

SUMMER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

FLORIDA KINDERGARTEN COUNCIL BOARD REFLECTIONS

The Florida Kindergarten Council (FKC) board met recently for their annual strategic planning meeting. In an effort to keep member schools abreast of current trends in education and educational technology, each board member was asked to bring information about an article, book, website, etc. that they have found helpful and/or informative. The following is a list of the resources that were shared by the members. It is our hope that you will find these resources helpful.

Articles

[Personal Best: Top Athletes and Singers Have Coaches. Should You?](#) by Atul Gawande

The New Yorker

Books for Educators (alpha by author)

[Nurture Shock: New Thinking About Children](#) by Po Bronson and Ashley Merryman

[Nurture Shock](#) offers a revolutionary new perspective on children that upends a library's worth of conventional wisdom. The authors demonstrate that many of modern society's strategies for nurturing children are in fact backfiring--because key twists in the science have been overlooked. Nothing like a parenting manual, NurtureShock gets to the core of how we grow, learn and live.

In addition to Bronson and Merryman's writings on praise, there are nine more equally groundbreaking chapters. Among the topics covered:

- Why the most brutal person in a child's life is often a sibling, and how a single aspect of their preschool-aged play can determine their relationship as adults.
- When is it too soon - or too late - to teach a child about race? Children in diverse schools are less likely to have a cross-racial friendship, not more - so is school diversity backfiring?
- Millions of families are fighting to get their kids into private schools and advanced programs as early as possible. But schools are missing the best kids, 73% of the time - the new neuroscience explains why.
- Why are kids - even those from the best of homes - still aggressive and cruel? The answer is found in a rethinking of parental conflict, discipline, television's unexpected influence, and social dominance.

[Playful Learning: Develop Your Child's Sense of Joy and Wonder](#) by Mariah Bruehl

Children are natural scientists, artists, mathematicians, authors, and scholars. From the time they are born, they seek out information about the world around them in an effort to construct meaning and further their development. While children have an inherent drive to make sense of their reality, parents have a unique opportunity to harness their children's curiosity and channel it into a love of learning.

Playful learning is the magic that takes place when we meld a child's sense of joy and wonder with thoughtfully planned learning experiences. Through easy-to-implement, hands-on projects you can engage your child in fun and creative ways that encourage learning and impart the joy of discovery. With a little bit of information and forethought, you can play a pivotal role in the cognitive and creative development of your child. Learn more at www.playfullearning.com.

[The Power of the Social Brain: Teaching, Learning, and Interdependent Thinking](#) by Arthur L. Costa

Cooperative learning has been demonstrated by research to be one of the most highly effective teaching strategies, but simply putting students in a group is not enough. The authors of *The Power of the Social Brain* see "interdependent thinking" as the missing piece of the collaborative puzzle. This authoritative book provides research from the neurosciences and education along with practical strategies to help groups function more effectively and thoughtfully. By adding the "cognitive dimension" to cooperative learning, this book will help readers apply strategies of successful group work in classrooms and professional educational learning communities.

[From Play to Practice: Connecting Teachers' Play to Children's Learning](#) by Walter F. Drew

[Essential Questions: Opening Doors to Students Understanding](#) by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins

Whether you are an Understanding by Design (UbD) devotee or are searching for ways to address standards local or Common Core State Standards in an engaging way, Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins provide practical guidance on how to design, initiate, and embed inquiry-based teaching and learning in your classroom.

Offering dozens of examples, the authors explore the usefulness of EQs in all K-12 content areas, including skill-based areas such as math, PE, language instruction, and arts education. As an important element of their backward design approach to designing curriculum, instruction, and assessment, the authors:

- Give a comprehensive explanation of why EQs are so important;
- Explore seven defining characteristics of EQs;
- Distinguish between topical and overarching questions and their uses;
- Outline the rationale for using EQs as the focal point in creating units of study; and
- Show how to create effective EQs, working from sources including standards, desired understandings, and student misconceptions.

Using essential questions can be challenging for both teachers and students and this book provides guidance through practical and proven processes, as well as suggested response strategies to encourage student engagement. Finally, you will learn how to create a culture of inquiry so that all members of the educational community students, teachers, and administrators benefit from the increased rigor and

deepened understanding that emerge when essential questions become a guiding force for learners of all ages.

[Making Learning Whole: How Seven Principles Can Transform Education](#) by David N. Perkins

David Perkins, a noted authority on teaching and learning and co-director of Harvard's Project Zero, introduces a practical and research-based framework for teaching. He describes how teaching any subject at any level can be made more effective if students are introduced to the "whole game," rather than isolated pieces of a discipline. Perkins explains how learning academic subjects should be approached like learning baseball or any game, and he demonstrates this with seven principles for making learning whole: from making the game worth playing (emphasizing the importance of motivation to sustained learning), to working on the hard parts (the importance of thoughtful practice), to learning how to learn (developing self-managed learners).

- Vividly explains how to organize learning in ways that allow people to do important things with what they know
- Offers guidelines for transforming education to prepare our youth for success in a rapidly changing world
- Filled with real-world, illustrative examples of the seven principles

[Literacy Beginnings: A Prekindergarten Handbook](#) by Gay Su Pinnell and Irene Fountas

For prekindergarten children, language and play are the major tools for learning about the world, and they are also the most important tools for early literacy learning. The three- or four-year-old who takes a memo pad and marker around to family members "to take orders" for dinner, like all young children, makes no distinction between play and reading and writing. It all involves curiosity, learning, discovery, and excitement.

In their latest professional book, Gay Su Pinnell and Irene Fountas show you how to tap into young children's excitement to introduce them to the world of literacy in joyful, engaging ways. As with their *Continuum of Literacy Learning* for grades K-8, they provide detailed descriptions of language and literacy behaviors and understandings for teachers to notice, teach, and support, while offering practical strategies for the prekindergarten classroom. Full of resources like songs, rhymes, and finger plays, [Literacy Beginnings](#) also includes 35 ready-to-use lessons to introduce young children to reading and writing.

[Bully Nation: Why America's Approach to Childhood Aggression is Bad for Everyone](#) by Susan Eva Porter

The Columbine school shooting caused the United States to ramp up the national discussion of school bullying and the hasty implementation of many new anti-bullying rules and "zero-tolerance" policies. Some of these policies have led to serious unintended consequences. In this timely book, Susan Eva Porter, a seasoned and licensed school professional, explains how our current bully language, school policies, and anti-bully activists are trying to address the problem of school bullying in ways that actually make problems worse. Some policies treat children as adults and adults as children. Unnecessary strife

among all parties involved, and the impeded social development of the children involved, can be a byproduct of popular policies. Especially in middle-school years, children are in a stage of development that involves testing boundaries and learning to relate to others. They need to gain resilience that will enable them to function well as adults. Bullying is often addressed in ways that arrest the social development of both the "bully" and the "victim." Porter, an expert in child development, sets a new standard for our understanding of America's approach to bullying, and how we can dramatically improve outcomes, in this easy-to-understand book. Bully Nation should be read by school administrators, counselors, policymakers, teachers, psychologists, and parents. It is a much needed analysis with common-sense solutions to one of our nation's most mis-addressed problems.

[Making Thinking Visible: How to Promote Engagement, Understanding, and Independence for All Learners](#) by Ron Ritchart, Mark Church, and Karin Morrison

This book outlines a proven program for enhancing students' thinking and comprehension abilities. Visible Thinking is a research-based approach to teaching thinking, begun at Harvard's Project Zero, that develops students' thinking dispositions, while at the same time deepening their understanding of the topics they study. Rather than a set of fixed lessons, Visible Thinking is a varied collection of practices, including thinking routines, small sets of questions or a short sequence of steps, as well as the documentation of student thinking. Using this process thinking becomes visible as the students' different viewpoints are expressed, documented, discussed and reflected upon.

- Helps direct student thinking and structure classroom discussion
- Can be applied with students at all grade levels and in all content areas
- Includes easy-to-implement classroom strategies

The book also comes with a DVD of video clips featuring Visible Thinking in practice in different classrooms.

[The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything](#) by Ken Robinson and Lou Aronica

The Element is the point at which natural talent meets personal passion. When people arrive at the Element, they feel most themselves and most inspired and achieve at their highest levels. With a wry sense of humor, Ken Robinson looks at the conditions that enable us to find ourselves in the Element and those that stifle that possibility. Drawing on the stories of a wide range of people, including Paul McCartney, Matt Groening, Richard Branson, Arianna Huffington, and Bart Conner, he shows that age and occupation are no barrier and that this is the essential strategy for transform-ing education, business, and communities in the twenty-first century.

This is a breakthrough book about talent, passion, and achievement from one of the world's leading thinkers on creativity and self-fulfillment.

[Out of Our Minds: Learning To Be Creative](#) by Ken Robinson

"It is often said that education and training are the keys to the future. They are, but a key can be turned in two directions. Turn it one way and you lock resources away, even from those they belong to. Turn it the other way and you release resources and give people back to themselves. To realize our true creative potential—in our organizations, in our schools and in our communities—we need to think differently about ourselves and to act differently towards each other. We must learn to be creative."

—Ken Robinson

[Teaching for Wisdom, Intelligence, Creativity, and Success](#) by Robert J. Sternberg, Linda Jarvin, and Elena L. Grigorenko

Based on an extensive research, this practical teaching resource provides instructional and assessment guidelines for strengthening students' higher-order thinking and reasoning skills.

[How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character](#) by Paul Tough

Why do some children succeed while others fail? The story we usually tell about childhood and success is the one about intelligence: success comes to those who score highest on tests, from preschool admissions to SATs. But in [How Children Succeed](#), Paul Tough argues that the qualities that matter most have more to do with character: skills like perseverance, curiosity, conscientiousness, optimism, and self-control.

[How Children Succeed](#) introduces us to a new generation of researchers and educators who, for the first time, are using the tools of science to peel back the mysteries of character. Through their stories—and the stories of the children they are trying to help—Tough traces the links between childhood stress and life success. He uncovers the surprising ways in which parents do—and do not—prepare their children for adulthood. And he provides us with new insights into how to help children growing up in poverty.

Early adversity, scientists have come to understand, can not only affect the conditions of children's lives, it can alter the physical development of their brains as well. But now educators and doctors around the country are using that knowledge to develop innovative interventions that allow children to overcome the constraints of poverty. And with the help of these new strategies, as Tough's extraordinary reporting makes clear, children who grow up in the most painful circumstances can go on to achieve amazing things.

This provocative and profoundly hopeful book has the potential to change how we raise our children, how we run our schools, and how we construct our social safety net. It will not only inspire and engage readers, it will also change our understanding of childhood itself.

MOVIES/DVD'S

[Conscious Discipline](#) with Dr. Becky Bailey (4 DVD set)

Building emotionally intelligent homes and schools
Currently out of stock at Amazon.com

[Stand and Deliver](#)

Based on a true story, this inspiring American Playhouse production stars Edward James Olmos as a high school teacher who motivated a class full of East L.A. barrio kids to care enough about mathematics to pass an Advanced Placement Calculus Test. Not exactly a variation of *To Sir, With Love*, the film concerns itself with assumptions and biases held by mainstream authorities about disadvantaged kids, and Olmos's efforts to keep his students coolheaded enough to prove them wrong. Olmos, virtually unrecognizable as the pudgy, balding instructor, gives a career performance in this fine piece directed by Ramón Menéndez, and written by the director and Tom Musca. --*Tom Keogh*

WEBSITES

[Edmodo](#)

Edmodo is a social learning platform for teachers, students, and parents. It is commonly thought of as the Facebook of schools, as called by pupils and teachers alike. Edmodo can be incorporated into classrooms through a variety of applications including Reading, Assignments, and Paper-studying. Current uses include posting assignments, creating polls for student responses, embedding video clips, create learning groups, post a quiz for students to take, and create a calendar of events and assignments. Students can also turn in assignments or upload assignments for their teachers to view and grade. Teachers can annotate the assignments directly in Edmodo to provide instant feedback.

Parents can also create parent accounts. Parent accounts allow parents to see their children's assignments and grades. Teachers can also send alerts to parents about school events, missed assignments, and other important messages through Edmodo. Teachers can generate printable class rosters; so if a teacher is going to have a substitute teacher in their classroom who needs a printed roster, they can print one from Edmodo account. Educators are finding creative ways to support student learning by using Edmodo as a place to post and critique one another's literature analysis, collaborate with their peers, and post creative writing for an audience. In early December 2012, Edmodo underwent a style revamp. It now includes easier browsing, emoticon responses to assignments, and the addition of two apps, a photo editor and SchoolTube, an educational video site.

[Mem Fox](#)

Mem Fox is an Australian writer of children's books and an educationalist specializing in literacy. In 1981, while working in drama, Fox decided to retrain in literacy studies. She said: "Literacy has become the great focus of my life — it's my passion, my battle and my mission and my exhaustion." She has published books on literacy aimed at children, their parents, teachers and educators. She held the position of Associate Professor, Literacy Studies, in the School of Education at Flinders University until her retirement in 1996. Since her retirement from teaching, Fox travels around the world visiting many countries and doing presentations and speaking on children's books and literacy issues.

To hear Mem Fox reading many of her own stories on YouTube, click [here](#).

[Pinterest](#)

Pinterest is a pinboard-style photo-sharing website that allows users to create and manage theme-based image collections such as events, interests, and hobbies. Users can browse other pinboards for images, 're-pin' images to their own pinboards, or 'like' photos. Pinterest is a wonderful place for teachers to 'pin' items that relate to their subject and/or grade level. It can also be used to 'pin' books, classroom management tips, curriculum ideas, and more.

[Project Zero](#)

Project Zero is an educational research group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education composed of multiple, independently-sponsored research projects. Since 1967, Project Zero has examined the development of learning processes in children, adults, and organizations. Today, Project Zero's work includes investigations into the nature of intelligence, understanding, thinking, creativity, ethics, and other essential aspects of human learning. Our mission is to understand and enhance high-level thinking and learning across disciplines and cultures and in a range of contexts, including schools, businesses, museums, and digital environments.

[Quizlet](#)

Quizlet is an online learning tool created by high school sophomore Andrew Sutherland in Albany, California. It was originally conceived in October 2005 and released to the public in January 2007. As of April 2011, Quizlet had over 8.7 million user-generated flashcard sets and more than 2.8 million registered users.

[Study Stack](#)

StudyStack.com strives to help people learn what they want to learn. The StudyStack concept was designed to help people memorize information about various subjects. Using the StudyStack web site, you use your computer to display a stack of "virtual cards" which contain information about a certain subject. Just like flashcards, you can review the information at your own pace discarding the cards you've learned and keeping the ones you still need to review. When you enter data on studystack, the data can be studied using many different activities such as flashcards, a matching game, a word search puzzle, and a hangman game. You can also export the data to your cellphone or PDA so you can review it when you are away from the computer.

[Teach Preschool](#)

Deborah J. Stewart's blog provides valuable resources for early childhood educators. These resources include links to articles, lesson ideas, simple song lyrics, and more.

[Teacher Leader Model Standard](#)

The Teacher Leader Model Standards are intended to codify, promote, and support teacher leadership as a vehicle for transforming schools to meet the needs of 21st-century learners. Rather than serve as a comprehensive job description for teacher leaders, the Standards instead describe seven domains of leadership. Each domain is further developed and supported by a list of functions that a teacher leader who is an expert in that domain might perform.

[Turn the Page Press](#)

Bev Bos, Renowned Early Childhood Education Expert

The website offers DVDs, books, songs, toys, and lectures. These items are available for purchase through the site.



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