

Marshall Memo 951

A Weekly Round-up of Important Ideas and Research in K-12 Education
September 5, 2022

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Quotes of the Week

"It's hard to be what you can't see."

Marian Wright Edelman (quoted in item #6)

"Gender diversity has always existed; it shows up across cultures and is not unique to today's youth."

Devon Frye (see item #3)

"Readers who consume media on devices are – knowingly or not – trapped in a world customized to their own preferences. Readers who flip through a print magazine have the opportunity to stumble upon stories they might have never seen while living within their filter bubble."

Lee Douma (see item #4)

"The physically printed word is old school, for sure, but it still matters."

Matthew Kay (see item #5)

"To the extent that there's consensus on sport's contribution to character... it appears to be this: what kids glean from athletics depends entirely on a shifting and tangled array of variables. Community values, parental attitudes toward sports, the coaches' manner and methods, the child's own temperament and training, and countless other intangibles determine what kids learn from athletics. Sports themselves are empty vessels, imbued with the meanings we attach to them."

Linda Flanagan in ["Do Youth Sports Really Build Character? What Kids Gain from Sports Depends on Adults"](#) in *Mind/Shift*, August 26, 2022

"There was no experience in my scholastic or college education that led me to more self-knowledge than my basketball experience, no course or classroom in which I learned more about my capacities, my limitations, where I was willing to compromise, and where I would take my stand."

Trinity College philosophy professor Drew Hyland (quoted in *ibid.*)

1. A 1993 Critique of U.S. Math Education: Is It Still on Target Today?

In this vintage *Phi Delta Kappan* article, Katherine Merseth (Harvard University) asks us to consider the following nonsensical math problem:

There are 125 sheep and 5 dogs in a flock. How old is the shepherd?

Three-quarters of schoolchildren will produce a numerical answer to the problem. Here's a transcript of one student's thought process:

- $125 + 5 = 130$... This is too big.
- $125 - 5 = 120$... Still too big.
- $125 \div 5 = 25$... That works!
- I think the shepherd is 25 years old.

"In this child's world," says Merseth, "mathematics is seen as a set of rules – a collection of procedures, actually – that must first be memorized and then correctly applied to produce *the* answer." This kid shows some sense-making ability, but feels compelled to produce an answer without stepping back and grasping what's going on in the problem.

When Merseth wrote this article in 1993, she said, "America has produced a generation of students who engage in problem solving without regard for common sense or the context of the problem." She attributed this – and our students' mediocre performance on international assessments – to three factors:

- *Societal beliefs about mathematics* – The first (as demonstrated by most students' failure to solve the shepherd problem correctly) is the notion that math is a static, rule-oriented body of knowledge learned by memorizing number facts and following algorithmic rules. In fact, says Merseth, "mathematicians participate in a problem-solving process that is interactive and often quite fluid... Mathematicians offer hypotheses, or educated guesses, changing their ideas and their approaches in response to new arguments and discourse. They creatively combine a variety of techniques, hunches, and ideas, constantly 'reforming' their attempts to reach a solution."

A second belief is that math is a difficult subject that can be mastered only by a small minority of naturally gifted individuals. In fact, when kids (and adults) shift to a growth mindset about math, they do much better.

- *The curriculum in our schools* – Merseth was highly critical of the textbooks and other materials that were being used in 1993: "outdated, repetitious, and unrepresentative of the evolution of the field," and especially weak in eliciting and developing students' conceptual knowledge, understanding, and sense-making. She was also critical of the spiral curriculum,

which “rehashes the same material in the same way, time and time again.” Is this still true in the era of new standards and copious online materials?

- *Teacher preparation* – “While many teachers do an excellent job,” said Merseth, “by some accounts nearly one out of every two math and science teachers does not possess adequate subject-matter training. This situation results from the common practice of assigning teachers to teach classes in fields outside their areas of competence or certification.” On top of that, there’s a shortage of math and science teachers – still true today.

Future teachers learn about their craft in four settings, said Merseth: as K-12 students, in teacher-education programs, as student teachers, and on the job. “Currently,” she said, “these four learning environments operate in isolation from one another. A prospective teacher gains academic training in one location while issues of practice and implementation are explored elsewhere. This separation between theory and practice, content and method, produces false and limiting dichotomies that fragment and disable teacher education.” Perhaps it’s not surprising that many teachers teach the way they were taught – reflecting the beliefs and curriculum used in previous generations.

What solutions did Merseth suggest? She believed we needed a multi-pronged approach that addressed the curriculum, pedagogy, new forms of assessment, and beliefs about mathematics. Cognitive science has provided important insights in all four areas. It’s helping us see that children and adults “come to mathematical and scientific learning with *surprisingly extensive* theories about how the world or a particular phenomenon works,” said Merseth. “In some instances, these naïve theories are accurate; in other cases, they are not.” But kids (and adults) cling tenaciously to their theories, setting up an interesting challenge for teachers.

These insights, and others, said Merseth, have major implications for curriculum and pedagogy: less emphasis on computation, right/wrong answers, and teacher talk. Then there’s the way student learning is measured. “Changing the form, content, and objectives of assessment is the quickest way to stimulate change in curriculum and instruction,” said Merseth. “While some may view the power of testing as dangerous, it is possible to exploit its influence in ways that will fuel rather than extinguish reform in mathematics education. Orienting the content and the forms of assessment to problem solving, critical thinking, and analytical reasoning will change classroom practices.”

“Changes in the mathematics education of our young people,” Merseth concluded, “will depend on many individuals working in multiple areas and sharing a common vision of what is possible. It is within our reach to have highly literate citizens who will read the story of the shepherd and smile, knowing that the data are insufficient to determine the age of the shepherd. Mathematics need not be the purview of the few; it must be made available to everyone. That is a goal our society can and must achieve.”

[“How Old Is the Shepherd? An Essay About Mathematics Education”](#) by Katherine Merseth in *Phi Delta Kappan*, March 1993 (Vol. 74, #7, pp. 548-554); Merseth can be reached at kay_merseth@harvard.edu.

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2. Is the Danielson Framework Suitable for Evaluating Special Educators?

In this article in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Nathan Jones (Boston University) and seven colleagues report the results of their study of using the Danielson teacher-evaluation rubric (Framework for Teaching, or FFT) to evaluate and support the improvement of special educators. The researchers' larger question was whether tools like Danielson's "reflect the reality that instructional quality depends on individual students' needs."

Their main finding: the rubric scores of special educators on the Danielson rubric "were almost universally low compared with scores assigned to general-education teachers in other studies. If we were to rely on these scores alone, we would conclude that special educators were performing far below expectations of teacher effectiveness" – especially the Instruction domain. When teachers were evaluated on an instrument (the QCI – Quality of Classroom Instruction) designed specifically for teacher-directed instruction, they received significantly higher scores.

Why the difference? The researchers believe it's because the Danielson rubric privileges student-centered instruction and doesn't "capture the kinds of instruction that many struggling students need. Studies suggest," they continue, "that all students benefit from explicit, systematic instruction, with such instruction being particularly beneficial among lower-performing students... Although all students should be presented with opportunities to develop higher-level skills (and inquiry-based approaches may be most appropriate for fostering these skills), students with weaker initial skill – including many [students with disabilities] – are more likely to need additional time engaged in explicit (or teacher-directed) instruction."

What are the policy implications of this study? "Our results," say the authors, "raise concerns that if states and districts intend on using FFT for evaluative purposes, and if administrators score in accurate ways, then special educators could be treated unfairly. For a population of teachers that suffers from chronic shortages and high rates of attrition, the field of special education cannot sustain losses of its best teachers."

How about the second purpose of teacher-evaluation rubrics, coaching and improving teaching? Will special-education teachers benefit from the more positive side of the teacher-evaluation process? "Our study," say the authors, "suggests that, in the case of special-education teachers, the answer is likely no."

How can these concerns be addressed? Jones et al. suggest using evaluation tools better suited to special educators, or having special-education administrators evaluate special educators. "The logic," they say, "would be that these administrators would have the necessary background to more accurately assess the quality of a special educator's instruction." More generally, they suggest fine-tuning professional development to build teachers' and administrators' skills in tailoring instruction to meet the varied needs of individual students.

The researchers acknowledge that their study didn't answer some important questions about how the Danielson framework is implemented in schools, including these two: "Do principals adapt their use of the FFT in special-education settings in ways that are beneficial, or

do they not know the criteria they should use to differentiate between special and general education teaching quality? Do principals score in ways that sacrifice accuracy to preserve positive relationships with special-education teachers?” Jones and colleagues suggest the need for further research on how teacher evaluation is conducted on a day-to-day basis, how teachers get feedback, how teachers receive it, and whether teaching does or does not improve over time.

[“Using Classroom Observations in the Evaluation of Special Education Teachers”](#) by Nathan Jones, Courtney Bell, Mary Brownell, Yi Qi, David Peyton, Daisy Pua, Melissa Fowler, and Steven Holtzman in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, September 2022 (Vol. 44, #3, pp. 429-457); Jones can be reached at ndjones@bu.edu.

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3. Answering Parents’ Questions About Gender-Nonconforming Children

In this article in *Psychology Today*, Devon Frye reports on the questions often asked by parents whose children say they are transgender, nonbinary, or genderfluid. Here are the answers suggested by the pediatricians, endocrinologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, researchers, and clinicians interviewed by *Psychology Today*:

- *Did we cause this?* The question comes up frequently because having a gender-nonconforming child often feels like an aberration. “We cannot minimize the lifetime of conditioning against this,” says New York psychotherapist Ken Page. In many families, a lot of energy goes into seeking explanations: was it overindulgence? previously unknown abuse? a same-gender role model? When parents go down this rabbit hole, says Frye, it can cause great distress to children “who desperately seek parental validation and are skilled at recognizing when they’re not getting it.”

The expert consensus is that parents are not responsible for the changes their child is going through. “Gender identity is not something a parent can cause to be different or to change,” says Daniel Shumer, a pediatric endocrinologist in Michigan. Melissa Cyperski, a psychologist at Vanderbilt University, agrees: “This is who your child is as a person. It’s not something that *happened* to them.”

- *Okay, so what does cause it?* “Gender diversity has always existed,” says Frye; “it shows up across cultures and is not unique to today’s youth.” There’s likely a genetic component, and hormonal exposure in utero may be involved, but those factors have existed through human history. So why do there seem to be so many transgender young people today? A recent report estimated there are 300,000 in the U.S. – twice as many as previously reported.

One reason may be changes in data gathering; it wasn’t until 2017 that CDC surveys began asking teens about their gender identity. There have also been changes in cultural perspectives. “The understanding that gender is on a spectrum,” says Melina Wald at Columbia University, “that one’s gender and sex assigned at birth may not correspond, and that one doesn’t need to fit into a particular stereotype, is a much more dominant view now... This has caused a lot of people to pause and think more critically about who they are – not who they were told they are or who they think they should be.”

• *Is there a “transness” contagion?* There certainly has been an increase in visibility – TV shows, social media and the Internet, *Time* covers, openly transgender government officials, peers who’ve come out. All this can create a sense of safety and confidence and put language to a child’s feelings, recognizing something that resonates with them. But the idea “that social influence can make a child start a journey that was never going to be theirs,” says Wald, “– and *stay on it* – is a myth. The social contagion theory is not supported by scientific evidence.”

• *Is this just a phase?* The answer seems to be no. In a *Pediatrics* study of more than 300 transgender youth, 94 percent continued to identify as trans five years later, with 3.5 percent identifying as nonbinary. Teen rebelliousness, power struggles in the family, experimentation, and identity-seeking are the cause in only a small number of cases. “Whatever the child’s motives,” says Frye, “a parent’s approach should be basically the same: Get the help of an experienced professional, give the child time and space to explore their feelings, and keep up a dialogue.” Parents’ support and acceptance are essential.

• *Why now?* It’s a myth that “legitimate” trans people know and express their gender identity from the moment they’re able to articulate it. “In reality,” says Frye, “someone may realize or come to terms with their transgender or nonbinary identity at any point across the lifespan... Family norms, gender expectations within a community or culture, religious conflicts, social stigma, or a fear of rejection could keep kids from confiding their gender distress...”

That said, experts say there are two peaks of gender expression. Some children age 5-7 strongly identify with the other gender and start dressing accordingly and using another name. The second peak is puberty, when a trans child may feel discomfort with the body changes taking place, but may not have the words to express what they are feeling. Pubertal blockers are often a first-line treatment for young people at this point.

• *What does this mean for my child’s mental health?* Children experiencing gender dysphoria – not identifying with birth-assigned gender – can experience intense discomfort and desire to be rid of the name, clothes, or physical features that don’t match how they feel inside. They may struggle academically and socially, feeling self-conscious and refusing to shower for physical education class in school. They may also experience depression, anxiety, self-harm, PTSD, and suicidality. These feelings can be soothed by taking steps to transition – clothing, name, pronouns. Studies show that having pronouns respected dramatically reduces the risk of suicide.

“When gender dysphoria co-occurs with another mental health condition,” says Frye, “or other sources of distress like poor body image or low self-esteem, it can be hard for parents to tell which came first – and tempting to blame the former on the latter... If treating another mental health condition could resolve their child’s gender-related distress – and avert the risks of transition – who wouldn’t do so?” What’s needed is a full medical and psychological work-up to discern what is really going on.

• *Does this mean my child should start taking hormones right away – and will need surgery?* Not necessarily, say the experts; surgery is part of the solution in only a minority of

cases. Later this year, the recommended minimum age for hormone treatments (from the World Professional Association for Transgender Health) will shift from 16 to 14. The rationale: because of the difficulty of going through puberty out of synch with peers. “Taking estrogen or testosterone can go a long way toward helping trans teens fit in,” says Frye. In all cases, talk therapy is vital. “For a teen going through many changes and much complex thinking,” says Shumer, “having a neutral person to explore with can be extremely helpful.”

- *What if my child has regrets later on?* Parents want to be supportive, but they wonder if the child will have a change of heart and end up being harmed by attempts to change their gender. Nothing is 100 percent, reports Kyle, but “the available data suggest the odds of regret are low.” One study of adults and another of teens found only 1 percent expressing later misgivings about surgery. Reassuringly, dealing with gender dysmorphia is not like flipping a switch; it’s a gradual process that can be stopped at any point, and in many cases reversed. One important suggestion for parents: take part in a support group with other parents who are going through the same experience.

- *Is it okay if I feel sad or confused?* Absolutely, say the experts. “Many parents experience a deep sense of loss around their own expectations of who they thought their child would be,” says psychologist Laura Anderson. Many family and cultural rituals are tied to gender – bar and bat mitzvahs, quinceañeras, a wedding dress kept in the family, walking a daughter down the aisle. The sense of loss experienced by parents is akin to grieving and they require support. The child also needs to know what parents are going through, that they’re working on it, and that they care. “Emotional support and transparency underlie successful gender transitions,” says Frye.

- *When should I tell my child’s school or our family and friends?* That depends on the child’s comfort level – and their safety. Once the school and other significant people in the child’s life know, the parents’ advocacy and support are essential on names, pronouns, and accommodations. But parents shouldn’t be too quick to correct others who misgender their child. “The goal of disclosure,” says Kyle, “should be what’s best for the child, not what’s easiest for the parent.”

- *What is the best way to help my child right now?* “It really comes down to listening to your own child,” says Sabra Katz-Wise at Boston Children’s Hospital, “and treating them as the expert of their own experience.” It’s also important to stay tuned to other parts of the child’s life – what they’re reading, music they love, a favorite hobby, friends, their school experience. Otherwise, says Katz-Wise, “the child ends up feeling as if their whole experience is reduced to being trans.”

And in this process, there can be joy: “It’s truly a magical thing,” says Wald, “when a child becomes who they’re meant to be and starts to be alive in a way they didn’t seem to be before.”

“What Parents of Trans Kids Want to Know” by Devon Frye in *Psychology Today*, September/October 2022 (Vol. 55, #5, pp. 32-37, 44-45)

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4. The Value of High-School Students Perusing Print Magazines Every Day

In this *Edutopia* article, Lee Douma says that over the last few years, he's devoted the first 15 minutes of every day's 65-minute English classes to having students explore a wide variety of high-quality print magazines – *National Geographic*, *Bon Appetit*, *Entrepreneur*, and others he gathered from the school's media center, his family's subscriptions, and other sources. This daily free-reading experience, says Douma, "was one of the more valuable learning activities that took place in those English classes... My primary intent with this activity was simply to immerse the students daily in the act of reading for reading's sake – 'just' exploring text and images in order to learn something new."

It turns out that few of today's young digital natives have had the experience of paging through this type of publication. "Print magazines," he says, "offer a unique synthesis of text and images that makes them an appealing option for reluctant readers," sparking "genuine, unfettered curiosity" through their richly diverse content. Douma believes the greatest advantage of magazines over online media is that they're free of algorithmic customization. "Readers who consume media on devices are – knowingly or not – trapped in a world customized to their own preferences," he says. "Readers who flip through a print magazine have the opportunity to stumble upon stories they might have never seen while living within their filter bubble. These unexpected encounters challenge the brain to make sense of new insights."

As he launched this activity each year, Douma found that it took students a few days to get past the preconception that print magazines were *boring*. "Within a few weeks, however, these complaints not only subsided but were replaced with quiet conversations among students about what they had read." Complaints were mostly about wanting more time with the magazines. The single most popular article was one in *National Geographic* about a young woman who got a face transplant after being disfigured in a failed suicide attempt. Students were also fascinated by an article about dogs serving in combat and parasites turning insects into "zombies" to spread their spores.

Douma noticed that students sometimes read the same article more than once. "For students who are accustomed to scrolling through dozens if not hundreds of headlines, captions, and memes each day," he says, "there seemed to be comfort in the familiarity of unchanging articles and unclickable images that they'd seen before. Like students who have read the Harry Potter series multiple times, students developed a sense of ownership of certain magazines. These hard-to-measure aspects of emotional investment and physical connectedness are facets of literacy that are absent in the experience of people who consume most of their text on screens."

Douma didn't give quizzes or follow-up assignments after the magazine-reading time. He appreciated that his school wasn't pushing him to justify every minute in terms of standards and his students' performance on standardized tests. Holding students accountable for their magazine time might sap some of the fun and learning potential. For teachers in a more high-pressure school, he suggests there are plenty of ELA standards (comprehension, persuasion,

reflection, vocabulary building) to justify the time, and *brief* assignments could provide some cover for the 75 minutes of unstructured reading each week.

[“The Benefits of Incorporating Print Magazines Into English Class”](#) by Lee Douma in *Edutopia*, August 18, 2022

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5. Getting Students’ Writing for More Than the “Audience of One”

(Originally titled “Get It Out There!”)

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, Philadelphia teacher Matthew Kay says he’s struck when his high-school students bring in hard-copy creative writing collections from previous classes with a poem or story they wrote. He finds that getting students to share their work orally is unmanageable in large classes, and gallery walks provide only a fleeting glimpse of others’ work. That’s why most of the ingenious, creative, brave writing they do is only for their teacher.

“The deeper we get into this age of social media,” says Kay, “the more of a missed opportunity this ‘audience of one’ becomes. Yes, our students are publishing all the time. Yes, TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube definitely count as publishing.” But social media content “doesn’t represent them very well... petty dramas, youthful indiscretions, and harmful self-perceptions.”

Kay expands the audience for students’ work in two ways: an online class website or blog where kids’ work can be seen and celebrated by classmates, parents, grandparents, community members, and former teachers; and a class book compiling students’ work on an especially cool project using platforms like Affinity Publisher or Amazon’s Kindle Direct Publishing. “The physically printed word is old school, for sure,” says Kay, “but it still matters.”

Students love both formats. “This eagerness to publish their most scholarly and creative selves,” he says, “– and not just their most clickable hot takes – is a habit that we should systematically encourage at every opportunity. When we do so, we increase the likelihood that they’ll believe us when we say that their voices are important; and that they can meaningfully contribute – as writers, artists, theorists, scientists – to conversations that make the world a better place.”

[“Get It Out There!”](#) by Matthew Kay in *Educational Leadership*, September 2022 (Vol. 80, #1, pp. 80-81); Kay can be reached at mrkay@notlight.com.

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6. Facing and Overcoming Imposter Syndrome

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, consultant Shelley Arakawa (WittKieffer) describes visiting the U.S. Supreme Court when she was in high school. Leaning over to her father, she whispered, “How do I become one of those?” Her father, thinking she was referring to the justices, beamed with pride; he knew his daughter dreamed of becoming a

lawyer and breaking barriers as Thurgood Marshall had done. But Arakawa was actually pointing to the clerks sitting behind the justices. As a young Japanese American, the eight men and one woman on the bench seemed out of her league; as Marian Wright Edelman once said, “It’s hard to be what you can’t see.”

Throughout her career, Arakawa has noticed imposter syndrome in herself and some of her colleagues, especially women and people of color. Here are a few tips she’s picked up along the way, all of which apply in K-12 schools:

- *Realize that it’s more than a syndrome.* The common understanding of imposter syndrome is that it resides within the individual – the feeling that you lack the qualities and qualifications for a position. But it may be more a case of an institution’s traditions and vibe. Arakawa recommends asking pointed questions when checking out a job: How are the strategic goals and budgets established? How are staffing cuts made? What professional supports are in place, especially for traditionally marginalized employees? What are the chances of success?

- *Speak from your strengths.* Some young professionals are told to “fake it until you make it,” covering up their perceived deficiencies with confidence and bravado. “But that only reinforces the existing structures that have perpetuated false constructs of merit,” says Arakawa. She believes it’s better to showcase skills, experience, and talents and also be willing to use those attributes to grow professionally.

- *Leverage your network.* That means cultivating a few trusted mentors and colleagues who appreciate your experience and strengths and can give candid and helpful career advice. These people can act as advisors and references – and one of them might one day be your boss.

- *Turn fear into action.* “Imposter syndrome can be debilitating, but it can also be a source of motivation,” says Arakawa. “.... Institutions need fresh ideas to evolve in order to survive. Why not offer a voice that has traditionally been muted to help spark a different way of thinking or an alternate approach on a pressing issue?” Flip the script and take a growth mindset approach to your unique viewpoint, dedication, work ethic, and resilience.

- *Accept that the feeling may never fully disappear.* Even after attaining a leadership position, insecurities linger. Jarrid Whitney, who was the first in his Native American family to attend a four-year university, rose to a position of great responsibility at the California Institute of Technology but is still haunted by a feeling he doesn’t belong, especially when he walks into meetings where so few people look like him. “I just have to keep reminding myself,” he says, “that I do belong, I do deserve to be here, and my voice matters.”

- *Cultivate humility and delegate wisely.* You can’t know everything, and won’t, says Arakawa. “Authentic and strategic leaders focus less on their own personal deficiencies and rely more on the subject-matter experts on their team, thereby building the confidence of those staff members and valuing their contributions.”

[“How Admins Can Overcome Imposter Syndrome”](#) by Shelley Arakawa in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 2, 2022 (Vol. 69, #1, pp. 47-49)

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7. Wordless Picture Books for Middle-School Students

In this *Middle School Journal* article, Cyndi Giorgis (Arizona State University) and Nancy Johnson (Western Washington University) say that using well-chosen picture books in middle-school classes can “inform and entertain readers, create disruptions in thinking, and prompt curiosity and wondering.” What’s more, these books can:

- Inspire expressive and descriptive writing;
- Elevate vocabulary awareness and use;
- Improve comprehension skills;
- Build background knowledge;
- Increase visual literacy and appreciation.

Giorgis and Johnson recommend the following picture books for middle-school classes:

- *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan
- *The Farmer and the Clown*, *The Farmer and the Monkey*, and *The Farmer and the Circus* by Marla Frazee
- *Journey*, *Quest*, and *Return* by Aaron Becker
- *Little Red and the Cat Who Loved Cake* by Barbara Lehman
- *Moletown* by Torben Kuhlmann
- *One Little Bag: An Amazing Journey* by Henry Cole
- *Over the Shop* by Jon Arno Lawson, illustrated by Qin Leng
- *Small Things* by Mel Treginning
- *Unspoken: A Story from the Underground Railroad* by Henry Cole
- *Window* by Marion Arbona

[“It’s a Radical Decision Not to Use Words’: Partnering with Wordless Picture Books to Enhance Reading and Writing”](#) by Cyndi Giorgis and Nancy Johnson in *Middle School Journal*, September 2022 (Vol. 53, #4, pp. 13-19); the authors can be reached at cgiorgis@asu.edu and njohnson0303@gmail.com.

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About the Marshall Memo

Mission and focus:

This weekly publication keeps principals, teachers, instructional coaches, superintendents, and other educators well-informed on current K-12 research and ideas. Kim Marshall, drawing on 53 years as a teacher, principal, central office administrator, writer, and consultant, lightens the load of busy educators by serving as their “designated reader.”

To produce the Marshall Memo, Kim subscribes to 60 carefully-chosen publications (see list to the right), sifts through more than 150 articles each week, and selects 8-10 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 Tuesday (with occasional breaks; there are 50 issues a year). Every week there’s also a podcast and HTML version.

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Core list of publications covered

Those read this week are underlined.

All Things PLC
American Educational Research Journal
American Educator
American Journal of Education
American School Board Journal
AMLE Magazine
ASCA School Counselor
ASCD Express
Cult of Pedagogy
District Management Journal
Ed. Magazine
Education Digest
Education Gadfly
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Education Week
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Educational Horizons
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Eduetopia
Elementary School Journal
English Journal
Exceptional Children
Harvard Business Review
Harvard Educational Review
Independent School
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy
Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk (JESPAR)
Kappa Delta Pi Record
Knowledge Quest
Language Arts
Learning for Justice (formerly Teaching Tolerance)
Literacy Today (formerly Reading Today)
Mathematics Teacher: Learning & Teaching PK-12
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The Journal of the Learning Sciences
The Language Educator
The Learning Professional (formerly Journal of Staff Development)
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Reading Teacher
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