

# WRITER'S GUIDELINES

## INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

Instructional Leader is published by the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA) every other month, beginning in January. Submissions are welcome. Email articles to [kirsten@tepsa.org](mailto:kirsten@tepsa.org). Articles are selected by the editor.

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### About TEPSA

TEPSA represents more than 5,800 PreK-8 school administrators, most of whom are principals and assistant principals. Visit [www.tepsa.org](http://www.tepsa.org) for more information.

### Purpose

*Instructional Leader* covers the latest educational research and strategies. We aim to provide timely and practical information to help administrators remain on the cutting edge of educational innovation.

### Audience

More than 2,400 PreK-8 administrators, curriculum supervisors and college professors of education. Archives of *Instructional Leader* are posted online at [www.tepsa.org](http://www.tepsa.org) as a subscriber benefit.

### Submitting an Article

We accept unsolicited manuscripts. Any education-related topic is acceptable. Articles with research-based content as well as practical and useful ideas that will assist PreK-8 administrators with instructional leadership will be given higher consideration.

Please write simply and just one notch above conversational level. Avoid jargon and explain unfamiliar terms. Attribute quotes and paraphrases by full name and title. Double-check spelling on references submitted. Time does not allow us to check your sources. We use Associated Press (AP) style.

Email article as an MS Word attachment to [kirsten@tepsa.org](mailto:kirsten@tepsa.org). Most articles are between 1,500 and 2,000 words, but we often publish longer articles (or series) as space permits. Submission must include author's name, address, phone number, word count, date and a brief biography or vita.

### Deadlines

Deadlines fall two months before the month of issue. A manuscript for the September issue is due July 1.

### Editing

We reserve the right to edit all manuscripts for organization, readability, spelling, grammar, punctuation and AP style. However, we always attempt to maintain personal writing style.

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### Moving from Middle Class to Situational Poverty — From Stability to Instability: What You Can do to Help Your Students and Parents During the Present Economic Downturn

Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D.

**D**uring the current recession, many principals and teachers are reporting to me the growing number of students and parents who are seeking assistance through the school, as well as increasing numbers of students who are homeless. There is a great reliance on the part of people who have been in the middle class as adults that their resource base is becoming unstable. In my book *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (1996, 2005), the transition from poverty to wealth is defined as "the extent to which you have resources." (See table on page 2.)

The first thing that happens in a severe economic downturn is that hope and choice are replaced with fear and a sense of scarcity. When fear and scarcity come into one's thinking, the brain is less able to seek options or see possibilities. The negative "survival voice" takes over the internal conversation with the self. For adults who have never experienced unemployment, insufficient funds to pay the mortgage or the need to sell things for cash, there is considerable confusion because the knowledge base is not available to know what the choices are. Furthermore, in middle class it is usually seen as a personal failing to lose a job or not be able to pay the mortgage. Making things worse, credit cards often are used as a short term borrowing mechanism to avoid the possibility of being evicted, which then exacerbates the financial issues.

As a child begins to assess the reality of their situation, most go through the five stages of grief as outlined by Kubler-Ross. These five stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. A person needs to move back and forth along this continuum. Middle class generally enables to decisions about time and money against these three factors: work, achievement and material security. When you have lost your job, you have lost two of the three decision makers—work and material security. It then impacts your identity: Who are you if you do not have work? If you cannot keep your house? If your material security is breached? Then, how do you make decisions? Furthermore, the one rule about money that middle class use are now out the window: (1) "I do not ask you for money, and you do not ask me" and (2) "If you borrow money you have to pay it back." Personal pride and the deeply ingrained habit of not sharing money are now challenged. Furthermore, it is typically taboo in middle class to tell people that you are in financial trouble. Middle class has another habit: talk about personal money and it is simply that you do not ask.

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