

Integrating SIM writing strategies and other programs

Rosemary Tralli
Independent
SIM Trainer,
Glastonbury,
Connecticut

One of the most important benefits we can stress is that the model provides a structure, language, and feedback mechanism that enable students to respond to other programs in more effective ways.

Numerous writing programs are used in schools today. As educators armed with vast experience and investment in these initiatives seek more information about the Strategic Instruction Model, we must ensure that they understand and appreciate the role of SIM in developing strong writers. Unless we develop vital, pragmatic links, educators may think that SIM is too mechanical or limited or way too hard to teach.

Fortunately, as SIM teachers and trainers, we can help these educators make the connections between SIM and other writing programs. Exploring several questions can guide our efforts to make SIM information meaningful and acceptable.

- Do we have sufficient understanding of writing principles and components outside of the SIM model?
- Where do the SIM writing strategies fit within process writing?
- How do we inform and excite teachers about the power of SIM writing strategies?
- How can we embrace the educators' knowledge and commitment toward other writing programs to showcase the value of SIM in daily instruction?

One of the most important benefits we can stress is that the model provides a structure, language, and feedback mechanism that enable students to respond to other programs in more effective ways. SIM writing strategies are powerful learning tools, but it is the blending of the model with other initiatives that can provide a comprehensive approach to writing development.

For example, one internationally popular writing model is 6+1 TraitTM, developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. We can illustrate many connections between SIM and 6+1 Trait for a group experienced in 6+1 Trait writing.

6+1 Trait was developed as a way to foster dialogue about writing through a shared vocabulary and understanding of key writing elements. The program includes a common core of characteristics or traits that can be evidenced in narrative, expository, and persuasive writing. These traits are

- Ideas and Content
- Organization
- Voice
- Word Choice
- Sentence Fluency
- Conventions
- Presentation (optional)

The traits are viewed as integrated components of the writing process. The defined traits help to illustrate how a writer moves through the development, revision, and editing processes to create meaning through writing.

Traits may be isolated for specific skill development but should be rapidly integrated back into an integrated writing process. The *Analytical Writing Assessment Scoring Rubric* is used to evaluate the development of each trait within a writing sample. In this example (pages 2 and 3), the rubric has been modified to highlight the SIM components directly related to each trait.

Analytical Writing Assessment Scoring Rubric

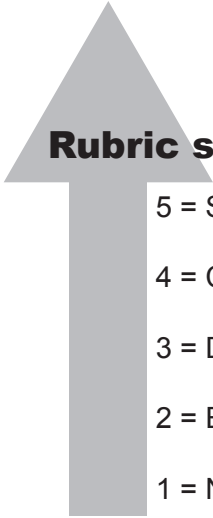
Trait	Rubric Score 1	Rubric Score 3	Rubric Score 5	Related SIM Component
Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still searching for a topic • Information is limited, unclear, inadequate length • Text is repetitive, disconnected, random 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic fairly broad • Support is attempted • Reader left with questions • Difficulty moving from general to specific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic is narrow and manageable • Relevant, telling, quality details • Ideas are fresh, original; from knowledge/experience • Reader's questions are anticipated/answered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph Writing diagram • Paragraph types • Theme Writing organizer and processes • Error Monitoring—Read for Meaning step
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks a clear sense of direction; no identifiable internal structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong enough to move the reader through the text without too much confusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances and showcases central idea or theme • Order, structure is compelling and moves reader through the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph Writing diagram • Theme Writing diagram • Error Monitoring—Read for Meaning step
Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indifferent, uninvolved • Mechanical writing, no POV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasant but not compelling; not fully engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual, compelling, with an awareness and respect for the audience and purpose for writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Error Monitoring—Read for Meaning step
Word Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited vocabulary, misused parts of speech, unimaginative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precise, interesting, powerful, engaging words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Error Monitoring—Read for Meaning step

Continued on page 3

In Focus

Trait	Rubric Score 1	Rubric Score 3	Rubric Score 5	Related SIM Component
Sentence Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choppy, incomplete, run-on, begin all the same way 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vary in length and structure, use of creative and appropriate connections/transitions, cadence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence Writing Strategy—All sentence types and formulas; Search & Check process
Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage, grammar • Paragraphing is missing or irregular 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows end punctuation • Most words capitalized correctly • Paragraphing is attempted • Spelling is reasonable • Moderate editing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling generally correct • Grammar and usage are correct • Punctuation and capitalization are accurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Error Monitoring—COPS steps • Paragraph Writing organizer • Theme Writing organizer
Presentation (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters ill formed, illegible • Spacing is random, confusing • Lack of markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting is legible • Margins present, but some text may crowd edges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slant, spacing is uniform • Effective use of white space • Strong use of markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall appearance component of COPS—Messy, margin, spacing

Rubric scoring

- 
- 5 = Strong
 - 4 = Competent
 - 3 = Developing
 - 2 = Emerging
 - 1 = Not yet

Students can use the SIM component column of the rubric in evaluating their writing by examining their work for the components embedded in each trait. For example, for sentence fluency, students could ask themselves, “Are my sentences different in length and type?” Or they might say, “I am only writing I,cI compound sentences. I need to remember to write I;I types to vary my sentences and improve my fluency.” SIM offers a language to answer writing questions. This language is the tool that enables self-assessment and continued growth.

Likewise, during peer review, students might say, “I see you write many SV sentences...There

doesn't seem to be any other type of simple sentences, and I don't see any compound sentences.” This type of elaborated feedback can be very powerful in promoting skill development in each trait. SIM fills in the gaps.

As SIM teachers and trainers, it is imperative that we understand how SIM works with other initiatives. We need to weave connections and offer sufficient opportunities for others to find relevant applications. By examining the salient features of other initiatives, such as the 6+1 Trait model in our example, and thinking creatively about SIM, we can build powerful, integrated instruction to help students develop strong writing skills. ●

Students at school for deaf find success with strategies

By **Amy Sturm**

Secondary Language Arts instructor, Council Bluffs, Iowa

The Iowa School for the Deaf (ISD) is a state residential school for deaf and hard of hearing children in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The primary mode of communication for students at ISD is American Sign Language (ASL). Teachers give all instruction in sign language; communication is of a very visual nature.

Written English and the through-the-air communication of sign language present some obvious challenges. ISD teachers were seeing that students were struggling with transforming their visual language to written communication. Teachers wanted to enable students to be effective and efficient writers of the English language. Middle school teacher Lorie Horn had taken a workshop in the *Sentence Writing Strategy*. She started using these strategies with her students and saw positive results. Lorie shared these results with other staff members, and a sentence and paragraph writing workshop was held last summer.

In the 2001-2002 school year, results have been amazing! The commitment of students, staff, and administration to create a strategic environment at ISD has proven to be most exciting.

Teachers and staff from elementary to high school levels report how the structure provided by the CRL writing strategies allow students to take the visual language of ASL and form a complete, written thought in English word order. Students are now identifying parts of speech and their importance with much improved accuracy. They are able to develop a variety of sentences and experience success with their written products. This success has propelled them to feel more self-confidence in their written work and have a strong strategic approach when faced with writing tasks.

ISD is fortunate to have such a committed staff. Teachers met throughout this past school year to share ideas and challenges that came up as the strategies were implemented. One adjustment staff had to make was to create signs to go with the concepts presented in the material. Also, some of the activities teachers developed to use with students are included with this article (see pages 6 and 7).

The students at ISD now feel more confident with their written mode of communication. ISD has experienced the equation of...

CRL Strategies
+ *Effort*
= *SUCCESS!*

Sentence Writing cheat sheet

Mary Barrett, a reading teacher from St. Paul, Minnesota, created the Sentence Writing Cheat Sheet on page 5 so students would have a compact way to take notes on the key aspects of the strategy.

Mary gives students a 4x6 card to use in class as their formula card. On one side, they write the four sentence types and their formulas; on the other, they create the cheat sheet.

If students are unable to create their own, Mary copies the cheat sheet for them to put in their student folders.

Students use the cheat sheet as a study tool when they are reviewing with their homework partners.

The version of the card that appears on page 5 includes adaptations by Can-dice Hollingsead, assistant professor, Mankato, Minnesota.

Coordinating Conjunctions connect equal ideas (FANBOYS)

, for = because
 , and = added to
 , nor = not one or the other
 , but = opposite
 , or = choose one or other
 , yet = but
 , so = get a result

Subordinating Conjunctions connect a dependent idea with an independent idea

after since
 although even though
 as if in order that
 as long as just as
 as soon as like
 as though once
 because provided
 before rather than

Simple Sentence

- 1 independent clause
- subject (noun) and predicate (verb)
- complete thought

SV SSV
 SVV SSV

Compound Sentence

- 2 or more independent clauses

I,cl I;I

Complex Sentence

- 1 independent clause
- 1 or more dependent clauses (subject and predicate but cannot stand alone)

ID D,I

Compound-Complex Sentence

- 2 or more independent clauses
- 1 or more dependent clauses

D,I,cl D,I;I
 ID,cl ID;I
 I,clID I;ID

BE Verbs
 (helping verbs)
 be
 being
 been

Linking Verbs
 (helping verbs)
 am
 is
 are
 was
 were

Helping Verbs

C	h	a	d	B.	S	w	i	m	23
can	has	am	do	be	shall	was	is	may	
could	have	are	did	been	should	were	might	might	
	had		does	being		will	must	must	
						would			

Pick a formula.
Explore words to fit the formula.
Note the words.
Search and check.

Infinitive
 to + verb
Never a predicate

Not and **Never** =
 adverbs
 (never verbs!)

Verb Action

- physical
- mental

Noun Phrase = simple subject + words that describe subject
Verb Phrase = action or state of being verb + helping verbs

In the Classroom

Form A

1	2	3	4	5
Name the 5 rules for complete sentences.	Name the PENS steps.	Name the PENS + MARK steps.	Name the linking verbs.	Name five body action verbs.
6	7	8	9	10
Name five mind action verbs.	Write 5 sentences with action verbs and label the subject and verb.	Write 5 sentences with linking verbs and label the subject and verb.	Write 5 infinitive phrases.	Write 5 prepositional phrases.
11	12	13	14	15
Name the 4 sentence formulas.	Write an SV sentence and label it.	Name five antonym pairs.	Write an SLV (are) sentence.	Name five synonym pairs.
16	17	18	19	20
Write an SSV sentence and label it.	Write an SSVV sentence and label it.	Name five nouns.	Name five adjectives.	Write an SVV sentence and label it.
21	22	23	24	25
Name five common nouns.	Write five irregular plural nouns and their singular noun form.	Name the three articles.	Name two present tense verbs and their past tense forms.	Name two irregular verbs and their past tense forms.
26	27	28	29	30
Name five adverbs.	Name five proper nouns.	Name five helping verbs.	Write an SLV (were) sentence and label it.	Write an SSV "inf" sentence and label it.
31	32	33	34	35
Write an exclamatory sentence.	Write a declarative sentence.	Write an imperative sentence.	Write an interrogative sentence.	Write the 7 subject pronouns.

Developed by teachers at the Iowa School for the Deaf, Council Bluffs, Iowa

Sentence writing activities developed by teachers at the Iowa School for the Deaf, Council Bluffs, Iowa

Form A Activity

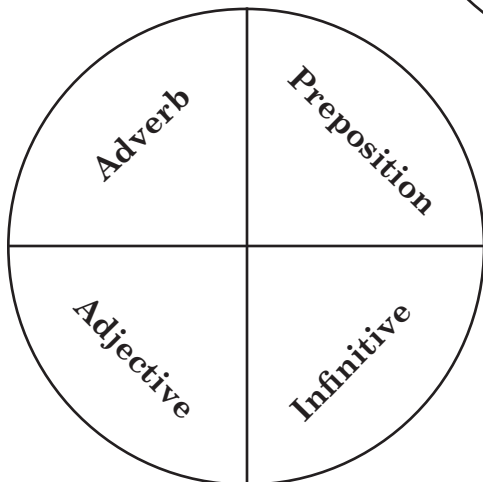
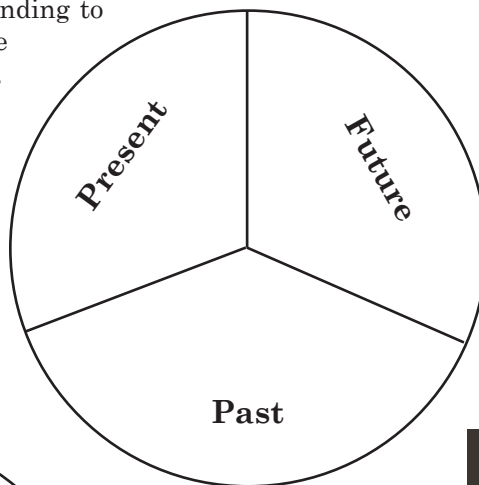
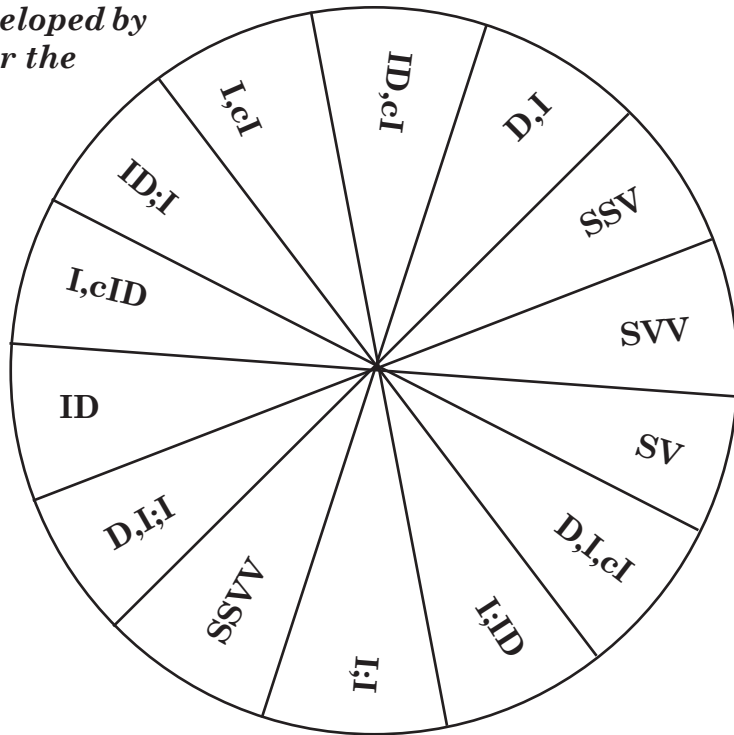
This activity is used as a review activity. Each student has a copy of Form A (see page 6). Teachers pick a number, and students complete the task on their individual copy according to the chosen number.

Sentence Wheels

This activity is used to create and review sentences. Students use a spinner to pick a sentence formula, a verb tense, and a part of speech (see the sentence wheels on this page). Once they have their choices, they compose the sentence.

Dice Formulas

In this activity, students roll a die and write a sentence corresponding to the formula represented by the number. (For example, 1 = SV, 2 = SSV, 3 = I,cI.) Sentence formulas can be changed depending on the student's ability.



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