

OF NOTE

[Counting on Summer](#)

CSLP SUMMER READING WHITE PAPER, Collaborative Summer Library Program, by NPC Research

Summer vacation is a time for learning, exploration, and growth for some children, but the time away from school significantly disadvantages others. All children lose some math skills over the summer, but loss in reading differs significantly by socioeconomic status (SES). Using statistical analysis to combine results from different studies, this paper points to a troubling finding: while high SES children maintain their reading level or advance over the summer, low SES children lose ground. It appears that access to books and other reading materials that allow for continued learning over the summer is key. Children also benefit from having "family capital" such as parents who read to them or take them to the library. By the end of elementary school, low SES children who lack access to reading resources are several grades behind their higher SES peers, and summer vacation is identified as the strongest contributing factor. The cumulative effect of summer loss can be deleterious to overall school success. The paper focuses on the state of research on summer reading programs, their effectiveness and best practices. The evidence is clear that school-based summer and other out-of-school-time reading programs can be effective in preventing summer learning loss and improving reading achievement. Programs that were small (approximately 20 students), individualized, and included parental involvement had the greatest effect on student achievement. Independent schools that want to make a difference in advancing low SES students may contemplate offering resources and programs to their families and to the larger community, either at their own site or in coordination with public libraries.

Pearl Kane, Klingenstein Center, NY

NPC Research, December 29, 2014

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](#).

May, 2015 VOL 54

EDITORIAL BOARD

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

MICHAEL ARJONA
PK-12 Director of Studies, The Walker School, Marietta, GA

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

MEGHAN TALLY
Head of English Department, American School in London, England

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

CYNTHIA UEJIO
Operations Manager, Klingenstein Center, New York, NY

ARTICLES, BLOGS, AND OTHER MEDIA

[Risking, Pushing, Healing.](#)

Can racism be stopped in the third grade? by Lisa Miller

Ethical Culture Fieldston School, an independent school in Manhattan with a long legacy of progressive education, took decisive action this year in implementing a mandatory diversity curriculum in their lower school in the Bronx. In this compelling article, the reactions among the parents and students are detailed, as is the Lower School Principal's rationale and intent to have students truly learn how to be culturally competent, and even at an early age, talk with confidence and sensitivity about matters of race, ethnicity, and privilege. By using affinity groups with 8-year-olds, the school launched what Miller calls a "boundary-pushing experiment." Predictably, many of the fears parents have about open discussions with young children about bias and prejudice surfaced as the school courageously engaged in open dialogue with the parent body. Whether one agrees with the approach Fieldston is taking or not, educators of all stripes will be inspired by the ways that one school is choosing to live out its values and respond to our current struggles to face and heal the racism still so pervasive in this country.

Stephanie Lipkowitz, Albuquerque Academy, NM

New York Magazine, May 18, 2015

[To Name or Not to Name.](#)

Don't Judge a Book by Its Author, by Aminatta Forna

Writer Aminatta Forna describes the spirit of inquiry in childhood and education's pernicious tendency to diminish curiosity, imagination, and wonder by overemphasizing categorizing and labeling. While she explores this with a focus on books and writers, her ideas apply more widely across disciplines. Ultimately, Forna advocates for pluralism and a global perspective that is flexible, recursive, and inclusive. She explores how names and categories can be reductive, determining that someone is an "African writer," for instance, when she (Forna herself, in this case) is indeed both Scottish and Sierra Leonean. Calling our attention to the "politics of university departments" and the ways in which they fragment our studies, Forna encourages us to embrace complexity and ambiguity. Considering ideas about identity and culture from important contemporary writers like Chinua Achebe, Kamila Shamsie, Salman Rushdie, and Nitasha Kaul, Forna writes, "I have never met a writer who wishes to be described as a female writer, gay writer, black writer, Asian writer or African writer." Forna allows that sometimes we need labels, but that "labels confirm the limitations of language, and when they are overused, they become limiting." Concluding her surprising and rich essay, Forna shares a wish for her students: that they will "let their imaginations fly and soar beyond themselves and their own experience, towards new horizons and into new worlds."

Meghan Tally, American School in London

The Guardian, February 13, 2015

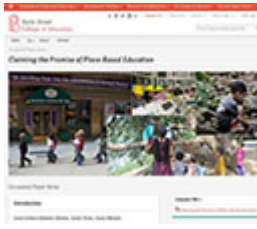
[The Value of the Experience](#)

Why is Dartmouth So Expensive? by C. J. Hughes

In this candid essay C.J. Hughes dissects the question, "Why is Dartmouth So Expensive?" If a college with the resources (Dartmouth's endowment stands at \$4.5 billion) and financial acumen of Dartmouth is faced with tuitions that are not sustainable, what then can independent schools do to meet the cost challenges we too are facing? Similar to independent schools, Dartmouth has added more staff and administration than faculty over the years. Additionally, new facilities, financial assistance, and overall salaries have put pressure on the school's finances, especially as they seek to keep tuition increases below the rate of inflation for the last two years. Though the numbers are impressively larger than our independent school budgets, the issues are very similar. What is compelling in this piece is the transparency of the budget numbers, coupled with the floating of possible solutions such as a freeze on salaries (which most likely will not happen) and increased enrollment (which may happen). Ultimately, though, Dartmouth's solution must be the same as our own: the value of the experience must be worth the price for people to continue investing in their children's education. By gathering metrics about the value added of an independent school education, we can attract and retain students who make positive change in the world, and are willing to invest in our schools to learn ways to fulfill missions after they leave our campuses. How we do this is not always clear, but Higher Education may offer us some interesting ideas.

Eric Temple, Lick Wilmerding High School, CA

Dartmouth Alumni Magazine, May-June 2015

[Outside In](#)

Claiming the Promise of Place-Based Education, by guest editors Roberta Altman, Susan Stires and Susan Weseen

The newest Bank Street College of Education Occasional Paper Series gathers nine articles under the wide umbrella of place-based education. Growing from progressive roots, place-based education grounds learning in the place where we are, and offers antidote to days and ways that are saturated with the distractions of screens and over-scheduled hours. Place-based educators see the built, human, and natural world as a wide, shared and infinitely engaging "classroom" that offers continuous opportunities for learning. The papers are not only a testament to the value of going outside the real and metaphorical walls of the conventional learning space, but also they take a scholarly and informed position on how and why place matters so deeply. Some articles have a focus on preschool and elementary students, some on teacher growth. There are lively examples of specific learning experiences that take place within communities that range from the streets of New York City to the streams of Hawaii to the foothills of the Himalayas. We meet students and their teachers who are deeply observing, wondering, hypothesizing, documenting, valuing and better understanding their own environments. This collection is an optimistic invitation to being wide awake to the potential of the place we are in, and to developing the invaluable skills of learning wherever we are.

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

Bank Street College of Education Occasional Paper Series #33, 2015

BOOKS

[Sipping Nectar](#)

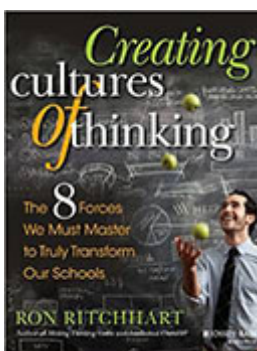
How to Raise a Wild Child - The Art and Science of Falling in Love with Nature, by Scott D. Sampson

How to Raise a Wild Child - The Art and Science of Falling in Love with Nature, by Scott D. Sampson (Article in Huffington Post about the book)

On average, American children spend more than seven hours a day staring at screens. They spend less time outdoors than ever before. With alarming statistics and a deep understanding of and passion for nature, Scott Sampson sets out to give teachers, parents, and caregivers the knowledge and tools to encourage our children to rediscover the outdoors. *How to Raise a Wild Child* is meant to push us into nature, arm us with scientific understanding and research explaining why kids need to spend more time there, and implore us to become nature mentors for our children. For schools, this book will help promote our efforts to move students outside to observe the world around them, and it will serve as a catalyst for conversations with parents about the importance of spending time together with their children in nature. In "10 Secrets for Raising a Wild Child," Sampson distills his advice for the *Huffington Post*, asking adults to explore, discover, share, and enjoy nature with our children. Here, he hopes to develop "hummingbird parents" who stay on the periphery, "sipping nectar" while their children have the space and autonomy to take risks and nurture their own love of the great, research-backed outdoors.

Paul Erickson, Nichols School, NY

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015
Huffington Post, 4/27/2015

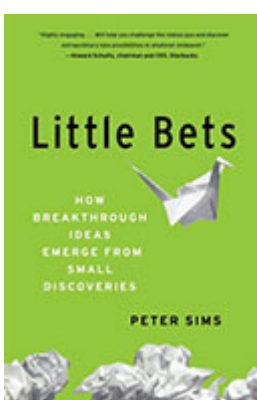
[Thinking Deeply about Thinking Culture](#)

Creating Cultures of Thinking: The 8 Forces We Must Master to Truly Transform Our Schools, by Ron Ritchhart

Author of *Making Thinking Visible* and *Intellectual Character*, Ron Ritchart deconstructs culture as it applies to the trending conversation on process over product. A first step for the author is the recognition of schools as veritable vessels of enculturation. Another premise is that classroom culture in support of nurturing student dispositions to thinking can change if - and only when - schools change to support these same dispositions in their educators. Eight chapters are dedicated to each of eight forces of culture: (1) expectations, (2) language, (3) time, (4) modeling, (5) opportunities, (6) routines and structures, (7) interactions and relationships, and (8) physical environment. Among the features of this book that make it essential and accessible reading are the case studies and appendix of resources. Additionally, each chapter ends with practical tips and strategies for teachers to use in the classroom. This is a highly recommended text for school and teacher leaders looking to create professional learning communities that reflect the kind of thinking and learning celebrated in students.

Rozena Raja, Alif to Z Consulting, NY

Jossey-Bass, 2015

[The Littler Bigger](#)

Little Bets: How Breakthrough Ideas Emerge from Small Discoveries, by Peter Sims

In *Little Bets*, *True North* co-author Peter Sims articulates a vision for leadership that loosely parallels the way many teachers encourage their students to pursue learning and growth. We should preach - and teach - concepts such as the growth mindset and the importance of play not only to the young, but also to adults. Sims builds his case by examining a group of celebrated professionals ranging from Ed Catmull to Chris Rock. His portraits remind us that startlingly innovative work is often the product of similarly innovative approaches to daily practice. School leaders will find convenient analogues to their work by listening closely to Sims's passions for rapid prototyping, increased feedback channels, close examination of the user experience, and making things "in order to think." In an age where "five year strategic plans" for schools are both popular and under fire, and where school resources are often constrained, the little bets approach will help school leaders and teachers envision a way forward that won't crumble should the conditions of our work change drastically. What's more, little bets, by definition, don't require huge commitments of resources up front. You don't always have to change the whole system to change school life - you can change small parts of it and, "small win by small win," discern the way forward.

Stephen J. Valentine, Montclair Kimberley Academy, NJ

Simon and Schuster, July 16, 2013

To submit comments or suggestions, or to request that the newsletter be sent to a colleague, contact Cynthia Uejio, Operations 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
www.klingenstein.org

