Language Educator*, October 2010 (Vol. 5, #5, p. 60)

[Back to page one](#)

c. French phonetic exercises – The Phonetique site has audio of the French alphabet and exercises and games: <http://phonetique.free.fr/indexgb.htm>.

“Web Watch” in *The Language Educator*, October 2010 (Vol. 5, #5, p. 60)

[Back to page one](#)

d. Interactive French exercises – This site is geared to students ages 11-18 and has listening, reading, and writing exercises at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels: <http://www.frenchrevision.co.uk>

“Web Watch” in *The Language Educator*, October 2010 (Vol. 5, #5, 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).

Subscriptions:

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

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