

# Marshall Memo 520

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

January 20, 2014

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## Quotes of the Week

“Schools are like racetracks, and educators are like pit crews. But it’s the students who are at the wheel. They must want to win, and they must believe they can win. Their parents and other fans should be there, cheering them on and making feel like they can do it.”

Erich May in “The Motivation Gap” in *Education Week*, Jan. 15, 2014 (Vol. 33, #17, p. 20, 22), [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org); May can be reached at [emay@hyndmancharterschool.org](mailto:emay@hyndmancharterschool.org)

“In the realm of organizational improvement, complexity kills. It demoralizes employees and distorts the critical connection between effort and outcomes. It is the enemy of the most indispensable elements of improvement: clarity, priority, and focus.”

Mike Schmoker (see item #1)

“The best lessons I’ve ever seen are simple, low-tech affairs that could be described in half a page.”

Mike Schmoker (*ibid.*)

“The links between close reading, strong arguments, and skillful writing are undeniable.”

Kim McCready (see item #7)

“On average, summer vacation creates a three-month gap in reading achievement between students from low- and middle-income families. Even small differences in summer learning can accumulate across the elementary years, resulting in a large achievement gap by the time students enter high school.”

Thomas White, James Kim, Helen Chen Kingston, and Lisa Foster (see item #4)

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## 1. Mike Schmoker on Curriculum Focus and Simplicity

“In the realm of organizational improvement, complexity kills,” says author/consultant Mike Schmoker in this powerful article in *Education Week*. “It demoralizes employees and distorts the critical connection between effort and outcomes. It is the enemy of the most indispensable elements of improvement: clarity, priority, and focus... It prevents us from perceiving the simplest, but most effective practices and then focusing our limited time and energy on mastering them, one at a time.”

Over-complexifying is a major problem in school-improvement efforts, says Schmoker. In most initiatives, educators have to wade through thick binders of jargon-filled mandates and endless lists of goals, tasks, and action plans, most of them “maddeningly ambiguous and confusing” and unrelated to what really improves teaching and learning. He says that when he visits classrooms, he often sees little evidence of the intended curriculum, but instead “a profusion of worksheets and aimless group activities.”

“All this pedagogic complication and accretion found its way into teacher evaluation...” Schmoker continues. “Done right, good evaluation criteria could greatly clarify good instruction and thus promote its improvement. But the most popular teacher-evaluation templates and rubrics bury or entirely ignore the most critical elements of good instruction... This has corrupted lesson planning itself, as teachers (as I’ve been seeing) are feeling that they must submit elaborate, multipart, five- to seven-page technology-drenched lesson plans concocted to address the innumerable evaluation criteria. Sadly, most of these lessons still lack the elements most critical to success... The best lessons I’ve ever seen are simple, low-tech affairs that could be described in half a page.” They contain these elements:

- A clear purpose or objective;
- An assessment aligned with that objective;
- An ongoing cycle of small, manageable teaching steps;
- Frequent, informal assessments of learning at each step – for example, the teacher circulating to observe student work;
- Reteaching when necessary;
- Ensuring that all students succeed on every phase of the lesson until they are ready to successfully complete the assessment or assignment.

Although Schmoker believes the Common Core State Standards are a step in the right direction, he says its grade-by-grade curriculum lists need pruning. “Officials at the highest level of both the English/language arts and math common core have admitted to me that there are still too many standards,” he reports, “and that much of the language is still mystifying –

fraught with the potential for improper practice.” Schmoker says the “Three Shifts” addendum to the ELA standards is very helpful, as is the simplification of the math standards. Here’s the link: [http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/122113\\_Shifts.pdf](http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/122113_Shifts.pdf)

Schmoker closes by saying the transition to simple, priority-driven education “might require a kind of civil disobedience: a refusal, by a critical mass of educators, to implement anything unless it has been adequately piloted, amply proven, and then made clear and simple enough for educators to learn and implement successfully.”

“Education’s Crisis of Complexity” by Mike Schmoker in *Education Week*, Jan. 15, 2014 (Vol. 33, #17, p. 28, 22), [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org); Schmoker is at [schmoker@futureone.com](mailto:schmoker@futureone.com).

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## **2. Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey on “Learning Walks”**

In this article in *Principal Leadership*, Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey (San Diego State University) draw a distinction between instructional rounds (which use protocols and long-term networks, define problems of practice, and formally analyze patterns) and learning walks, which are usually building-based and more *ad hoc* and loosely structured. Here are some examples of learning walks:

- Following up to see if accreditation recommendations are being implemented;
- Visiting classrooms each quarter to gather data on annual goals;
- Instructional coaches seeing how new ideas (blended learning, for example) are being used;
- Having new teachers visit a variety of classrooms around the school;
- The principal taking groups of parents on a tour of classes (whose teachers volunteer to have visitors);
- The principal taking bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, and front-office personnel on a similar tour.

Learning walks are not always embraced by teachers – some see them as “a secret evaluation mission” – and Fisher and Frey suggest several ways to build trust so the practice can become accepted as a valuable form of professional development:

- *Ghost walks* – These are learning walks through classrooms when teachers and students aren’t there. These tours last about an hour and focus on the physical environment. Participants might include the administrative team, coaches, teacher leaders, and PLC members, who then present evidence and “wonderings” to the whole staff. One school found this a useful way to look at how instructional objectives were posted in different classes.

- *Capacity-building walks* – This kind also takes about an hour, involves administrators, coaches, and members of the leadership team, and usually collects data, looks for evidence of effective practices, and gains insights to inform decisions. Afterward, there’s a similar presentation and discussion with the whole staff. These visits can also be used to help new teachers formulate their personal improvement goals.

- *Faculty learning walks* – These day-long affairs involve administrators and whoever is available during each time slot, and also culminate in a discussion of evidence and

wonderings with the whole faculty. “Teachers often come away with ways to innovate in their own classrooms and even to form new partnerships,” say Fisher and Frey.

“Learning walks are best conducted with some boundaries in mind, lest they devolve into the kind of judgmental discourse many teachers fear,” say the authors. Participation should be voluntary, “walkers” should be briefed beforehand (for example, no note-taking to reduce host teachers’ anxiety), teachers whose classrooms will be visited should have advance notice, visits should be no longer than 15 minutes, there should be a reflective debrief afterward, including insights about teachers’ own classrooms, and time is reserved in faculty meetings for observers and host teachers to share impressions.

“Using Teacher Learning Walks to Improve Instruction” by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey in *Principal Leadership*, January 2014 (Vol. 14, #5, p. 58-61), no e-link available; the authors can be reached at [dfisher@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:dfisher@mail.sdsu.edu) and [nfrey@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:nfrey@mail.sdsu.edu).

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### **3. Hidden Risks for Beat-the-Odds Students**

“Americans love a good rags-to-riches story,” say Gregory Miller and Edith Chen (Northwestern University) and Gene Brody (University of Georgia) in this *New York Times* article. We relish hearing about resilient individuals who somehow beat the odds and escape from poverty: “Often with nurturing from a parent, relative, or mentor, they set goals for the future, work diligently toward them, navigate setbacks, stay focused on the long term, and resist temptations that might knock them off the ladder to success.”

Miller, Chen, and Brody assumed that, along with academic and emotional success, resilient youth would also have better health than their low-income peers. But when the researchers looked more closely, the exact opposite turned out to be true: underneath their accomplishments, the physical health of many beat-the-odds youth was deteriorating. One long-term study of 487 low-income African Americans in Georgia found that in high school and college they were “more obese, had higher blood pressure, and produced more stress hormones (like cortisol, adrenaline, and noradrenaline),” say the authors. “Remarkably, their health was even worse than peers who, at age 11, had been rated by teachers as aggressive, difficult, and isolated. They were at substantial risk for developing diabetes or hypertension down the line.” Other studies have shown that black college graduates have shorter life expectancies than white high-school graduates.

What’s going on here? Miller, Chen, and Brody call it “John Henryism” after the legendary black railroad worker who defeated a steam-powered drill, only to drop dead of exhaustion. Many of these high achievers are the first in their families to attend college. “They feel tremendous pressure to succeed, so as to ensure their parents’ sacrifices have been worthwhile,” they say. “Many feel socially isolated and disconnected from peers from different backgrounds. They may encounter racism and discrimination... Behaving diligently all the time leaves people feeling exhausted and sapped of willpower. Worn out from having their noses to the grindstone all the time, they may let their health fall by the wayside, neglecting sleep and exercise, and like many of us, overindulging in comfort foods.”

What can be done? Long term, the solution lies in reducing poverty and income inequality and improving the quality of education in the lower grades. Short term, Miller, Chen, and Brody have three suggestions:

- Schools and colleges serving low-income students should provide health education and regular screenings and checkups to detect and address incipient health problems before they become serious.
- Schools and clinics should offer stress management programs targeting low-income, high-achieving students, helping them deal with pressures and blow off steam in productive ways.
- Schools and community agencies should put young people in touch with mentors who have navigated similar life challenges.

“Can Upward Mobility Cost You Your Health?” by Gregory Miller, Edith Chen, and Gene Brody in *The New York Times*, Jan. 5, 2014 (p. SR4), <http://nyti.ms/1josITW>

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#### **4. The Impact of a Well-Designed Summer Reading Program**

“On average, summer vacation creates a three-month gap in reading achievement between students from low- and middle-income families,” say Thomas White (University of Virginia) and James Kim, Helen Chen Kingston, and Lisa Foster (Harvard Graduate School of Education) in this article in *Reading Research Quarterly*. “Even small differences in summer learning can accumulate across the elementary years, resulting in a large achievement gap by the time students enter high school.” The gap is caused by well-documented SES differences in books in the home, access to public libraries, parents organizing literacy-related activities, and the amount of time children spend over the summer reading books that interest them.

White, Kim, Kingston, and Foster report on their study of the READS program (Reading Enhances Achievement During Summer) in 19 elementary schools. The program provides summer books matched to students’ interests and reading level and supports their summer reading through teacher lessons before the summer break, materials sent to students and parents over the summer, postcards for students to mail in, and teacher phone calls over the summer to encourage reading and have students retell one book (teachers weren’t always able to reach students on the phone, and not all the postcards were returned).

The results: READS-program students in high-poverty schools did much better than their control group, doing about as well on reading tests at the end of the summer as they did at the beginning – in other words, the program prevented summer reading loss. Surprisingly, READS-program students in moderate-poverty schools did *worse* than their control group. “One possible explanation for the negative effects,” say the authors, “is that the READS program of matched book delivery caused students to read fewer books over the summer than they ordinarily would have.” It’s also possible that control-group students’ parents figured out they were not in the treatment group (no books and postcards were being delivered over the summer) and made extra efforts to get their children reading.

The bottom line: well-designed summer reading programs can prevent summer reading loss for low-SES students – and at much less cost than an in-school summer program. But for schools in which fewer than 75 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced price meals, the impact of summer reading programs is questionable. More research is needed.

“Replicating the Effects of a Teacher-Scaffolded Voluntary Summer Reading Program: The Role of Poverty” by Thomas White, James Kim, Helen Chen Kingston, and Lisa Foster in *Reading Research Quarterly*, January/February/March 2014 (Vol. 49, #1, p. 5-30), <http://bit.ly/1e88UIU>; White can be reached at [tgw7u@virginia.edu](mailto:tgw7u@virginia.edu).

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## **5. Teaching Third Graders to Focus on Silent Reading for 50 Minutes**

In this helpful article in *Responsive Classroom*, New York City teacher Kate Umstatter describes how she got her 30 students to the point where they could be engrossed in their reading for 50 minutes. “Earlier in the year, this group of third graders couldn’t sustain their focus for more than a few minutes at a time, with reading or any other independent work,” says Umstatter. “They’d get up and wander the room, fidget with their pencil cases, or let their eyes wander off the page.” Here’s how she went about changing that:

- *Explicitly teach what staying focused looks, sounds, and feels like.* “I model exactly what their eyes, mouths, hands, and feet should be doing when they’re focused on a quiet independent task,” says Umstatter. She also teaches them “personal management” – taking water and bathroom breaks when needed.

- *Relate academic to physical stamina.* “Marathon runners can’t run 26.2 miles on day one,” she tells students. “They build endurance day by day. Maybe they run three miles at first, then four, and so on.” She starts students with three minutes of silent reading, then five, then ten, shooting for twenty minutes of focused reading by the end of the first month.

- *Teach refocusing skills.* Students need to learn how to get back on track when they lose focus – for example, inhaling and exhaling slowly three times – so they can take small breaks without disturbing classmates.

- *Use visuals.* A simple graph of the class’s progress reading without distraction is a powerful motivator.

- *Differentiate.* Not all students will progress at the same pace, and it’s smart to help some students use a different strategy – for example, letting a student work silently on a word search puzzle for the last ten minutes if he isn’t able to sustain independent reading.

- *Reflect regularly.* “I encourage students to name what gets in the way of focusing (such as sitting near a friend, having worried thoughts, or being hungry) and to address those issues if we can,” says Umstatter. “I’ve found that hearing their peers identify difficulties motivates the class to work together to overcome those challenges.”

“Teaching Students to Stay Focused” by Kate Umstatter in *Responsive Classroom*, Winter 2014 (p. 13), [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)

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## 6. Three Ways Teachers Can Use Language More Effectively

In this thoughtful article in *Responsive Classroom*, author Paula Denton says that teachers' choice of words, tone of voice, and pacing have a big influence on how students think, act, and learn. She identifies '3 Rs' and describes ineffective and effective strategies in each area:

- *Reinforcing language* – Effective teachers notice and strategically highlight students' accomplishments, effort, and attitudes:

- They name concrete, specific behaviors so students will know what to keep doing. Instead of saying, "Good job" or "Your spelling shows progress" say "You remembered to change the 'y' to 'i' when adding 'ed.'"
- They de-emphasize personal approval so the focus is on improving skills, not pleasing the teacher. Instead of saying "I'm so pleased with the way you added key details to your main point" say "You added key details to your main point. That helps your audience understand and be persuaded."
- They avoid holding up one student as an example to others. "The student held up may feel triumphant, but others are likely to feel devalued or criticized," says Denton. "And the student held up may even feel embarrassed. Instead of saying, "Notice how Glenda used four sources for her research project. Let's see all of you do that," say privately to Glenda, "You used at least three sources as we learned to do. That makes your research credible."
- Find positives to reinforce in all students so that, over time, every child has his or her strengths appreciated.

- *Reminding language* – "By using reminding language before students start a possibly challenging task, or right when they start to make a mistake, teachers help them stay on task, organized, responsible, and safe," says Denton. "Also, keep in mind that reminders are most effective when both the student and teacher feel calm."

- Prompt children to remember for themselves, showing your belief in their competence and helping build autonomy. Instead of saying, "Sit alone or next to someone you won't be tempted to talk to," say, "Think about what you can do to help yourself concentrate."
- Use matter-of-fact tone and body language, helping students focus on what needs to be done rather than what the teacher thinks of them. Instead of saying, "What did we say is the next step in making these kinds of graphs?" in a singsong voice, arms crossed, eyes rolling, say, "What did we say is the next step in making these kinds of graphs?" with neutral body language.
- Be brief; students tune out long directives. Instead of saying, "I'm hearing people starting to sound disrespectful when they disagree. Everyone, remember to say 'I hear your point, but I have a different idea' or ask a clarifying question the way we learned. If we interrupt and say things like 'No, that's not true,' or 'You're wrong,' we'll shut down discussion," say "What did we learn about disagreeing honestly and respectfully?"

- Watch for follow-through, because if we don't, children may learn that the teacher's words can be ignored. Instead of giving a reminder and immediately turning to something else, watch and acknowledge the child's action with a nod or a smile.
  - *Redirecting language* – “When students are doing something harmful to themselves or others, are too far into a mistake to correct themselves, or are too emotional to think reasonably about what they're supposed to be doing, teachers need to redirect them,” says Denton. Her suggestions:
    - Be direct and specific. Instead of saying, “Casey, you need to work harder,” say, “Casey, put your watch away and continue with your assignment right now.”
    - Say what *to* do instead of what *not* to do. The latter can sound like a complaint or an attack on a student's character. Instead of saying, “Class, stop wasting everyone's time,” say, “Freeze. Everyone return to your seat with your folder. Then we'll start.”
    - Redirect with a statement, not a question. Questions give the illusion of choice and can confuse students. Instead of saying, “Anna, could you refocus on your math?” say, “Anna, refocus on your math.”
    - Follow up if necessary. Instead of redirecting a student and turning away to deal with something else, watch to see if the student complies, and if not, move the student to a seat closer to you or have the student take a time-out away from other students.

“Reinforcing, Reminding, and Redirecting: The ‘3 Rs’ of Teacher Language” by Paula Denton in *Responsive Classroom*, Winter 2014 (p. 1-5), [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org) (excerpted from Denton's book, *The Power of Our Words*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, 2013).

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## 7. A Texas English Teacher Steps Up Her Beginning-of-Class Activities

In this thoughtful *Education Week* online article, veteran Texas teacher Kim McCready confesses that for years her “bell-ringers” – brief assignments to keep her high-school English students busy while she attended to beginning-of-class chores – were ineffective: they didn't engage and motivate students or move instruction forward. This led McCready to launch a three-part campaign to overhaul how her lessons began:

- *Improving vocabulary and sentence patterns* – Students get a worksheet with the 6-8 academic vocabulary words of the week in a box at the top. Below the box are the days of the week, each with a different sentence pattern from *The Art of Styling Sentences* by Ann Longknife and K.D. Sullivan (Barron's Educational Series, 2012). Each day of the week, students imitate the day's sentence pattern while correctly using one of the vocabulary words in context (they are allowed to use vocabulary books, dictionaries, and a class set of sentence-pattern books). After several minutes, volunteers come up and share their sentences using a document camera. “Soon, the more competitive students seek to out-do one another by correctly using as many vocabulary words as possible in a complex sentence pattern,” McCready reports. “They *desperately* want to share their writing with the class.” After a few weeks, she stops using worksheets, instead writing the vocabulary words on the board and adding the number of the day's sentence pattern or choice of patterns. After a few weeks, she

shifts to pulling vocabulary words only from the current unit of study. On Fridays, the class works together to draft a paragraph combining the week's sentences into a coherent unit, adding transitions as necessary.

• *Close reading done right* – “The links between close reading, strong arguments, and skillful writing are undeniable,” says McCready. She shares short articles, blog posts, and editorials and has students tackle a different task each day of the week:

- Monday: Read the text noting sentence structure and academic vocabulary and jargon; highlight short sentences in one color, longer ones in another, and note anything unusual, such as rhetorical devices.
- Tuesday: Identify unfamiliar or especially sophisticated words in Monday's passage; consider synonyms and think about why the author used them (this is about teaching students to find just the right word to express their ideas).
- Wednesday: Re-read the text and find evidence that identifies the author's purpose, main idea, target audience, and tone.
- Thursday: Write 3-4 original sentences in response to the text, emulating sentence structures or specific vocabulary found in the text.
- Friday: Share Thursday's response aloud, which produces animated discussions.

• *Tone chips* – McCready chooses catchy texts (fiction, essays, poems, drama, speeches), prints excerpts on note cards, gives each one a number, and laminates them. She then gets a variety of paint chips at a hardware store (3-4 shades of each color), labels each tone chip with a word, its part of speech, definition, and synonyms, and has students do something different with the excerpts and chips each day:

- Monday: Each student is given a text or a tone chip and they mingle, find the tone that matches their text, debate any differences of opinion, and write down the tone word and the number of their text.
- Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday: Students sit in the pairs established on Monday and reveal their tone/text matches to the class under the document camera. Sometimes they discover a more precise tone elsewhere in the classroom.
- Friday: Students form a “tone continuum” around the room, categorizing tones such as “sad” or “happy” and arrange the texts from least intense to most intense. This helps them understand tone in their own writing and that of others.

“Yes, these opening activities require a little more front-end-planning by me – and certainly absorb more class time – than in the past,” concludes McCready, “but it's worth it. Better sentences, word choices, tone perception, and a different kind of energy among us all, setting the stage for more complex and sustained tasks. No more boring bell ringers!”

“When Bell-Ringers Go Bad: My Quest to Deepen Start-of-Class Activities” by Kim McCready in *Education Week* (online), Jan. 15, 2014, [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org)

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## 8. What Works to Improve Vocabulary and Comprehension?

In this article in *Reading Research Quarterly*, Rebecca Silverman, Jeffrey Harring, Brie Doyle, Marisa Mitchell, and Anna Meyer (University of Maryland/College Park) and Patrick Proctor (Boston College) report on their study of vocabulary and comprehension instruction in 33 third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classrooms (the schools were in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast, were racially diverse, and 74 percent of students were eligible for free and reduced-price meals). By observing teachers during the school year and looking at students' before-and-after assessment results, the researchers were able to see which teaching practices seemed to have the biggest impact on students' literacy gains:

### Vocabulary

- Explicitly teaching definitions of words was associated with gains in vocabulary achievement.
- Instruction that helped students see relations among words was also associated with vocabulary improvement, probably because it gives students leverage when they encounter new words.
- Instruction devoted to syntax and morphology was also associated with vocabulary gains. "These findings suggest that if students are taught to break down words into meaningful word parts and to analyze how words are used in various syntactic contexts, they may be able to learn new words, improve language proficiency, and perhaps ultimately, use those skills to comprehend text," say Silverman, Harring, Doyle, Mitchell, and Meyer.
- The authors were surprised that getting students to think about words in different contexts was associated with *negative* effects on vocabulary achievement. They theorized this may have been because teachers weren't handling these teaching moments well – for example, one teacher defined the word *delivery* and then talked about how she had ordered pizza the night before. The discussion veered into students' favorite foods and the teacher never brought it back to the application of the word *delivery* in that context.
- Instruction devoted to literal comprehension was associated with negative results in students' vocabulary acquisition. Again, the authors believe this was because teachers were using low-level techniques with literal comprehension, mostly the Initiate/Respond/Evaluate model in which the teacher asks a question, a student responds, and the teacher says whether it's right or wrong and moves on – not more-effective techniques such as the who/what/when/where approach, guiding students to find answers to literary questions in texts.

### Comprehension

- Teachers' attention to inferential comprehension – getting students thinking about what is implied in a passage – was associated with positive gains in student comprehension.
- Instruction in comprehension strategies was associated with positive gains for bilingual students but not for monolinguals.

- In general, however, bilingual students performed less well in vocabulary and comprehension than monolingual students, and the authors note that the teachers they observed did not do enough differentiating to help bilingual students – for example, using cognates, translation, gestures, pictures, and videos.
- Instruction that targeted context clues, text elements, decoding, and fluency were not associated with gains or losses in comprehension or vocabulary achievement – probably because the researchers didn’t observe much instruction in these areas. It may also have been because teachers told students to “sound it out” or “read it with fluency” without giving detailed and explicit instruction on how to do each, and also because they weren’t giving differentiated instruction to students who needed help in these areas.

The study did not draw any clear conclusions on the relationship between students’ vocabulary and comprehension achievement, and the authors call for further research in that area.

“Teachers’ Instruction and Students’ Vocabulary and Comprehension: An Exploratory Study with English Monolingual and Spanish-English Bilingual Students in Grades 3-5” by Rebecca Silverman, Patrick Proctor, Jeffrey Haring, Brie Doyle, Marisa Mitchell, and Anna Meyer in *Reading Research Quarterly*, January/February/March 2014 (Vol. 49, #1, p. 31-55), <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/rrq.63/abstract>; Silverman can be reached at [rdsilver@umd.edu](mailto:rdsilver@umd.edu).

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## **9. Short Item:**

***Better Lesson’s expanded Common Core collection*** – The Better Lesson website now has over 3,000 free, publicly available lessons across all grade levels and Common Core standards and is adding hundreds more each week. Check out <http://cc.betterlesson.com>.

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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.marshall48@gmail.com](mailto:kim.marshall48@gmail.com)*

# About the Marshall Memo

## ***Mission and focus:***

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

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 64 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 50 issues a year).

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## ***Core list of publications covered***

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal  
American Educator  
American Journal of Education  
American School Board Journal  
AMLE Magazine  
ASCA School Counselor  
ASCD SmartBrief/Public Education NewsBlast  
Better Evidence-Based Education  
Center for Performance Assessment Newsletter  
District Administration  
ED Magazine  
Education Digest  
Education Gadfly  
Education Next  
Education Update/Curriculum Update  
Education Week  
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis  
Educational Horizons  
Educational Leadership  
Educational Researcher  
Elementary School Journal  
Essential Teacher  
Go Teach  
Harvard Business Review  
Harvard Education Letter  
Harvard Educational Review  
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)  
Journal of Staff Development  
Kappa Delta Pi Record  
Knowledge Quest  
Middle School Journal  
NASSP Journal  
NJEA Review  
Perspectives  
Phi Delta Kappan  
Principal  
Principal Leadership  
Principal's Research Review  
Reading Research Quarterly  
Reading Today  
Responsive Classroom Newsletter  
Rethinking Schools  
Review of Educational Research  
School Administrator  
School Library Journal  
Teacher  
Teachers College Record  
Teaching Children Mathematics  
Teaching Exceptional Children/Exceptional Children  
The Atlantic  
The Chronicle of Higher Education  
The District Management Journal  
The Language Educator  
The Learning Principal/Learning System/Tools for Schools  
The New York Times  
The New Yorker  
The Reading Teacher  
Theory Into Practice  
Time  
Wharton Leadership Digest