

# Larry Ferlazzo Websites

7 September, 2010 | "When one teaches, two learn."

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## Street Gangs In Mexico City

Sep 6, 2010 11:46PM

The New York Times has an online video titled *Streetwise Saint Joins Mexico Drug War*. Here's how they describe it:

*Mexico City gang youth have adopted a first century saint as their idol. A septuagenarian American priest who speaks their language wants to cash in on their unconventional fervor to help them.*

I'm adding the link to [The Best Sites To Learn About Street Gangs](#).

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## "America Out Of Work"

Sep 6, 2010 11:07PM

"America Out Of Work" is ongoing series of video interviews the Los Angeles Times is doing with the unemployed.

I'm adding it to [The Best Sites To Learn About The Recession](#).

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## "Assessing A Teacher's Value"

Sep 6, 2010 09:57PM

Assessing A Teacher's Value is the headline of a New York Times feature that highlights four supporters and four critiques of the "value-added" approach of assessing teachers. Critics including Linda Darling-Hammond and Diane Ravitch.

I'm adding it to [The Best Resources For Learning About The "Value-Added" Approach Towards Teacher Evaluation](#).

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## What Would Anne Frank Say About Anti-Muslim Sentiments?

Sep 6, 2010 09:12PM

What do you think Anne Frank would say about all the anti-Muslim sentiments being expressed in opposition to the proposed New York mosque (and mosques in other states, too)?

Anya Cordell, the recipient of the 2010 Spirit of Anne Frank Award, has some ideas. Read them at [THEN WHAT? The Consequences of Lighting the Anti-Muslim Fuse](#).

I'm adding the link to [The Best Sites To Help Teach About 9/11](#).

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## First Day Of School Tomorrow...

Sep 6, 2010 05:09PM

Sacramento city schools begin the new year tomorrow. I'm as set as I'm going to be, and it should be a good year. My Intermediate English class has turned into a combination Beginners/Intermediate, including some Beginners with learning challenges, so that class will be interesting

I'll also be teaching a double-period ninth-grade English class, Pre-IB ninth-grade English (this one will be a first for me), and an IB Theory of Knowledge class.

Posts might be a little less frequent this month as I get my footing in the new classes, and as I make revisions to the first draft of my forthcoming book, *Student Self-Motivation, Responsibility, and Engagement: Practical Answers to Classroom Challenges*. I need to get that manuscript squared-away by the end of September.

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## "Forget What You Know About Good Study Habits"

Sep 6, 2010 04:52PM

Forget What You Know About Good Study Habits is the title of a very useful article that has just appeared in The New York Times.

It's worth a full-read, but here are some points that struck me in particular:

### **Vary What You Study**

*Varying the type of material studied in a single sitting — alternating, for example, among vocabulary, reading and speaking in a new language — seems to leave a deeper impression on the brain than does concentrating on just one skill at a time. Musicians have known this for years, and their practice sessions often include a mix of scales, musical pieces and rhythmic work. Many athletes, too, routinely mix their workouts with strength, speed and skill drills.*

This is definitely advice I'll be sharing with students in my

Intermediate English class.

### Don't Just Study In One Place:

Students should study in multiple locations because:

*The brain makes subtle associations between what it is studying and the background sensations it has at the time, the authors say, regardless of whether those perceptions are conscious. It colors the terms of the Versailles Treaty with the wasted fluorescent glow of the dorm study room, say; or the elements of the Marshall Plan with the jade-curtain shade of the willow tree in the backyard. Forcing the brain to make multiple associations with the same material may, in effect, give that information more neural scaffolding.*

### Use "Tests" To Help Students Learn

*...cognitive scientists see testing itself — or practice tests and quizzes — as a powerful tool of learning, rather than merely assessment. The process of retrieving an idea is not like pulling a book from a shelf; it seems to fundamentally alter the way the information is subsequently stored, making it far more accessible in the future.*

*In one of his own experiments, Dr. Roediger and Jeffrey Karpicke, also of Washington University, had college students study science passages from a reading comprehension test, in short study periods. When students studied the same material twice, in back-to-back sessions, they did very well on a test given immediately afterward, then began to forget the material.*

*But if they studied the passage just once and did a practice test in the second session, they did very well on one test two days later, and another given a week later.*

*"Testing has such bad connotation; people think of standardized testing or teaching to the test," Dr. Roediger said. "Maybe we need to call it something else, but this is one of the most powerful learning tools we have."*

I'm not a huge fan of tests, but I do often ask students to take a minute to write down what they remember about a topic we have discussed at an earlier time and that will apply to what we will be doing that day. Then I'll have students share with partner. Perhaps I should do this sort of activity more often?

I'd be very interested in hearing peoples reactions to the article....

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## The Best Sites For Learning About The Birth Of Lord Krishna

Sep 6, 2010 08:21AM

Last week, Hindus celebrated Janmashtami, a two-day holiday marking the birth of the god Krishna.

Here are a few resources about the holiday that readers might find useful (and accessible to English Language Learners):

In pictures: Hindus celebrate birth of Krishna comes from the BBC.

Krishna's birthday is a slideshow from The Guardian.

Janmashtami: blue-painted Hindu children dress up to celebrate the birth of Lord Krishna is a slideshow from The Telegraph.

Stories of Krishna is an interactive from the Seattle Art Museum.

More suggestions are welcome.

If you found this post useful, you might want to consider subscribing to this blog for free.

You might also want to explore the 500 other "The Best..." lists I've compiled. Several of them provide information about many different religions.

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## "The places most likely to harbor aliens"

Sep 6, 2010 07:05AM

The places most likely to harbor aliens is a short, useful slideshow from The Mother Nature Network.

I'm adding it to The Best Sites For Learning About Possible Life On Other Planets.

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## Students Can Write Book & Movie Recommendations At "Hello Hype"

Sep 6, 2010 06:52AM

Students can write short (500 characters or less) reviews of books, movies, TV shows, or music at Hello Hype.

I'm adding it to The Best Places Where Students Can Write For An "Authentic Audience."

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## "People who have been trapped for extended periods"

Sep 6, 2010 05:38AM

Waiting for help: People who have been trapped for extended periods is a very interesting slideshow from The Washington Post. Here's how they describe it:

*The Chilean miners continue to wait for help to arrive. Christmas may come and go before they are freed. But they are not the first to*

*be trapped. Here are other instances where individuals have been forced to wait in confined quarters for a long period of time.*

I'm adding the link to [The Best Sites For Learning About The Trapped Miners In Chile](#).

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