

Games, activities, handouts, and song

Strategic teachers share classroom ideas

Here in Kansas, the daffodils have pushed through the dirt and turned toward the sun, the redbud trees are starting to bloom, and the requirements of work vie for attention against the lure of spring activities.

Julie Tollefson
Managing Editor
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Kansas Center
for Research on
Learning

Featuring
contributions
from the
following SIM
teachers:

- **Bonita Cox**
- **Linda Estes**
- **Karen Koskovich**
- **Linda Kremers**
- **Pat Parrott**
- **Alberta Roth**
- **Margaret Schnecke**

'Last semester, I made the Dean's Honor Roll... I had never made the Honor Roll before.'

If you, too, find thoughts of the coming summer vacation occupying more of your time than you'd like, perhaps you need a strategic teaching boost.

This issue of *Strategram* brings you more than half a dozen ideas you can use now to help you break out of your routine. These ideas come from classroom teachers who have tested them in their own classrooms and found them to be worth passing on to others.

This issue also brings a reminder, in the form of the letter reprinted above, of the power of Learning Strategies instruction and the success we can help students achieve by incorporating the Strategic Instruction Model in classroom activities. The letter beautifully illustrates the value of Learning Strategies.

We thank everyone who has

October 1998

Dr. Deshler,

Using the *Paraphrasing Strategy* has made a significant difference in my reading skills.

I am a student at West Florida and last semester I made the Dean's Honor Roll. This was an accomplishment that I never expected. My school years were full of failure. I had never made the Honor Roll before.

Also, I had taken the ACT and failed it. My reading score was "18." After learning the *Paraphrasing* and *Test-Taking* strategies and using them, I took the ACT again and my reading score was a "24." It was my highest score, which brought up the composite score and made it possible for me to be admitted to the College of Education.

Thanks,

Kim Pickett
Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

contributed activities and success stories for publication in *Strategram*, and we look forward to continuing to learn from each other in this way.

Sentence Writing materials

Bonita Cox, a SIM Trainer from Sanford, North Carolina, submitted the materials on this page and page 3.

Bonita’s students like to have a list of all of the material they need to know.

“I have found through the years that having the information needed for the oral quiz typed out really helps,” Bonita said. “My students then make a copy for themselves to which they may refer in studying or in review. The material also works great for a quick review in a new term or year. Since my students are in high school and need to edit their work, I also include COPS as a part of the ‘Search and Check’ step.”

Bonita also has found that her students do not understand the denotation (dictionary meaning) nor connotation (dictionary meaning plus everyday use) of the coordinating conjunctions.

“I have them find the dictionary meanings and then we discuss them,” she said.

Bonita then gives students a sheet containing the information reprinted on page 3. Students make copies of the sheet and place it in their notebooks, where they can quickly refer to it when needed.

Oral Quiz Requirements for Simple Sentences

To pass the oral quiz for the *Sentence Writing Strategy* for simple sentences, you must be able to correctly answer the following:

1. What does PENS stand for?

PENS: **P**ick a Formula

Explore the words to fit the formula

Note the words

Search and check

- for verbs and subjects

- Use COPS **C**apitalization

Overall appearance, organization, omissions

Punctuation

Spelling

2. What is a simple sentence?

A simple sentence is a sentence with one independent clause.

3. What is an independent clause?

An independent clause is a group of words that can stand alone and that has a subject and a verb.

4. What is a subject of a sentence?

The subject of a sentence is who or what the sentence is about.

5. What is the verb of a sentence?

The verb of a sentence shows the action or state of being of the subject of the sentence.

6. What is a compound subject?

A compound subject means that there are two or more subjects in an independent clause.

7. What is a compound verb?

A compound verb means that there are two or more verbs in an independent clause.

8. Name the simple sentence formulas.

S V S S V

S V V S S V V

Oral Quiz Requirements for Compound Sentences

To pass the oral quiz for the *Sentence Writing Strategy* for compound sentences, you must be able to correctly answer the following:

1. What are the steps in PENS and COPS?

PENS: Pick a Formula

Explore the words to fit the formula

Note the words

Search and check

COPS: Capitalization

Overall appearance, organization, omissions

Punctuation

Spelling

2. What is a compound sentence?

A compound sentence is a sentence with two or more independent clauses.

3. What is an independent clause?

An independent clause is a group of words that can stand alone and that has a subject and a verb.

4. What is a coordinating conjunction?

A coordinating conjunction is a word used with a comma to join two independent clauses together to form one sentence.

5. Name the coordinating conjunctions and the “cue” words.

FAN BOYS: , for , and , nor
, but , or , yet , so

6. How do you use a comma in a compound sentence?

A comma goes in front of the coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

7. How do you use a semicolon in a compound sentence?

A semicolon is used between the two independent clauses in a compound sentence.

8. What are the formulas for compound sentences?

I,cl

I;l

9. What are the formulas for an independent clause (simple sentences)?

S V SS V

S VV SS VV

Coordinating conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions show relationships between independent clauses. The following information suggests what these relationships might be when each coordinating conjunction is used.

This means the same as

, for “because” when it is used as a coordinating conjunction. Don’t confuse “for” as a preposition and “for” as a coordinating conjunction, which must have a comma and a subject and a verb following it in an independent clause.

This is used to show that two

, and ideas or actions in two independent clauses are equally important and connected.

, nor This is used to introduce the second clause of a negative statement. It shows that the second clause is negative as well. With “nor” and helping verbs, the helping verb or verbs will come before the subject, and the main verb will come after the subject in the second independent clause.

, but This shows contrast between the ideas or actions in the two independent clauses.

, or This joins two ideas when there is a choice between the independent clause ideas or actions.

, yet This shows contrast between the independent clause ideas or actions.

, so This shows the second independent clause is the result of the first independent clause.

Bag It: A rapid-fire game

Karen Koskovich, a SIM Trainer and Reading Recovery/Title I teacher from Maquoketa, Iowa, spices up strategies instruction with a variety of games and activities, such as this DISSECT rhyme and rapid-fire verbal rehearsal game.

Karen uses “Bag It” to speed up the time it takes to get students in the room and ready to work. She uses it not only for verbal rehearsal, but as a quick review at the beginning of each class period during the controlled practice part of strategy instruction.

Procedures: Use a brown paper lunch bag for each letter of the mnemonic for the strategy you are teaching. Write one letter of the mnemonic on each bag. As students enter the room, give each one a large foam bathtub letter that stands for a step of the strategy being learned.

Once all of the letters have been distributed, begin the rapid-fire practice. If the student can say the strategy step at

an automatic rate, he or she is allowed to drop the letter in the corresponding bag. Continue going around the room, repeating the steps until every student has been able to bag his or her letter.

Then, remove the first letter of the mnemonic and throw it like a Frisbee at an unsuspecting student. When you call the letter, the student who caught it must say what it stands for at an automatic rate. Continue this process until all letters are out of the bags.

For the last round, have the student holding the letter throw it to another student. Again, the student who catches the letter must say the step for that letter. Continue until the students have said all of the steps again.

An idea to help students DISSECT

Karen has been using the following idea for fifth-graders learning the *Word Identification Strategy* (DISSECT).

“It seemed that I was reminding the students which letters were vowels all the time,” she said, “but once we learned this little rhyme, the questions stopped.”

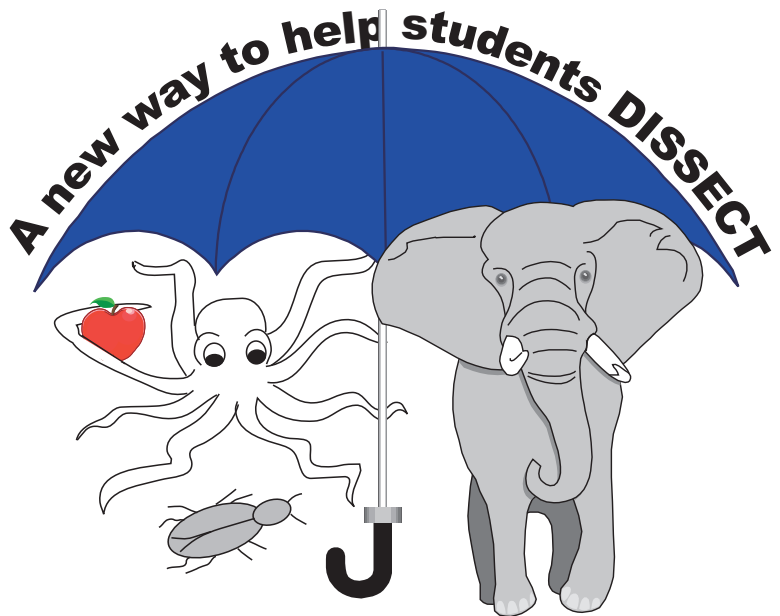
Instead of the middle school version of the Rules of Twos and Threes, Karen teaches this:

Rule 1: A,E,I,O,U, count over two; otherwise, count over three.

Rule 2: Take off the first letter and A,E,I,O,U, count over two; otherwise, count over three.

Rule 3: Say “A,E,I,O,U,” the long way the short way, and any other way they might sound when together.

Karen also has a picture for students to keep in mind: an apple, an insect, an elephant, and an octopus all under an umbrella.



‘20 Questions’ prepositions game

about	beneath	like	toward
above	beside	near	under
across	between	of	underneath
after	beyond	off	until
against	by	on	up
along	down	over	upon
amid	during	out	with
among	except	outside	of
around	for	past	within
at	from	since	without
before	in	through	
behind	inside	throughout	
below	into	to	

Margaret Schneck of Summit School in Dundee, Illinois, engages her fifth-, sixth-, and seventh-grade students in a game similar to “20 Questions” to help them master prepositions.

Margaret begins by announcing “I am thinking of something in this room.” One by one, each student is given an opportunity to either ask a question about the object or to guess what the object is. The student is eliminated from the game if

- the question does not include a preposition
- the guess is incorrect

The game continues until the object is identified or until all of the students are eliminated.

Margaret suggests that teachers may list prepositions on the board for students to use for guidance.

Adding technology to strategy tools

Linda Estes and Alberta Roth, SIM Trainers in the Klein Independent School District in Klein, Texas, shared the following idea for putting technology to work in strategies instruction.

Linda and Alberta noted numerous teacher concerns with the *Sentence Writing Strategy* focusing on the number of student practice lessons, content of the lesson sentences, and the lack of flexibility to add personalized sentences. In response to these concerns, the two used Claris 3.0 to retype the simple and compound sentence student exercises, quizzes, and evaluations, putting these components on computer disk. They formatted the computerized version of these lessons so teachers could generate their own sentences,

use more culturally appropriate or geographic topics, insert student sentences for practice, and develop more practice lessons if needed. Some of the teachers who have used this new format print the personalized lessons for student use, and others allow students to work directly on the computer. Linda and Alberta report that students enjoy this additional component of strategy instruction, and the teachers who have used it appreciate the flexibility.

Outline reading activities

Reciprocal teaching

Pat Parrott, an LD Liaison and SIM Trainer in Chesterfield County Public Schools, Chesterfield, Virginia, recently shared these reading activities.

1. Divide the text to be read. Begin with a paragraph. Move to larger segments of text (such as an entire story, a chapter, sections of a story, or expository text) as students become proficient.
2. Read the text in one of the following ways: Students and teacher read silently, students read aloud, teacher reads aloud (later, dialogue leader reads, see No. 5 below).
3. Conduct a dialogue with students using four strategies:
 - **Questioning:** Identify relevant information and self-check knowledge of information with clear and concise questions.
 - **Summarizing:** Identify and integrate the important information. Look for or develop a topic sentence.
 - **Clarifying:** Identify hindrances to comprehension and take the necessary steps to restore meaning. Look for unfamiliar vocabulary, incomplete information, unclear references, and unusual expressions.
 - **Predicting:** Hypothesize what the author will do next and confirm or disprove your hypothesis. Use background knowledge, titles, headings, questions embedded in the text.
4. Have students answer the questions, help revise the summary, clarify difficult parts, and evaluate the prediction.

(Continued on page 7)

Jigsaw activity

1. Divide the class into three groups. Also divide the reading material into three sections, and assign one to each group.
2. Pair students to read the assigned section, strategically placing poor readers with able readers. Allow a specific amount of time for reading (about two to four minutes).
3. After the allotted time, all students who read the same section come together to discuss the information. Within a specified amount of time (about five to seven minutes), they summarize what they read, clarify words and concepts they did not understand, and ask questions of each other about the content. The students need to know this information so well that they can teach it to others, because that is the next step. Before dismissing these groups, have all three groups count off: 1-2-3.
4. Regroup the class into “1”s, “2”s, and “3”s. Now each group contains students who have read the first, second, and third parts of the passage. Beginning with the first part, the students who read that section share information they learned with the rest of the group. All of the “1”s should have a chance to give input. Students may ask questions to clarify information presented. Then, the “2”s explain the second part, and the “3”s share the third. Subdividing the group works well at this step. Groups of six—two “1”s, two “2”s, and two “3”s—are ideal. Allow about seven to 10 minutes for the students to teach each other the information.
5. You may want to do some group processing at the end to bring closure to the activity.

‘Dear Teacher’

Linda Kremers of Waite Park, Minnesota, wrote the words to this song, which is sung to the tune of “I Walk the Line.” Linda submitted the song along with the following note: “Dear teacher, please include memory techniques in your daily lesson plans.”

I keep a close watch on that teacher of mine.
I keep my ears wide open all the time.
You see it’s listening day and night for me,
But what I need are strategies.

I really need to see and say and do.
I want to be as smart as you!
I need some hands-on activities.
Oh, what I need are strategies.

Please plant those pictures in my mind.
I always need to visualize.
I want to see it through your eyes.
I really need some strategies.

You could help me with mnemonics.
How do I remember seven times six?
Dear teacher, how do I spell “geography”?
Oh, what I need are strategies.

How can I remember all this stuff?
The names of the French Explorers are so tough!
I have too much, too much to memorize.
I always need to verbalize.

Please teach me questioning techniques,
and for the answers I’ll know how to seek.
You see I try so very hard to please,
But what I need are strategies.

As you can see, my tone memory is strong,
And like your lessons, this should not be too long.
You say my gift to you is listening,
Your gift to me is strategies!
Your gift to me is strategies!

Reciprocal

(Continued from page 6)

5. After modeling the process a number of times, appoint a student (referred to as the “dialogue leader”) to take your place.
6. As students take the role of dialogue leader, assume the role of student and facilitator. In the role of facilitator, you will provide feedback on the quality of questions and summaries and provide encouragement to the dialogue leader.

—Brown & Palincsar

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Strategram

Vol. 11: Issue number 3. Published six times per year by The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning, Dole Human Development Center-Room 3061, Lawrence, Kansas, 66045-2342. Subscription rate: \$13 per year. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher, unless otherwise stated.

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Your subscription entitles you to all six issues of the current volume.
The current volume is No. 11, and the publication period is
September 1998 to August 1999.

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