

SIM in the Classroom

Ideas presented during 2003 conference

During the 2003 International SIM Conference, many participants shared wonderfully innovative ideas for Strategic Instruction Model instruction. This issue contains a sampling of some of these ideas. The conference also celebrated the 25th anniversary of the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning. To see highlights of the celebration, visit CRL's web site, www.kucrl.org/25thanniversary.

4Teachers Tools

Presented by **Erica Schaapveld**, Educational Support Technologist, Center for Research on Learning—Advanced Learning Technologies (ALTEC) division

- Integrating technology into classrooms
 - Colorful activities
- Strategies in general education classrooms
- Books and comics
- Collaboration resources

Erica demonstrated a number of tools developed to help teachers integrate technology into their classrooms. The tools were developed by the 4teachers team of the High Plains Regional Technology in Education Consortium (HPR*TEC).

All HPR*TEC and 4teachers tools are free and available on the HPR*TEC web site, www.hprtec.org. Or you can go directly to the 4teachers web site, www.4teachers.org.

- [TrackStar](#) helps instructors organize and annotate Web sites for use in lessons. Teachers can include instructions or questions for students to answer as they view the Web sites. TrackStar includes a database of more than 150,000 online lesson plans and activities. Teachers can customize existing tracks to meet the needs of their own classroom or create their own tracks.
- [QuizStar](#) offers a tool for teachers to make online quizzes in a variety of formats (multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank). It even allows teachers to set time limits for students taking

the quiz and offers an option of having results e-mailed.

- [RTEC Teacher](#) is a hierarchical search index. Teachers choose a subject, theme, and topic, and RTEC Teacher retrieves all the educational links 4teachers has to such resources as WebQuests (a form of project-based and problem-based learning in which the resources and, often, tasks are located on the Web), ThinkQuests (an online program that challenges students to develop educational Web sites for K-12 curriculum), and Explorer (a collection of educational resources—lab activities, lesson plans, and curricular material—for K-12 teachers to use when teaching science and mathematics).
- [Web Worksheet Wizard](#) allows teachers to make Web pages without knowing HTML. Teachers can include assignments, resources, and links. Web Worksheet Wizard includes a searchable database, allowing teachers to borrow or build on other teachers' worksheets.
- [Casa Notes](#) is designed to allow teach-

ers to quickly make, and customize, typical notes that are sent home to parents or given to students. It includes templates for common forms, such as field trip permission forms, awards, or medication. The tool even includes a button that will automatically translate the note into Spanish.

- **Rubistar** is a tool to help teachers make rubrics. Teachers choose rubrics from a list of templates and then customize them, including choosing the rating scale, categories, and other options. Rubistar rubrics may be printed or saved, and the tool offers a way for teachers to analyze results after grading is completed. Rubistar is available in English and Spanish.
- **Project-Based Learning Checklist** gives teachers templates to start making checklists for students. It includes checklists for written reports, multimedia projects, oral presentations, and science projects. Like Rubistar, PBL Checklist is available in English and Spanish.
- **NoteStar** is another project-based learning tool. It is a great way to teach students how to start taking and organizing notes as they prepare for research papers.
- **Think Tank** teaches students (mainly third- through seventh-graders) how to take a topic, narrow it, and break it down into subtopics. Think Tank helps students create an outline, which can be exported

to NoteStar.

- **Notable Pics** allows teachers to upload their own pictures, or those for which they have copyright permission, to use as the basis of Web-based lessons. This tool allows teachers to identify “hot spots” in the picture and add pertinent facts about that spot.
- **Assign-a-Day** is a tool teachers can use to create online calendars for each of their classes. The calendar can display assignments and information students need to know.

For all of the 4teachers tools, teachers’ work is saved on the HPR*TEC server, saving space on school computers and allowing teachers to access the products from any computer.

Erica noted that the 4teachers web site (www.4teachers.org) contains many other resources, such as information about grants, special education, and professional development opportunities.

*HPR*TEC is one of 10 RTECs funded by the U.S. Department*

of Education. Its region consists of Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.



TrackStar

<http://trackstar.hprtec.org/>

QuizStar

<http://quizstar.4teachers.org/>

RTEC Teacher

<http://4teachers.org/intech/lessons/>

Web Worksheet Wizard

<http://wizard.hprtec.org/>

Casa Notes

<http://casanotes.4teachers.org/>

Rubistar

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>

Project-Based Learning Checklist

<http://4teachers.org/projectbased/>

Think Tank

<http://thinktank.4teachers.org/>

Notable Pics

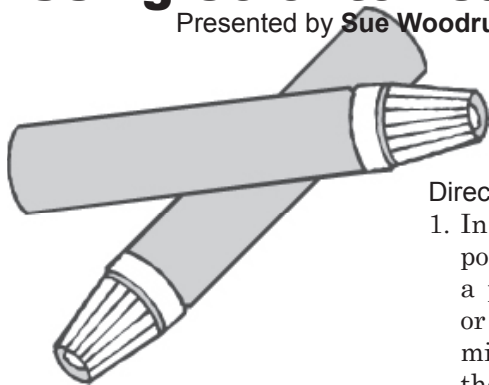
<http://notablepics.4teachers.org/>

Assign-a-Day

<http://assignaday.4teachers.org/>

Using Color to Teach Main Ideas & Teamwork

Presented by Sue Woodruff, Independent Consultant, Muskegon, Michigan



Sue blended the ideas of two other educators to develop this idea to reinforce strategy instruction for students. This activity is intended to be used as practice—either guided or group practice. It is not intended to be instructional in nature.

In her handouts for the session, Sue wrote, “I want to give credit to two people who really came up with these ideas: Mary Barrett, creator and author of HUG: The Highlighting Strategy, and Frank Slubowski, a middle school special education teacher in the Detroit area who shared his wonderful idea with me. I simply melded the two ideas together!”

Objectives for Activity

1. Practice narrowing down main ideas in an article or section of text.
2. Practice discussing main ideas and coming to agreement with a partner or consensus with a group on the main ideas.

Materials Needed

- One yellow marker per student
- One blue marker per student
- Duplicated handout that students can highlight

Directions

1. Instruct students to read a portion of the text. It can be a paragraph, section, page, or whatever length is determined to be appropriate for the students’ grade and ability levels.
2. Give each student a yellow marker. Instruct them to highlight the main ideas in the specified portion of text.
3. The first time through, Sue recommends “DO”ing the next part with the students. Talk about the text and share ideas. Nail down exactly the text that contains the main idea. Sue notes that if she is having students practice RAP, she makes sure each paragraph contains only one main idea statement.
4. When the group comes to agreement on the main idea, ask students to highlight that section using their blue highlighters. Like magic, the main idea turns green if the student had identified it correctly on his or her own (highlighted with the yellow marker in Step 2).
5. Have students continue reading and highlighting independently with yellow highlighters and then group them to come to final decisions.

Students Liked It!

Sue and her colleagues used this activity in a ninth-grade physical science general education classroom. The students really enjoyed it. They performed it multiple times and found that the students became engaged in the reading and thought seriously about identifying the main idea. Something about highlighting and the color was highly appealing to the students, Sue said.

Teachers Liked It!

In a general education classroom with large numbers of students, it is imperative that students are engaged in the activities and that management is not a huge issue. The teachers really liked this strategy because it was easy to take a brief look at the students’ papers and get a quick idea of how students were doing with finding main ideas, Sue said.

If a student has the color:

- Green only, it means that he or she is doing perfectly or is pretty much on target.
- Green and some yellow, the student found the main idea but also is highlighting too much text. This is the norm initially, it seems. “We tell the students ‘No more than 20 percent of text.’ We want them to carve it down to the minimal amount. It gets to be a game,” Sue said.
- Yellow and blue only, it means that the student completely missed the main idea. The student is focusing on details and does not yet understand the concept of main idea.

Teaching Sentence & Paragraph Writing in General Education

Presented by **Bev Colombo**, Instructional Facilitator, Staff Development, Special School District, St. Louis, Missouri, & **Kim Toebe**, Resource Teacher, Ballwin, Missouri

Bev and Kim collected the following ideas (among many) from a number of sources. Thank you to the following contributors, in addition to Bev and Kim: Victoria Cotsworth, Brent Grimes, Mandy Horton, Janet Jones, Jerri Neduchal, Margie Motzel, Sue Nolan, Jean Piazza, Shari Schindele, Rosemary Tralli, Sue Woodruff, and Gail Wulff.

Management

Practice exercises and managing large group instruction

- Use the first exercise (for example, 1A) as guided practice for the whole group and then assign the second practice (1B) as independent practice; if students do not reach mastery on that exercise, provide individual or small group feedback, and then assign the third exercise as homework. Students who still do not reach mastery can work in a small group the next day before the large group moves on to the next practice.
- Classwide peer tutoring: Students complete the exercise with a peer, alternating as the tutor and the tutee. For example, one student completes No. 1 on the practice sheet and explains the response. The second student checks the other's work and provides positive or corrective feedback. Students alternate roles for items 2 through 10.
- Cooperative learning groups:

Each student completes one item on the exercise and explains his or her response; the other students discuss the response and provide feedback. When students have completed the first exercise together, they each complete the second one independently to show they have independent mastery of the skills or concepts.

- Differentiated instruction: Students complete the exercises as part of centers or tiered assignments, then move to an enrichment center/assignment if they have mastered an exercise. This method works particularly well in co-taught classes in which one or both teachers can work with centers or small groups.
- Editing for advanced prac-

tice:

—*Editor Center*: Students learn editing symbols and take turns being the editor for other students who come to the center (or students who have reached mastery assist other students with editing)

—*Peer Editing*: Students learn editing symbols, and partners edit each other's work and provide feedback.

Generalization

- Students keep a portfolio of work from their general education classes that demonstrates mastery of sentence, paragraph, and theme writing; each quarter, they discuss their work with the teacher. The portfolio also can be used in conjunction with student-led conferences for parent conferences.



In the Classroom

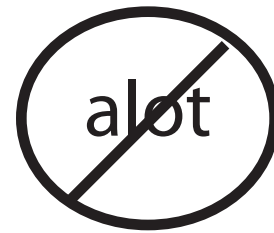
Providing scaffolding and improving quality

- **Gallery Walk:**

1. Post chart paper in several locations around the room.
2. Divide students into small groups. If you have 24 students and six chart papers, for example, divide the students into six groups of four students each.
3. Ask each group to write a sentence together on the chart paper following a specified formula, such as SV or I;I.
4. Ask each group to check its own sentence.
5. Next, ask students to move to the next chart paper and check or change the

last group's sentence. For example, you might ask students to Search and Check the sentence and then change it to a different formula.

6. Continue asking groups to move around the room, performing other strategy-related tasks, such as improving word choice.
- Use children's literature that contains no words (for example, *The Good Dog, Carl*) to create word banks. Ask small groups of students to write words for each page of the book; students must coordinate with each other to create a story with the same tense, point of view, etc.



- Ask students to make “No” signs for words that are over-used or improper (for example, “alot”). Also ask students to list other words they can substitute.
- Use professional writing (magazine and newspaper articles, for example) as models for sentences, paragraphs, and essays or as samples to proof for errors. Students enjoy finding errors in published

Books, Games, & Comics to Teach Strategies

Presented by **Barb Glaeser**, Assistant Professor, California State University at Fullerton

Barb shared some of her favorite materials to use when teaching Learning Strategies to students. Here is a sample.

Reading

- Macaulay, David. *Motel of the Mysteries*. Houghton Mifflin. It's a great book for teaching main ideas and details for paraphrasing and for making predictions for self-questioning. Older students love it.
- Young, Ed. *Seven Blind Mice*. This book helps students understand visual imagery.
- Winter, Jeanette. *Follow the Drinking Gourd*. Knopf/Random House. Read this book in stages and prompt students to use the *Self-Questioning* and *Visual Imagery* strategies.

Writing

- Stock, Gregory (1988). *The Kids Book of Questions*. Workman Publishing, NY. This book is a great source for interesting writing topics for older students. Note that some questions can be rather personal, so choose carefully.

Studying for tests

- Cole, Joanna (Varies). *The Magic School Bus*. Use with younger students for *FIRST-Letter Mnemonic* and *LINCS* vocabulary words.
- *Science Close-up-Golden Books*. Western Publishing Company.
- *Through the Microscope* series by Scholastic, Inc. Great sources for finding lists for *FIRST-Letter Mnemonic* and *LINCS* vocabulary words.

Motivating students to read

- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. Written by himself.
- Polacco, Patricia. *Thank you, Mr. Falker*. Philomel Books.

Activity

- Take any comic of interest to students. Cut out one panel, and replace the dialog with an empty speech bubble. Have students paraphrase the original dialog into the speech bubble. Make the empty speech bubble a bit bigger because student writing is bigger than comic-book text.



Content Enhancement & Powerof2.org: The Perfect Match

Presented by **Helen Barrier**, High Incidence Coordinator, Roanoke, Virginia

Helen, searching for good resources related to collaboration, discovered the **Powerof2.org**, a Web site developed at the University of Kansas. Power of 2 is a resource designed to help teachers successfully include students with special needs in the general education classroom.

Helen notes that project staff members are real teachers in real classrooms and that the site is available any time of day, making it easy for teachers to investigate on their own schedule.

Power of 2 is divided into seven parts:

- A **Feature Article**, which changes about once a quarter, spotlights something about inclusive practices and students with special needs in general education classrooms. Many times, Helen said, visitors to the site can contact the author directly with questions. The feature article section of the site also includes archives of past articles.
- **Teacher Vistas** are lesson plans collected from teachers across the country. Teachers may adapt a lesson to meet their needs or use a plan directly from the site.
- **Resources** are divided into elementary, middle, and high school. Each category is further divided into core subject areas. The resources page includes information about curriculum planning strategies and strategic instruction.
- **Online Training** modules are divided into five areas: program development, effective teaching, collaborative consultation, co-teaching, and teams. All results are stored in an online portfolio. An example of a module is the flexibility assessment. It allows pairs of teachers to discuss issues such as discipline and grading before they face their first classroom incident together.

- **Links** include lists of updated resources in categories of Teaching Resources, Professional Organizations, Technology, and Special Needs.

- **Forums** provide a place for teachers to post questions and concerns.
- **FAQs** are frequently asked questions about collaboration and inclusive practices. Examples of questions answered in the FAQs section are “How do teachers find time to plan?” and “What are the components of creating a successful program?” Teachers are invited to submit their own questions to this section.

In addition, a **Contact Us** page provides a way for teachers to

CEC Announcements

Nominate a Teacher for Disney’s American Teacher Awards:

Nominate an outstanding teacher for Disney’s American Teacher Awards. Honorees receive \$10,000, funds for their school, professional development, and participation in special award events. You can nominate a teacher (or yourself) by going to www.DisneyHand.com or calling 1-877-ATA-TEACH. It only takes a couple of minutes and nominations are anonymous. The deadline for nominations is **Oct. 3, 2003**. CEC is a member of the Selection Committee for the Disney American Teacher Awards.

CEC Wants Info – No Child Left Behind: CEC knows many of you are struggling to meet the demands of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). CEC would like to hear from you how NCLB and its Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) provision have affected you and your students. CEC will use this information as we work with Congress on the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to ensure education policy works for students with disabilities and special educators.

Please send CEC anecdotes of how NCLB/AYP has affected your students, you, and your school and your suggestions on how difficult situations deriving from education law can be improved (or just how education law can be improved). Send your comments to nclb@cec.sped.org



The Center for Research on Learning's web site is undergoing substantial renovation. Phase 1, a new look for the Home page, is completed.

The Home page now emphasizes all four CRL divisions:

- Institute for Effective Instruction: Developers of the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM), including Learning Strategies for students and Content Enhancement Routines for teachers.
- Advanced Learning Technologies: Furthering the advancement of learning technologies for people of all ages and redefining the learning experience through projects such as HPR*TEC, www.4kids.org, and www4teachers.com.
- Division of Adult Studies: Addressing issues in the transition, education, employment, and quality of life of adults with disabilities.

- e-Learning Design Lab: Exploring new uses of technology to enhance learning environments that meet the educational and training needs of society.

The CRL Home page features a combination of new and familiar links:

- Our Story is a narrative describing how CRL was born
- History links to The CRL History Project web site. We began this project during the past year as we celebrated CRL's 25th anniversary. We continue to build the history site, adding success stories and testimonials about the effectiveness of SIM.
- Publications and Products are familiar links to materials produced by CRL. The Products link has been expanded to include information about all CRL divisions.

- CRL Connections is a new, electronic newsletter developed for CRL staff. Because it frequently contains information others outside of CRL may be interested in, we are making it available on the web site. It is published once a month, except during the summer.

- CRL Brochure. This brochure may be downloaded in pdf format or viewed online.
- And of course, the site prominently features links to Strategic Instruction Model information and how to contact CRL.

In the coming weeks, we will continue the redesign of the CRL web site and prepare to launch a new site for CRL's Institute for Effective Instruction.

Check www.kucrl.org often to watch us grow!

Strategram

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