

Calendar

June 12-16, 2000
Workshop for Potential
SIM Learning Strategies
Trainers
Cocoa Beach, Florida

June 20-23, 2000
Workshop for Potential
SIM Content
Enhancement Trainers
Setalle, Washington

June 26-30, 2000
Workshop for Potential
SIM Learning Strategies
Trainers
Connecticut

July 6-8, 2000
International SIM Trainers'
Conference
Lawrence, Kansas

July 10-12, 2000
Advanced Trainers'
Workshop: Teacher-
Guided Professional
Development
Lawrence, Kansas

July 17-19, 2000
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop Level I
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

July 20-22, 2000
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop Level II
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

July 17-21, 2000
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop Content
Enhancement
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

July 25-28, 2000
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Writing Strategies
Workshop
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

(Continued on page 2)

*"Seek first to understand.
Before the problem comes up,
before you try to evaluate and
prescribe, before you try to
present your own ideas—seek
to understand... If we really,
deeply understand each other,
we open the door to creative
solutions and third
alternatives. Our differences
are no longer stumbling blocks
to communication and
progress. Instead, they become
the stepping stones to synergy"*
(Covey, p 259)

Part one of this paper, published in last month's *Stratenotes*, described how professional developers might improve their workshops by, as Stephen Covey proposes, "seeking first to understand." Interviews, the paper suggested, enable us to understand the activities teachers do and do not prefer to experience during workshops and to understand the content teachers want and need to learn. Through our understanding, interviews enable us to respect and empathize with teachers. This last point, the importance of an empathic connection with teachers before professional development, is perhaps the most important and least understood aspect of "seeking first to understand." In her book *Respect*, Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot tells a story from her childhood that captures the meaning and power of such empathic connection between people:

The summer of my eighth birthday, my family was visited by a seventy-year-old black woman, a professor of sociology, an old and dear friend. A woman of warmth and dignity, she always seemed to have secret treasures hidden under her smooth exterior. On this visit, she brought charcoals and a sketch pad. Mid-afternoon, with the sun high in the sky, she asked me to sit for her...

What I remember most clearly was the wonderful, glowing sensation I got from being attended to so fully. There were no distractions. I was the only one in her gaze. My image filled her eyes, and the sound of the chalk stroking the paper was palpable. The audible senses translated into tactile ones. After the warmth of this human encounter, the artistic product was almost forgettable. I do not recall whether I liked the portrait or not... This fast-working artist whipped the page out of her sketch pad after less than an hour and gave it to me with one admonition: "Always remember you're beautiful," she said firmly. To which I responded—beaming with pleasure and momentary embarrassment—"Now I *know* I'm somebody!"

In the process of recording the image, the artist had made me feel "seen" in a way

Seeking first to understand

Part 2: Reporting back on interviews to make professional development sessions more successful

*Jim Knight, Research Associate
KU-Center for Research on Learning*

More calendar

July 31-August 4, 2000
Workshop for Potential SIM
Content Enhancement Trainers
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

July 31-August 4, 2000
Workshop for Potential SIM
Learning Strategy Trainers
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

July 31-August 4, 2000
Workshop for Potential SIM
Learning Strategy Trainers
Seattle, Washington

New on the Web

- **SIMville**, resources especially for SIM Trainers (see page 6)
- Spring photos from the **University of Kansas campus**
- **April Spotlight. PRO-CESS: Presenting Learning Strategies**
- International Conference information, including registration forms to be downloaded.

www.ku-crl.org

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that I had never felt seen before, fully attended to, wrapped up in an empathic gaze (Lawrence-Lightfoot, p. 211).

By "seeking first to understand," through interviews, we can make teachers feel "seen" and "fully attended to." Empathy, of course, is a gift that can be given to anyone, but it is a gift that many overwhelmed or pressured teachers receive with a tremendous amount of gratitude.

Interviews begin an empathic relationship with individuals, but that relationship should be continued and built upon during group presentations. This paper describes just how such a connection between people can be established and enriched during group presentations. Specifically, the paper discusses:

1. two devices (vignettes and themes) professional developers can use to

report back interview data

2. how the conversation that grows out of reporting back interview data can be used as a bridge to training in the Content Enhancement Routines and Learning Strategies of the Strategic Instruction Model

Vignettes

Vignettes are short (one to three paragraphs), powerful narratives that summarize a theme repeated by teachers during interviews. They can be powerful Thinking Devices (see box on page 3) for encouraging dialogue. Two examples accompany this article. The first vignette, *The Learning Strategies Presentation* (below), summarizes the comments of Mary, a middle school English teacher who had many years of experience with students and professional developers. Mary made the case against staff development with

The Learning Strategies Presentation

She made so many of us so angry by her attitude probably as much as anything. ... The weather was extremely hot and we really didn't have any air-conditioned anything in this building at that time. ... It was at the end of the day when you're really tired. We weren't being paid for it at all. We'd be here until way after four and the building would be empty by the time we would finish. I'm not quite sure that people really function well if they're mentally and physically tired. She may have had a much better audience if we had been rested...

She would come in and she would always talk about her experiences, her family, how all of this was very possible and how it would be very beneficial. She always looked so fresh, so clean... Red, perfectly styled hair. Very attractive. She looked good; she had beautiful clothes, and all of us felt absolutely so grubby, just really nasty ... we really weren't very receptive to her. I think we sat around looking like hostile juvenile delinquents. I'm sure we did. We were hostile, giving dirty looks, looking at each other. It's embarrassing to think about. A bit amusing, but mostly embarrassing...

I don't believe that there is any one system that is perfect, and this was virtually sold to us as being something that we had to do step-by-step, no deviation. There could be none of our personal input working with maybe an individual child. It was very cut, and very dried and it was nothing that you could deviate from. That irritated me. It was as if you absolutely had no brain and that you didn't know what might work better using the same basic idea. There was no possibility at all. None whatsoever. While I could see that strategies would be really very effective with some children, I knew that it wouldn't work with everybody. And could you change it? "No" was the answer we got. You could not. This was it. It had been tested ... you could not change it and she was really quite adamant about that ... she didn't bend anything ... you had to follow those instructions exactly.

At any rate, after she finished her stint here, I think that most of us tucked the books away that our district bought for us and just never used them...

the kind of clarity that is only possible when you know exactly what you're talking about and exactly how to say it. In her interview, Mary described her experiences in one particular, disappointing session

The second vignette, *Quality of Relationships* (right), encapsulates Dawn's statement about why she teaches, the rewards she gains, and the rewards she hopes her students gain. Dawn was an optimistic, highly successful elementary school teacher in a very positive school in an almost idyllic setting, built on the edge of a forest in a suburban community. She loved her profession, her students, and her colleagues, but she still felt she and her peers could do more to enable professional growth. For Dawn, teaching and teacher growth were first built around relationships.

Using vignettes

SIM Trainers who have employed vignettes generally use them at the start of workshops as Thinking Devices. They read the vignettes out loud and ask teachers a few Question Recipes, such as "How did you feel as you heard the vignette?" "Is the vignette accurate?" "What else needs to be said about this topic?" Those SIM Trainers who use vignettes report that teachers are quick to comment, and often vignettes produce rich, meaningful conversations about the rewards and challenges of teaching.

The rest of the article provides guidance to help you incorporate

Quality of Relationships

I think the beauty of being an educator is the quality of relationships people have. These relationships are beautiful in the sense that they are forms that you are in the process of creating. I think in schools everyone can think, listen with respect, use good group processes that are supportive but at the same time challenging.

I think our students need to have relationships with others that challenge them. That way, through those challenges, children can get a better picture of who they are. I think children need to understand purpose. They need to be dealt with on an equal level; they need to be spoken to and just generally related to in a way that is respectful. I think they need to feel connected to the earth, to each other, to themselves.

I think we need that kind of connection as professionals with our colleagues, too. I have personal autonomy, but I want to learn from and with my colleagues. At our school, the collective aspect of the adult learning community is beginning to emerge, but we don't have a collective yet. We aren't really looking at where we want to go and what we're banging our heads up against. We need to think about what we're going to do, what we're going to learn about as adults. What I'm hungry for right now in teaching is a really supportive adult learning community to help me to think more, to challenge myself more, to move forward, and to be in a place that's exciting and invigorating. I think my school has tremendous potential to do that. I'm dying to enable those kinds of relationships with my colleagues.

vignettes and other results of your interviews into your training sessions and workshops. In developing vignettes, your goal is to create and use three to six vignettes that adequately summarize what was heard during interviews so that the coming workshop can be positioned in the real context of each teacher's professional life. Additionally, you want to show that you have heard each teacher and understand what matters in each person's school and classroom.

Creating vignettes

A few simple procedures can be

use to create vignettes. First, go through your interview notes to highlight recurring ideas and identify topics you see as common themes. Then, develop a transcript of teacher statements about each common theme. Each transcript could be a collection of similar teacher comments on one topic from your interview notes, or it could be transcribed selections of comments if you tape-recorded interviews. Pick comments that are lucid, provocative, and naturally expressive. You should eventually have a collection of phrases and statements that discuss a number of aspects of a common theme. After this, edit the transcript into a coherent statement, as if it has been spoken by one voice. Cut out redundancy, and begin and end with powerful images or memorable phrases. Finally, if you want, you can title the vignette. Your goal in writing a vignette is to create a short statement that an entire group will

Thinking Devices, Question Recipes, and more

For more information about Thinking Devices (items such as vignettes used to elicit participant responses and promote dialogue) and Question Recipes (open ended, nonjudgmental questions that prompt detailed responses), see Jim's article about Partnership Learning in the November 1997 issue of *Stratenotes*, volume 6, issue 3. The article, "Open conversations: The art and practice of Partnership Learning," also is available on the Center's Web site, www.ku-crl.org, in the SIM Spotlight archives section.

Summer update: Kansas workshops

This summer's workshops for Potential SIM Content Enhancement Trainers and Potential SIM Learning Strategy Trainers will go ahead as planned, although current enrollment is small. Please think about any Strategic Instruction Model teachers you know who would be good candidates for these workshops and encourage them to apply now.

Both workshops will be July 31-August 4, 2000. Jerri Neduchal and Connie Gentle will lead the Content Enhancement workshop, and Fran Clark and Vicki Cotsworth will lead the Learning Strategy workshop.

We also have sufficient enrollment for both Level 1 and Level II of the Strategic Instruction Model Workshops. Level 1 will be July 17-19, 2000, and Level II will be July 20-22, 2000.

We are still waiting to see whether we will have enough participants for the SIM Content Enhancement Workshop, scheduled July 17-21, 2000, and for the SIM Writing Strategies Workshop, scheduled July 25-28, 2000.

For information and applications, contact Janet Roth at CRL, (785) 864-4780, jroth@ukans.edu

hear and say, "Yes, that's it; you understand our experience!"

Themes

On occasion, you may not have time to create vignettes (each vignette takes at least one or two hours to develop), or you may think that the group with which you are working would respond more positively to a direct discussion of themes. When this is the case, you can list each theme on a transparency or flip chart and then elaborate on each theme using notes from your interviews. Typically, interviews uncover that teachers are concerned about district mandates, student diversity, parents' interference, or apathy. They also frequently uncover that teachers love their children, are committed to their own personal growth, and hold a great deal of respect for their colleagues. Since this respect is often unspoken, both themes and vignettes can be used to make powerful, positive statements about the school as a community.

At all times, you need to protect the confidentiality of the materials you are using, so be certain to avoid reporting comments that participants might quickly connect with particular people in the sessions. Use Question Recipes, as you would if you were employing vignettes, to open up dialogue about the information gathered during the interviewing process. Also, be certain to balance negative and positive comments, ending with a positive theme or vignette.

Link themes to the routine or strategy to be covered

When you have completed the group dialogue (whether you use themes or vignettes), sum up the comments on a flip chart or transparency. Then, position the day's activities by showing how the intervention to be discussed addresses some of the concerns that teachers expressed during the interviews and the group dialogue. For example, if you are providing training in the *Course*

Organizer Routine, and a common theme during interviews was that teachers wished parents could be more involved in their students' learning, you could explain how the *Course Organizer Routine* can be used to enhance communication between teachers and parents.

By interviewing teachers, discussing the common themes of their interviews, and showing how the professional development you are providing responds to those specific teacher concerns, you can create workshops where it is much easier for teachers to see the usefulness of what you are offering; you are authentically living Covey's habit: "seek first to understand, then be understood." Covey writes that "when you can present your own ideas clearly, specifically, visually, and most importantly contextually—in the context of a deep understanding of [the audiences'] paradigm and concerns—you significantly increase the credibility of your own ideas" (Covey, p.257). By meeting one-to-one with teachers, reporting back interview information during workshops, and then linking the conversation to the material you will be covering, you can increase the credibility of what you have to offer. On some occasions, though, you may be able to do something that is perhaps even more important. By "seeking first to understand," you may, as Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot suggests, enable teachers to understand that they have been "seen," both by you and their colleagues, in a way that they "have never felt seen before." That might make all the difference to the teachers with whom you are working, and, indeed, to you.

References

- Covey, S. (1989). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2000). *Respect: An Exploration*. Cambridge: Perseus Books.



Lodging information

Lawrence, Kansas

Summer 2000

Several establishments have given us special rates for the conference this summer. When making reservations, **you must mention that you are attending a Center for Research on Learning Workshop** to receive these rates. Prices quoted are for single occupancy unless otherwise specified.

Anderson Inn Cozy Cottages

Private residences within walking distance of campus
785-843-2044

Rates start at \$119 two bedrooms for two nights

Hotel Lawrence

740 Iowa St.

One of the newest motels
785-838-4242

(Available only for July 17-22 and August sessions)

\$55 double room, double occupancy

Days Inn

2309 Iowa St.

One of the newest Motels
785-843-9100

\$68+ tax Incl. refrigerator, coffeepot, continental breakfast, indoor pool, & jacuzzi

Eldridge Hotel

701 Massachusetts

Historic Downtown Hotel
785-749-5011

\$71 flat rate

queen suite, 1 queen bed

Halcyon House

Bed and Breakfast

1000 Ohio St.

785-841-0314

6-8 rooms available, close to campus and downtown

\$47-\$89: Price reflects single and double room rates. Lower rate (sharing a bathroom). Full breakfast offered.

Hallmark Inn

730 Iowa St.

785-841-6500

\$62.95-double

Hampton Inn

2300 W. 6th St.

One of the newest motels

785-841-4994

\$58 flat rate

Deluxe continental breakfast, indoor pool, hot tub, workout room, computer outlets in rooms.

Holiday Inn Holidome

200 McDonald Dr.

Indoor pool and restaurant

785-841-7077

\$65 flat rate; reservations must be made 3 weeks in advance.

Ramada Inn

2222 W. 6th St.

Outdoor swimming pool, restaurant

785-842-7030

\$56 flat rate—single; \$64 flat rate—double; reservations must be made 3 weeks in advance.

Travelodge Motel

801 Iowa St.

Six blocks from Campus

785-842-5100

\$45 flat rate

Continental breakfast, in-room coffee, free local phone, outdoor heated pool.

Transportation

Even though some travel agents will want to send you to Topeka, transportation from the Kansas City Airport to Lawrence is much easier. KCI is northeast of Lawrence, about an hour's drive away. You may want to rent a car or use the transportation services described below. If you are driving from the airport to Lawrence, take the I-435 Topeka exit and then I-70 west. Leave the turnpike at the east Lawrence exit if you are staying at Anderson Inn Cozy Cottages, Eldridge Hotel, or Halcyon House. For other places, the west Lawrence exit is more convenient.

Superior Shuttle Service. Call 888-795-3914 (toll free outside of Lawrence) or 785-838-4500 for reservations. Make reservations 12 to 24 hours in advance. \$22 one way, \$40 round trip. Trips every one and a half to two hours. Last departure from KCI is 12:15 a.m., and earliest departure from Lawrence is 4:45 a.m. (\$35 one way). Free pickup/delivery at all area hotels and motels. 24-hour transportation available for additional fee.

Midwest Limousine Services. Call 888-467-3729 (toll free outside of Lawrence) or 785-865-2872. Rates begin at \$55 (Town Car) per trip; groups are welcome to split fares. Other options include 6-passenger, 8-passenger, and 10-passenger limousines. 24-hour scheduling.

Lawrence Taxi Service. Call 785-842-8294 for reservations. Rates within Lawrence are \$4 for a ride under 10 blocks, and \$6 for everything over that within the city limits. Additional passengers bring a \$.75/person increase in rates.

Goodbye, StrateNet, and welcome to SIMville!

Where SIM Trainers meet, share, learn

With mixed feelings, we report the demise of StrateNet. For years, we have struggled to make StrateNet a quality resource for trainers. Unfortunately, we have encountered so many roadblocks and technological challenges, the system has never lived up to our expectations.

Recently, increasing problems with access to the system have prompted us to reconsider how best to meet your needs. We think we have come up with a better solution: SIMville, the SIM Trainers' resource area on the Center's Web site, and SIMTRAINER-L, the SIM Trainers' e-mail discussion list.

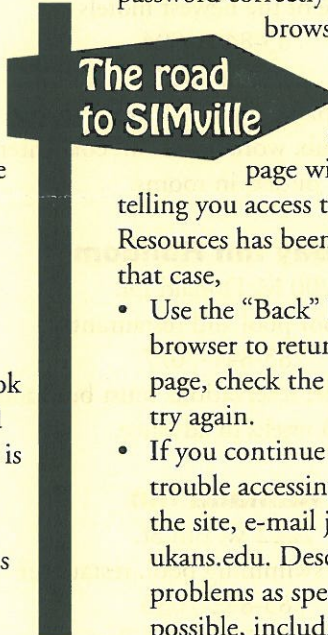
SIMville

SIMville is the first place to look for articles, ideas for training, and activities for the classroom. Here is one way to get to SIMville. Take special note of the password established for active SIM Trainers to access this area.

1. Point your browser to the Center's Web site:
www.ku-crl.org.
2. From the first screen (splash screen), click on "More about KU-CRL" to move to the site's table of contents page.
Hint: Bookmark this page for easy access in the future.
3. Scroll down the page until you see the "Popular Picks" listing. Click on "SIM Trainer Resources."
4. Click where indicated to log on to SIM Trainer Resources.
5. At this point, you will be asked

for a password. Type "strategic" in the box (do not type the quotation marks). The password is case-sensitive, so you must use all lowercase letters. Click on the "OK" button.

6. You should see the SIMville page listing resources available to SIM Trainers. If you did not type the password correctly or if your Web



The road
to SIMville

browser does not support JavaScript, an alternate page will appear telling you access to SIM Trainer Resources has been denied. In that case,

- Use the "Back" button on your browser to return to the Login page, check the password, and try again.
- If you continue to have trouble accessing this part of the site, e-mail jtollefson@ukans.edu. Describe your problems as specifically as possible, including the exact wording of any error messages you have received.

To bypass the password screen in the future, bookmark the first SIMville page. You will be able to go directly to that page any time you select that bookmark in the future.

SIMTRAINER-L

SIMTRAINER-L is an e-mail discussion list designed to help SIM Trainers keep in touch with one another and with CRL. List membership is limited to members

of the International SIM Training Network. To subscribe to the list, send an e-mail message to

listproc@ukans.edu

In the body of the message, type

sub SIMTRAINER-L Your Name

Replace "Your Name" with your name. Note that SIMTRAINER-L is all one word; do not type any spaces in the list name. Do not type anything in the Subject line of the message.

When you have successfully subscribed, the list processing program will return a confirmation message to you. The message will welcome you to the list and tell you how to post messages. We encourage you to send a message to the list once you have subscribed, just to say hello to other participants and to get an idea of how to post messages to the list.

Participating in SIMTRAINER-L discussions is as easy as reading and responding to your e-mail messages. Your responses to a SIMTRAINER-L message can take two forms:

1. To reply to the individual who sent the message, use the "Reply" option in your e-mail program. Your reply will be sent only to that individual.
2. To reply to the list, use the "Reply to all" option in your e-mail program. Your reply will be distributed to every subscriber's e-mail address.

If you have any questions, e-mail jtollefson@ukans.edu.

Change in schedule for July conference

Taking a cue from the Southeast regional meetings, we've decided to eliminate the lunch break normally scheduled on Saturday during the summer conference. Instead, sessions will run straight through until 1:30 p.m. However, no need to fear starvation: we're planning to have snacks to get us through the morning. To get the most out of the conference, please make sure your airline reservations that day are scheduled for 4 p.m. or later.

And now for the rest of the story.

This year's International SIM Trainers' Conference will delve into the story behind the story of the Strategic Instruction Model. Presenters will address the "how" and "why" questions related to strategic instruction: How does SIM fit into whole-school reform efforts? How do you develop course questions based on state standards? How do you organize a learning community? Why *should* you do these things?

Other topics tentatively scheduled include how to be an independent trainer, how to bring content literacy to life, how to package SIM pieces from a site perspective, and how to succeed with strategy instruction in a specific content class.

In addition, sessions will introduce new manuals and will review manuals first presented during the 1999 conference. The new manuals to be presented are *Community Building* and *Strategic Tutoring*. Last year's manuals are the *THINK Strategy*, *LEARN Strategy*, *BUILD Strategy*, *InSPECT Strategy*, and *Proficiency in the Sentence Writing Strategy*.

The Rest of the Story

What

International SIM Trainers' Conference

When

July 6-8, 2000

Where

Holidome
Lawrence, Kansas

Make plans now to join us in exploring "The Rest of the Story."

Keynote speakers

- **Dr. Sharon Vaughn**, Endowed Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, will deliver her address, "Teaching on Purpose: Implementing Instructional

Practices that Matter" on July 6. She also will present a break-out session, "How to teach on purpose: Reading in the content area," focusing on fluency and comprehension strategies that improve outcomes for students with disabilities in general education classrooms.

- On July 7, **Dr. Jeanne Bauwens**, Professor in the College of Education at Boise State University in Idaho, will deliver her address, "The Key is We!" She also will present a break-out session, "Tools and Techniques to Accommodate All Learners," describing six universal tools to accommodate all learners and numerous techniques for planning for and teaching a diverse group of learners within general education classrooms.

Post-conference workshop

A three-day post-conference workshop will provide advanced skills that certified trainers can use to become forces for improvement in schools. The historic Eldridge Hotel in downtown Lawrence will be the setting for the **Advanced Trainers' Workshop: Teacher-Guided Professional**

(Continued on page 8)

Conference hotel reservations

Rooms are available at the Lawrence Holidome for \$65 per night plus 10.9 percent tax. Reservations may be made with the hotel by calling (785) 841-7077, ext. 8902. Please specify that you are with the **National SIM Trainers' Conference** to ensure special group rates. A block of rooms will be held for SIM Trainers until June 6, 2000. After that, reservations will be taken on a space-available basis only, and the hotel cannot guarantee the special rate. See page 5 for other lodging options.

Registration and call for papers

More information about the conference, including a call for presentations and registration forms for the conference and the post-conference workshop, appeared in the January issue of *Stratenotes*. The forms also are available for download from the Center's Web site, www.ku-crl.org.

Conference

(Continued from page 7)

Development. This workshop, facilitated by Jim Knight, will adopt a problem-solving and highly interactive format, enabling participants to work on real problems as they learn. Participants will

- build presentations shaped around partnership principles and learning structures
 - learn and practice skills required for successful one-to-one professional development
 - learn and practice process structures that they can use with groups who need to solve problems or create a plan for implementation during training
- Teacher-Guided Professional Development is a democratic

approach now being used in the Pathways to Success project recently undertaken at the Center and directed by Jim. Trainers who are

interested in a more teacher-centered, partnership-based approach to professional development should benefit from these sessions.

Poster, kaleidoscope sessions

Thinking of presenting during the poster or kaleidoscope sessions at the conference, but need a little inspiration? Let this year's theme, "The Rest of the Story," help. The experience, knowledge, and skills of all members of the SIM International Training Network—the rest of the story—are essential to the growth and vitality of the network. These two conference sessions are valuable opportunities for you to share.

We will be happy to work with you to develop your posters for the traditional poster session. Roxanne Mysinger, our poster session coordinator, will work directly with you to ensure you have the materials you need for a polished poster presentation. The most important thing for you to supply is the idea!

Be thinking of ideas you can present during these sessions, and we'll look forward to hearing "The Rest of the Story."

FIRST CLASS

University of Kansas
STRATENOTES Volume 8-Issue #7
 CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON LEARNING
 Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities
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