Marshall Memo 448

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
August 20, 2012

In This Issue:

Quotes of the Week

"Good teaching is, first and foremost, the communication of an enthusiasm, and this requires an adequate context of freedom."

David Gee, 54-year veteran history teacher at Shrewsbury School, England, writing in *The Salopian*, Summer 2012 (#150)

"Education is not the transmission of information or ideas. Education is the training needed to make use of information and ideas. As information breaks loose from bookstores and libraries and floods onto computers and mobile devices, that training becomes more important, not less."

Pamela Hieronymi (see item #10)

"Just as coaching requires individual attention, education, at its core, requires one mind engaging with another, in real time: listening, understanding, correcting, modeling, suggesting, prodding, denying, affirming, and critiquing thoughts and their expression."

Pamela Hieronymi (*ibid.*)

"Kids are spending three or four hours of time on homework a week and 54 hours on entertainment. It's not going to kill them to spend four more hours a week on a paper."

Will Fitzhugh, advocating for required research papers (see item #9)

"I have never had a student thank me in the short term for my demands for rigor, for my requirements to revise work, or for my expectations that they work to a higher level than they thought possible."

Douglas Reeves (see item #2)

1. The Impact of Teacher Caring on Hispanic Students' Math Achievement

In this intriguing *Teachers College Record* article, James Lewis, Robert Ream, Kathleen Bocian, Richard Cardullo, Kimberly Hammond (University of California/Riverside) and Lisa Fast (MiraCosta College) explore the relationship between teacher caring, student self-efficacy, and math test scores.

Working with 1,456 Hispanic fifth- and sixth-graders, the researchers first measured students' perceptions of whether their teachers cared about them. Affective variables appear to play an important part in at-risk students' success in school, say the authors – teacher caring is a form of social capital in the classroom. For cultural reasons, Hispanic students "may implicitly ask to be cared for before they can optimally care about school," say the authors. Well-intentioned teachers, on the other hand, may expect students to demonstrate that they value schooling before they are deserving of care. This misalignment, say the authors, "can taint classroom relations and impede the education of Hispanic youth."

To measure students' perceptions of how much their teachers cared about them, students were asked for their reactions to these questions (teachers were not in the room when students had the questions read aloud to them by a researcher):

- *Our math teacher takes a personal interest in students.*
- *Our math teacher cares about how we feel.*
- *Our math teacher listens to what I have to say.*

Here are some of the questions researchers asked to measure students' math self-efficacy:

- *I'm sure I can learn everything taught in math.*
- *I'm sure I can do even the hardest work in my math class.*
- *Even if a new topic in math is hard, I'm sure I can learn it.*
- *I'm sure I can figure out the answers to problems my teacher gives me in math class.*

What did the researchers find?

• First, students' perceptions about teacher caring had a direct impact on their belief that they would learn what was taught in math, even the hardest material.

• Second, math self-efficacy led directly to better performance on standardized math tests.

• Third, the link between teacher caring, math self-efficacy, and math achievement was strongest with Hispanic students who had not yet mastered English, as compared with Hispanic English speakers.

"Thus," conclude the researchers, "ELs stand the most to gain from teachers who are

predisposed to and skilled at caring, and the math confidence they engender in Hispanic youth."

"Con Cariño: Teacher Caring, Math Self-Efficacy, and Math Achievement Among Hispanic English Learners" by James Lewis, Robert Ream, Kathleen Bocian, Richard Cardullo, Kimberly Hammond, and Lisa Fast in *Teachers College Record*, July 2012 (Vol. 114, #7, p. 37-42)

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2. Douglas Reeves Pushes Back on Educational Folklore

In this iconoclastic *American School Board Journal* article, author/consultant Douglas Reeves notes that a number of strongly-held opinions are folklore – they're not backed up by facts. "Critical thinking is not criticism," he says. "Rather, it is the capacity of a person to distinguish claims from evidence." Here are some examples of claims that don't stand up to critical scrutiny:

• *Continuous praise will boost students' self-esteem*. "The 'everybody-gets-a-trophy!' school of thought does not make students confident, but renders them cynical," says Reeves. "When students play video games, they receive honest and immediate feedback that is not filtered by sympathy or earnest intentions… Students build self-esteem through the confidence acquired as their work improves their results." Carol Dweck says educators must intentionally foster the "growth mindset", which prepares people to see frustration, criticism, and failure as opportunities to learn. (See Memos 350, 319, 206, and 144 for previous articles by Dweck.)

• *Fs and zeroes teach students about the real world*. In fact, says Reeves, the evidence is that punishing students with low grades "leads to lower performance, lower compliance, and a poorer work ethic… When confronted by students whose work is absent, late, or inadequate, the best answer is not the F or zero, but consequences that result in improved performance." (See Reeves's earlier articles on this subject in Memos 363, 302, 236, and 223.)

• *Students are our customers*. This sounds right, but there's a crucial difference, says Reeves: "While customers demand immediate satisfaction, students must learn delayed gratification. I have never had a student thank me in the short term for my demands for rigor, for my requirements to revise work, or for my expectations that they work to a higher level than they thought possible." The payoff comes later, when students return to thank teachers for having high expectations and believing in them.

• *Schools must adapt to students' visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learning styles*. The problem with this logical-sounding theory is that: (a) researchers have found that labeling students with various learning styles is inconsistent and inaccurate, and (b) teaching to learning styles is no more effective than not doing so. (See Daniel Willingham's articles in Memo 423 and 95 for more on this.)

• *Data will help teachers make better decisions*. Billions of dollars have been spent on generating data on student achievement, says Reeves. "Unfortunately, the availability of data is irrelevant without critical thinking skills." Too many educators engage in wishful thinking and don't make effective use of the data in front of them.

• *Systemic change requires five to seven years*. "The 'five-year' excuse is the last refuge of consultants who are better at making plans and recommendations than at follow-through and implementation," says Reeves. Short-term wins are possible – even essential – according to new books by Michael Fullan and John Kotter.

"Claims vs. Evidence" by Douglas Reeves in *American School Board Journal*, September 2012 (Vol. 199, #9, p. 36-37), http://www.asbj.com; Reeves can be reached at dreeves@changeleaders.com.

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3. Stopping Small Classroom Cruelties Before They Escalate to Bullying

"Bullying typically does not emerge from thin air," says author Caltha Crowe in this *Responsive Classroom Newsletter* article. "It starts with small, mean social behaviors, such as Missy's whisper to Laticia as the children trickle into their third-grade classroom: 'Your hair's nappy. You'll never get a boyfriend.'" These are "gateway behaviors," says Crowe, and if they aren't stopped, they can become accepted in a classroom. "Once that happens, children may quickly move from poking fun or smirking to openly calling classmates mean names and then to pinching, shoving, and excluding the targeted classmate from recess games or classroom conversations."

The key is for the teacher to spot the gateway behaviors, nip them in the bud, and actively teach kindness. Crowe suggests the following:

• *Take time to notice*. Teachers should be on the lookout as students arrive in the morning, at lunch time (getting to the cafeteria a few minutes early is helpful), and during choice time, indoor recess, and independent work time.

• *Assess what you're seeing*. "Are interactions between students good-natured joshing between social equals or true gateway behaviors?" asks Crowe. Watch for tone, mean jokes, rolled eyes, exclusion (who's "in" and who's "out"), and students who are often isolated.

• *Respond immediately*. "A quick response shows the child behaving meanly, the child targeted, and those nearby that mean behavior is unacceptable," says Crowe. "When adults don't respond quickly, conditions are set for mean behaviors to flourish."

• *Be assertive but respectful*. "It's important to model respectful behavior toward *all* students, including children who are being unkind," says Crowe. "Disrespect, a harsh tone, or sarcastic words can escalate the mean behaviors you're trying to stop." She suggests short-and-sweet *remind and redirect* statements such as, "Our rules say to be kind; that statement was not kind. Try again." Logical consequences are also appropriate if they're delivered in a matter-of-fact, non-punitive way. They should always relate to the misbehavior – for example, having a child sit by the bus driver rather than with her friends for a few days, or asking a child who was bothering kindergarten students to help them put on their snowsuits before dismissal.

"Close the Gateway to Bullying" by Caltha Crowe in *Responsive Classroom Newsletter*, Fall 2012, www.responsiveclassroom.org

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4. Dealing Skillfully with Angry Parents

In this helpful *American School Board Journal* article, Harvard Medical School psychiatry professor Nancy Rappaport shares her 20 years of experience helping school staff deal with confrontational parents. "The way school personnel respond can profoundly impact whether the 'blame game' persists or whether there is true collaboration that enables parents and school professionals to work together in the best interests of the child," she says. Her suggestions:

• *Body language matters*. If the school administrator is standing up, towering over a seated parent, that can inflame the parent's sense of powerlessness. If the administrator appears impatient, looking at his watch or rolling her eyes, things are more likely to escalate. "When parents feel that their concerns are being heard," says Rappaport, "they don't need to shout."

• *It's all in a name*. Referring to parents as "Mom" or "Dad" is impersonal and doesn't help build collaboration, Rappaport believes. She suggests using parents' and guardians' names – better still, asking them at the beginning of a meeting how they would like to be addressed.

• *Don't point fingers*. The trickiest part of many meetings is getting angry, accusatory parents to take responsibility – and getting their misbehaving child to take responsibility. "It is helpful in these situations to describe the child's unacceptable behavior in a way that doesn't sound like the parent is being scolded," says Rappaport. "For example, the administrator can explain, 'When Johnny storms out of the room, he may feel that the teacher doesn't like him, but I worry that he needs a better way of understanding his frustration without missing time from class.'"

• *Don't delay*. Avoidance and procrastination only make things worse, says Rappaport, especially when bullying is involved. Mobilize immediately, meet to address the parent's concerns, and always schedule a follow-up meeting.

• *Sidestep the normal tendency to get defensive*. "It is hard not to take verbal assaults personally," says Rappaport, "but it's important to remain aware of our own behavior even during tense confrontations… The first step is not to get defensive, but to stay calm. This communicates that the parent's outrage isn't intimidating and instead can be used as a starting point for a discussion."

• *Don't argue*. Instead, show curiosity by saying, "Can you help me understand why you think I am unfair to your son?" Rappaport suggests a technique called *roll with the resistance*: "Don't challenge the complaints, but rather use the person's momentum to explore their view and to develop a viable solution together."

• *Calmly reassure*. What if parents exaggerate a situation, are overly protective of their child, or aren't listening to evidence that the school has things under control? "It's essential to communicate your commitment to keeping all children safe," says Rappaport. "It's also important to let the parents know that you understand how disturbing it must be to hear about troubling events." She suggests identifying a point person who will keep parents informed in the days ahead.

• *Don't call 911 unless absolutely necessary*. "While volatile language can be seen as a form of intimidation, it's usually an expression of tremendous frustration," says Rappaport,

suggesting that calling security or the police shames parents and is usually counterproductive. "Remain compassionate but firm, which lets the parents know there is potential over time to build a united front. A strong-willed parent who comes to understand the school's concerns can become a powerful ally."

• *Stay positive*. "[P]arents can get exhausted and exasperated when the only thing they hear from the school is bad news," says Rappaport. She suggests ending every meeting, no matter how contentious, with a genuine comment about the child's strong points, and following up with positive calls or e-mails – a higher test score, a good deed, a successful day. "This helps create a spirit of collaboration and provides hope that the entire team is united in helping the student shine."

"A Mindful Approach to Parent Conflict" by Nancy Rappaport in *American School Board Journal*, September 2012 (Vol. 199, #9, p. 20-21), http://www.asbj.com; Rappaport can be reached at nrappaport@comcast.net.

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5. Using Formative Assessment in Foreign-Language Classes

In this article in *The Language Educator*, Sally Warner Read (Michigan State University doctoral student) and Kristy Placido (Fowlerville High School, MI Spanish teacher and instructional coach) describe ways that formative assessment can be used in foreign-language classrooms (these five areas follow Dylan Wiliam's theory of assessment):

• *Clarifying and sharing learning targets and assessment criteria* – "It may seem obvious," say Read and Placido, "but all too often students fail to do what is expected of them simply because they do not know what that is." Specific techniques:

- "I can" statements – for example, *I can name all the rooms in my house in Spanish*.
- Sharing examples of student work – for example, having students watch a video of other students' dialogues.
- Sharing rubrics in clear language – "Rather than approaching the rubric as a teacher tool for grading purposes," say Read and Placido, "students will benefit from dissecting the rubric in advance and thinking about their own personal goals."

• *Engineering effective classroom discussions, questions, and learning tasks* – The key is teachers listening interpretively rather than evaluatively," say the authors. "When students use an incorrect conjugation or pronunciation, these are signs of their growing understanding. It is up to their teachers to use these little pieces of evidence to shape their instruction." Some examples:

- Varied response patterns – including whole-class choral, partner discussion, calling on random students, and calling on students who raise their hands;
- Levels of questioning – Begin with high-level questions and, if students have difficulty, bring the level down; if a "Why?" question is too difficult, give options. As students gain confidence, move up to harder questions.

- Matching cards – Pass out cards with questions (*What's a typical breakfast in* ___?) and cards with answers (*Coffee, pastry, and* ____) and have students get up and find the student with the matching card.
- Numbered heads together – Students work in groups of four, each one assigned a number from 1-4, to answer a question or solve a problem. After a few minutes, the teacher calls on students with a particular number to answer for their group.
- Timed written responses – for example, giving students ten minutes to write 100 words on a topic.

• *Providing feedback that moves learners forward* – "Unlike letter grades or percentage scores, formative feedback tells students what they have done well and what they can do next to improve and to keep learning," say Read and Placido. "This kind of feedback makes students think; it is the beginning of the journey rather than the end." Techniques:

- Stars and steps – Start with positive comments, then suggest next steps, for example, "You correctly conjugate the verbs in first person. Your next step is to master the third-person conjugations."
- "It looks like you're ready to…" – This formulation avoids sounding judgmental and puts the emphasis on the student's growth.
- Comments only – Teachers are despondent when students look quickly at the grade and toss the paper into the trash. By providing comments only, with a chance to resubmit, the feedback drives learning forward.
- Individual conferences – Pulling a few students aside every day for one-on-one talks is very helpful, especially if students have self-assessed beforehand.

• *Activating students as owners of their own learning* – Formative assessment is more powerful – and more manageable – when students take control of their own learning through self-assessment and students and teachers become partners rather than adversaries. Some techniques:

- Stoplights – Students have green, yellow, and red cards that they hold up to indicate that they understand, they need the teacher to go over it again, or they're stuck.
- Variations on stoplights – Some teachers prefer a code-word (like "fromage") for students to use when they need help.
- Highlighting – Students use different colors of highlighters to indicate which parts of a passage they understand and which they don't.

• *Activating students as instructional resources to one another* – "When students help teach one another, their own understanding grows as well," say Read and Placido. For this to work, it's essential for students to have a clear idea of learning objectives, an understanding of the rubrics, and some ground rules for peer instruction. Some techniques:

- Type 1, 2, and 3 questions – The first are questions that students should answer on their own by looking in their notes or in a book; the second are questions that students can ask a classmate; the third are things that only the teacher can answer.
- Preflight checklist – Students can go through a checklist (alone or with a peer) to make sure their assignment is ready for "takeoff."

- Limit the focus – It's overwhelming for most students to be told to edit another student's paper, but if the scope of the editing is limited to one or two elements, the task is manageable.

"Bringing Formative Assessment to Life in the Language Classroom" by Sally Warner Read and Kristy Placido in *The Language Educator*, August 2012 (Vol. 7, #4, p. 50-53), no e-link

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6. Using Diagnostic Interviews to Understand Students' Math Thinking

In this *Teaching Children Mathematics* article, Thomas Hodges, Terry Rose, and April Hicks recommend periodically doing a few individual student interviews in which teachers ask a series of diagnostic questions to understand students' misconceptions and inform instruction. Here is their suggested protocol:

- Select an assessment task or a short sequence of tasks that highlight students' conceptual and procedural fluency with the selected topic.
- Ask questions that elicit students' understanding of the topic, following up as needed – for example: *Can you explain what you were thinking? What did you do first? How did you decide to do that? Tell me why…*
- Document students' explanations and understanding of the assessment task, including brief descriptions and sketches of the manipulatives, pictures, symbols, and language used.
- Collect any written work done by the student as additional evidence.
- Try to avoid the following: Teaching, remedying, or correcting students' errors; restating students' responses in another way ("So, what you're trying to say is…"); and giving value to students' responses ("Great job!").

"Interviews as RtI Tools" by Thomas Hodges, Terry Rose, and April Hicks in *Teaching Children Mathematics*, August 2012 (Vol. 19, #1, p. 30-36), http://www.nctm.org/publications/article.aspx?id=33737

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7. Taking Clickers to the Next Level

In this *VatorNews* article, Faith Merino describes a mistake she made as a young creative-writing teacher in Brooklyn. She had finished a lesson on perspective and voice and asked her students, "Does anyone have any questions?" There was a long silence and then one boy raised his hand and asked, "Is it true Chinese people eat dogs?" Merino couldn't contain herself: she burst out laughing.

"Most teachers – new and established, alike – know that asking a room full of students if anyone has any questions is pointless," she says ruefully, "…How do you make sure that every student in the room understands the material without alienating those who don't and slowing down those that do?"

Well, there are low-tech methods like having students write their answers on cards and

scanning the room or giving a short quiz, but they lack immediacy. "In the time it takes you to grade a quiz or scan a room full of cards, the students' brains are elsewhere," says Merino. A much quicker method of getting feedback is student response systems, a.k.a. clickers. "The 'clicker' movement has taken off like a tornado as educators snap them up for their classrooms," she says. Clickers allow a teacher to focus on understanding versus recall, on reasoning versus answers, says Ian Beatty of the University of North Carolina/Greensboro. "Once students have committed to and externalized an answer, even if only guessing, they are emotionally invested in the problem and pay far more attention to subsequent discussion and resolution."

Clickers aren't free and they don't always produce better learning, which has led teachers to explore the next generation of remote classroom response systems that allow students to use laptops, smartphones, and tablets to send in responses to teachers' questions. One K-12 product created by Louise Waters and her team in the Leadership Public Schools in California is ExitTicket, which displays students' answers – http://www.exitticket.org. See the following article for more detail on this idea.

"Resetting Education: Tapping Into the Classroom" by Faith Merino in *VatorNews*, Aug. 13, 2012, http://vator.tv/news/2012-08-13-resetting-education-tapping-into-the-classroom

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8. Open-Ended Clicker Systems

This *Educause* article describes how an open-ended student response system works. The teacher asks a question (in the case of a college course on the Evolution of Social Justice in the 20th century, the question was, *In what way is Prohibition like gay rights?*) and students use their laptops, smartphones, or tablets to enter responses. Everyone looks at the suggestions displayed on the screen and a clicker poll decides which ones will be the focus for discussion. In this university class of 63 students, the winning suggestion was, *Both Prohibition and gay rights were watershed topics that divided the nation into clear political camps*. Based on students' input, the teacher can follow up on questions and misconceptions, invite in pertinent guest speakers, and analyze trends in student responses over time.

"These communication tools open a channel for the kind of individual, creative student responses that can alter the character of learning," says the article. "In larger classes, electronic communication tools might tempt shy students to enter the class discourse or reduce the impact of dominant voices that might otherwise monopolize a conversation." And discussions can continue after class through face-to-face chats or through social media.

Here are some of the products that perform these functions: Google Moderator, Poll Everywhere, IdeaScale, ResponseWare, Harvard University's Live Question Tool, Purdue University's Hotseat, and MIT's Classroom Learning Partner.

"Things You Should Know About Open-Ended Response Systems" in *Educause*, January 2011, http://bit.ly/NXzMpG

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9. Why Students Should Write Research Papers Starting in First Grade

In this *American School Board Journal* interview by editor Del Stover, Will Fitzhugh, founder and editor of *The Concord Review,* continues his feisty advocacy for students at all levels writing full-blown research papers – something very few schools currently require. Fitzhugh believes in the Paper Per Year Plan: first graders should do a one-page research paper citing one source, second graders a two-pager with two sources, and so forth through seniors completing a twelve-page paper with twelve sources.

Why research papers? "They ask for a lot of reading," says Fitzhugh, "and as a result, the student learns a lot about something. This encourages students to believe that, through their own efforts for the most part, they can learn about other things in the future. In addition, a serious research paper can help them keep out of remedial reading and writing classes at college." This is a serious concern: A *Chronicle of Higher Education* survey found that 90 percent of college professors say their students are poorly prepared for the reading, writing, and research they need to be successful in college.

Should students be allowed to use blogs, PowerPoint, and social media to fulfill the requirement? Absolutely not, says Fitzhugh, calling this approach "a mistake by teachers desperate to pander to student interests instead of requiring them to do the hard work essential to their education… Kids are spending three or four hours of time on homework a week and 54 hours on entertainment. It's not going to kill them to spend four more hours a week on a paper."

"Q & A with Will Fitzhugh, Research Paper Advocate" – an interview with Del Stover in *American School Board Journal*, September 2012 (Vol. 199, #9, p. 8), http://www.asbj.com

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10. Can Online Courses Improve Learning – and Save Money?

In this thoughtful *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, UCLA philosophy professor Pamela Hieronymi says she is worried about the surge of free online courses offered by universities, including Harvard, MIT, and Berkeley. We're told that educators need to adapt to the Internet as have journalists and publishing houses, but that's a conceptual error, Hieronymi believes: "Education is not the transmission of information or ideas. Education is the training needed to make use of information and ideas. As information breaks loose from bookstores and libraries and floods onto computers and mobile devices, that training becomes more important, not less… A set of podcasts is the 21st-century equivalent of a textbook, not the 21st-century equivalent of a teacher." True, some students can use such materials to learn on their own, but that's not the norm. If we assume that ability, schools and colleges will be ineffective for the majority of students.

Educators are "personal trainers in intellectual fitness," Hieronymi continues. "The value we add to the media extravaganza is like the value the trainer adds to the gym or the coach adds to the equipment. We provide individualized instruction in how to evaluate and make use of information and ideas, teaching people how to think for themselves. Just as coaching requires individual attention, education, at its core, requires one mind engaging with

another, in real time: listening, understanding, correcting, modeling, suggesting, prodding, denying, affirming, and critiquing thoughts and their expression."

To be sure, there are things computers do wonderfully well: they present information clearly; they can correct assignments that have clearly delineated standards, especially in multiple-choice formats; they can assign drills to remedy specific errors; they can even correct grammar. "These capacities should be celebrated," says Hieronymi. "But they should not be confused with the training provided by one mind interacting with another – when, for example, a teacher discerns what is on a student's mind (even though the thought may be novel and half-formed); sees how it relates to the material; and knows how to question, encourage, challenge, or otherwise prompt the student to find his or her own way out of confusion, to a clearer expression of thought or a more powerful argument or analysis."

The one thing Hieronymi is sure *won't* work is getting students to chat about complex ideas online. This rewards glibness, catchy phrases, and false confidence and is a cop-out from real teaching, she believes. What we need to do in the years ahead, she says, is figure out what technology does well and what only face-to-face teaching can do. In the process, we'll realize some cost savings. "But the core task of training minds is labor-intensive," she concludes. "It requires the time and effort of smart, highly trained individuals… And so, I am afraid, we will not make that core task significantly less expensive without cheapening it."

"Don't Confuse Technology with College Teaching" by Pamela Hieronymi in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* Aug. 17, 2012 (Vol. LVIII, #44, p. A19), http://bit.ly/QWCS1w; the author can be reached at hieronymi@ucla.edu.

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11. Will Online Courses Put College Professors Out of Business?

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Bethany College economics professor David Youngberg describes his experience taking a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) from Udacity, and gives five reasons he believes courses like this one aren't about to replace bricks-and-mortar colleges – yet:

• *It's too easy to cheat*. Discussion boards are nice for the exchange of ideas and students seemed to be respecting the honor code against posting answers, says Youngberg of his not-for-credit course. But with higher stakes, he believes that will crumble. "Despite our best efforts, the proliferation of cheating is higher education's dirty little secret," he says. "Take away the classroom and you've made a bad situation much worse."

• *Star students can't shine*. "It became immediately clear to me that even if I excelled at this course, no one would know who I was," says Youngberg. "Networking, either with my fellow students or with the professors, was virtually impossible." For an online professor to write a meaningful letter of recommendation for a student would be a stretch.

• *Employers avoid weird people*. Getting an unconventional degree could serve as a signal that this person is off the beaten track, perhaps a troublemaker.

• *Computers can't grade everything*. This is especially true of essays and presentations.

To train and evaluate the skills of writing and public speaking, online courses will have to invest in human graders.

"Why Online Education Won't Replace College – Yet" by David Youngberg in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* Aug. 17, 2012 (Vol. LVIII, #44, p. A19-20), http://bit.ly/MUPpxf

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12. Short Items:

a. Chinese dictionary and tools – This MDBG site has a Chinese word and character dictionary and flashcards, quizzes, and text annotation: http://www.mdbg.net/chindict/chindict.php

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, August 2012 (Vol. 7, #4, p. 60)

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b. Interactive games for learning French – *Retrouvez le Sourire* is an interactive game designed to introduce players to France and the French language with real-life situations: http://www.ciep.fr/sourire/english/prologue.html

"Web Watch" in *The Language Educator*, August 2012 (Vol. 7, #4, p. 61)

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c. Math manipulative websites – Teaching Children Mathematics recommends these:

- National Library of Virtual Mathematics – http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html
- NCTM Illuminations website (search by grade and topic) http://illuminations.nctm.org
- Shodor Interativate – http://www.shodor.org/interactivate
- http://www.glencoe.com/sites/common_assets/mathematics/ebook_assets/vmf/VMF-Interface.html
- Kids' Zone Create a Graph – http://nces.ed.gov/nceskids/createagraph

Teaching Children Mathematics, August 2012 (Vol. 19, #1, p. 62),

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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

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 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 50 issues a year).

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Publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
ASCD, CEC SmartBriefs, Daily EdNews
Better Evidence-Based Education
EDge
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
Education Next
Education Week
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Elementary School Journal
Essential Teacher (TESOL)
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Education Letter
Harvard Educational Review
JESPAR
Journal of Staff Development
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Language Learner (NABE)
Middle Ground
Middle School Journal
New York Times
Newsweek
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