

OF NOTE

[The Kids are All Right](#)*Science is for Everyone, Kids Included* by Beau Lotto and Amy O'Toole

"Perception is grounded in our history," says neuroscientist Beau Lotto. Additionally, according to Lotto, uncertainty plays a significant role in our sense of perception. Putting theory into practice, Lotto turned 25 children, ages 8 to 10, into scientists to test out bees' sense of perception. Amy O'Toole, one of the young scientists on the project (and youngest Ted Talk participant), joined Lotto on stage during his Ted Talk and enchanted the audience with her enthusiasm in describing the project. While many in the science community dismissed the findings of the experiment, after two years and the help of a few renowned scientists in the field, O'Toole and her classmates went on to become the youngest scientists published in a peer-reviewed journal. At the heart of this talk is the possibility that uncertainty can lead us to think about new ways of perceiving and doing things - and that even the youngest in our world can be equal contributors in experiences that lead to great discoveries.

Maritza Solano, Ed. M. Candidate, The Klingenstein Center
Teachers College Columbia University, NY

Ted Talk / TedGlobal, June 2012

Klingbrief is a free, monthly publication of recommended articles, books, research reports and media selected by and for independent school educators. The Klingenstein Center for Independent School Leadership provides graduate programs and professional development for independent school educators throughout their careers. For information about submitting to Klingbrief, please click [here](#).

January, 2013 VOL 34

EDITORIAL BOARD

PETER HERZBERG
Coordinating Editor, Associate Head of the
Brearley School, New York, NY

PEARL ROCK KANE
Klingenstein Center Director, New York, NY

CHRIS LAURICELLA
Head of the Park School of Buffalo, NY

STEPHANIE LIPKOWITZ
Assistant Head, Albuquerque Academy,
Albuquerque, NM

ELIZABETH MORLEY
Principal, The Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child
Study, University of Toronto, Canada

BRUCE SHAW
Principal, Bruce A. Shaw Consulting, LLC
Essex, MA

ERIC TEMPLE
Head of Lick-Wilmerding High School,
San Francisco, CA

ADELE TONGE
Communications Manager, Klingenstein Center,
New York, NY

STEPHEN J. VALENTINE
Coordinating Editor, Assistant Head, Upper
School, Montclair Kimberley Academy, Montclair,
NJ

ARTICLES, BLOGS, AND OTHER MEDIA

[Deconstructing the Constructivist Approach](#)*Putting Students on the Path to Learning: The Case for Fully Guided Instruction*, by Richard E. Clark

Partially guided instruction, also known as problem-based learning or constructivist learning, focuses on the expectation that students will discover key concepts or skills on their own. Independent school educators have championed this practice for years. After reviewing decades of educational research comparing fully guided to partially guided instruction, Richard E. Clark has arrived at a challenging conclusion: a pervasive problem with partial guidance is that, typically, the "brightest and most well prepared" students make the discoveries whereas the majority of the class might disengage, make false discoveries, or become frustrated. Partially guided instruction, therefore, has been shown to increase the achievement gap: strong students get stronger, and weaker students continue to miss out. One implication of these many studies is that teachers should consider beginning with explicitly guided instruction when all students are novices, and then using varied instructional strategies as expertise grows.

Rebekah Zuercher Sollitto, Ed. M. Candidate, The Klingenstein Center
Teachers College Columbia University, NY

American Educator, Spring 2012

[Intelligence from the Talent Wars](#)*How to Keep Talented Teachers from Leaving*, by Eric Klinenberg and Caitlin Zaloom

Administrators understand that they must find ways to improve the support given to new teachers, as well as to recognize the successes of mid-career and veteran teachers. If they don't, schools will continue to struggle to attract and retain the most talented members of society. The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation recently helped to frame the issue and offer solutions. A synopsis of its recent study, "A Life of Consequence, a Profession of Status: Enhancing Respect, Recognition, and Retention of Talented Teachers," is presented as an opinion piece in this month's *Christian Science Monitor*. Independent schools should take note. As our student populations become increasingly comprised of more diverse learners, our teachers will need to work arm in arm with administrators who are dedicated to the professional growth of their faculties and who are willing to provide on-going feedback about teaching and learning. Such support will ultimately determine how successful our young teachers feel in the classroom. Additionally, tapping models proven to be successful in other professions, such as law and medicine, may help to elevate the prestige afforded teachers.

Eric Temple, Lick-Wilmerding High School, CA

The Christian Science Monitor, January 14, 2013

[Comparing Sunburn to Cancer](#)*Distress of the Privileged*, by Doug Muder

Educators seeking a recent, thoughtful, and hard-hitting essay on the issue of privilege should turn to Doug Muder's blog posting on *The Weekly Sift*. The post deservedly received thousands of visits, and it would fit nicely - though not necessarily comfortably - within most diversity dialogues unfolding in independent schools today. Muder writes in a compassionate and incisive way about the distress of those who have historically enjoyed great privilege in American society. "The world used to fit them like a glove," he writes, but now the fit is less comfortable as they must navigate among the "formerly invisible concerns of others." Muder works to put such discomfort into context, but he never loses sight of the false equivalences that sometimes arise when those who feel their privilege is being eroded express their anger at societal change. He cautions against comparing a sunburn to cancer. Such analogies make the essay accessible and potent. Muder frames a very important conversation in human terms, drawing from some well-known and controversial media examples, while never losing sight of the need for true social justice.

Stephanie Lipkowitz, Albuquerque Academy, NM

The Weekly Sift, September 10, 2012

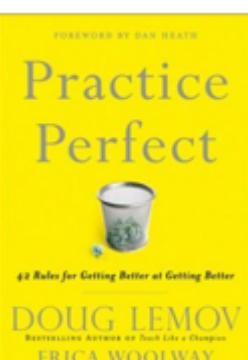
[Changing Habits in the Digital Age](#)*How Teens Do Research in the Digital World*, by Kristen Purcell, Lee Raini, Alan Heaps, Judy Buchanan, Linda Friedrich, Amanda Jacklin, Clara Chen, Kathryn Zickuhr

Everyone knows that the ubiquity of technology in our lives has a profound effect on how we interact, communicate, and gather information. Educators, however, are uniquely positioned to witness - and to shape - the way the next generation uses technology to learn. This report, the first in a series from the *Pew Research Center*, lays the groundwork for an unavoidable question for education: Does technology ultimately enhance or detract from learning? Basing their research firmly in both qualitative and quantitative data, the authors offer a balanced and accessible consideration of ways in which the Internet and digital tools have a "mostly positive" effect on students' research habits; however, it also points to potential problem areas related to general literacy, increasing distractibility, and a possible diminishment in critical thinking skills. As technology continues to change, the authors argue, the very definition of "research" is shifting. In the end, reports such as this can help guide our decisions in regard to all aspects of our schools, from curricular design to professional development to resource allocation.

David Padilla, Baylor School, TN

Pew Internet & American Life Project, November 1, 2012

BOOKS

[The Practice of Practice](#)*Practice Perfect: 42 Rules for Getting Better at Getting Better*, by Doug Lemov, Erica Woolway and Katie Yezzi

Great athletes, artists, and musicians understand that what makes them successful is continued, deliberate practice. But what about teachers and those who train them? Do years of teaching experience improve teaching technique? Should teachers be rewarded merely for years of experience? Not according to these authors, who posit that the mere fact of doing something repeatedly does not make you better. In fact, practice can be wasteful and unproductive unless you practice with intentionality. The authors suggest focusing on a few specific skills and using concrete measurable objectives to track progress. Additionally, they would have teachers focus on strengths, not just current weaknesses. Practicing "perfectly" can be most effective for taking good skills to a masterful level, developing what the authors call "bright spots." The subtitle of this book, *42 Rules for Getting Better*, may convey a view of teaching that is reductionist, but for those who care deeply about teaching as a profession, the book's message and concrete examples for improvement underscore that excellence in teaching is a career-long challenge.

Pearl Rock Kane, Klingenstein Center, NY

Jossey Bass, 2012

[Old School to Bold School](#)*Why School?: How Education Must Change When Learning and Information Are Everywhere (E-Book)*, by Will Richardson

As a former teacher, current parent, and influential blogger Will Richardson turns to a short e-book to pose the most basic and disruptive question for educators: "Why School?" The tension between an abundance of high-quality information available on the Internet and the ever-rising cost of education drives his inquiry. He believes that schools must accelerate how they adapt to this potential disruption by moving from "old school" qualities such as teaching specific and sometimes arcane content to "bold school" qualities such as teaching students how to "learn, unlearn, and relearn." These concepts are not new for many independent school educators. And veteran educators, who have seen countless cycles of "next big things," understandably may be overwhelmed by another broad indictment of their profession. Regardless, Richardson's thesis about the interplay between the changing economics of education, particularly at the college level, and the increasing availability of relatively cheap or free high-quality information, is worth considering. After all, he might be right.

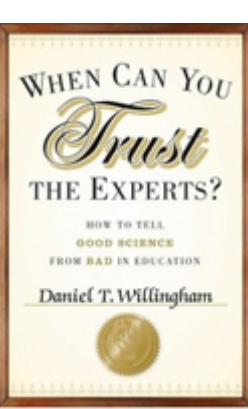
Blog: <http://www.willrichardson.com/>

TED: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ni75vIE4vdk>

Slideshare: <http://www.slideshare.net/cpstoolech/will-richardson-keynote-cps-its>

Christopher J. Lauricella, Park School of Buffalo, NY

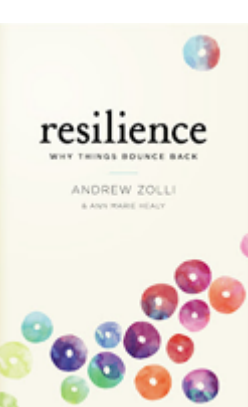
TED Conferences, September 10, 2012

[A Guide to Cutting Through the Fog](#)*When Can You Trust the Experts: How to Tell Good Science from Bad in Education*, by Daniel T. Willingham

How often have we heard that old saw about "best practices?" How do you respond when a member of your team or board declares that his or her pet theory is "research based?" What tools (besides Klingbrief) do you use to plow through the blizzard of educational articles that arrive in your inbox each day? These are just a few of the questions to which Daniel T. Willingham offers answers in this easily readable volume. Written for those of varying levels of what he calls "research sophistication," Willingham's text aims to provide a set of simple tools that will help educators, administrators, and leaders become better decision makers about, and evaluators of, educational programs. Willingham's strategies are geared to help leaders persuade those who have grown tired of the latest research look again at educational meta-beliefs; additionally, it aims to empower teachers to understand how scientific expertise can be misapplied. Along the way, Willingham provides easily digestible information about some of the most up-to-date information from the field of neuroscience and clever anecdotes that will, if nothing else, keep readers on their toes.

Stella K. Beale, San Francisco University High School, San Francisco, California

Jossey Bass, 2012

[Tools for Change](#)*Resilience: Why Things Bounce Back*, by Andrew Zolli and Ann Marie Healy

Change will find us, whether or not we seek it. With sometimes little control over the financial, environmental, scientific, and social contexts in which we find ourselves, we can turn to the research on resilience to find insights, explanations, and maybe even hope. Zolli and Healy make such a turn easy. Through engaging examples and critical research, their book draws together - with startling clarity - exactly what is known about the skills of adaptation, shock absorption, and the role of interdependency in resilient people and systems. Concurrently, they tackle several important questions: Why do some bounce back while others become permanently broken? Why do some people, some circumstances, some responses promote rebounding and forward movement? Although this is not a book about education, or aiming for educators as its primary audience, its importance for schools increases when it is seen through the lens of even bigger and, for us, more essential questions: What tools does it take to navigate rapid change and unpredictable circumstances, and are those tools present in our schools?

Elizabeth Morley, Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study,
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

Free Press, 2012

To submit comments or suggestions, or to request that the newsletter be sent to a colleague, contact Adele Tonge, Communications Manager at klingbrief@tc.columbia.edu.

To support Klingenstein Center scholarships and program endowment, please [make your gift here](#).

The Klingenstein Center
for Independent School Leadership
Teachers College, Columbia University
Box 125
525 West 120th Street
New York, New York 10027
212-678-3156
<http://www.klingenstein.org/>

