

StrategramTM

Strategic Instruction Model

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SIM in Virginia

Project to build capacity in state

Julie Tollefson
KU-CRL

Students across the state of Virginia will be introduced to “Kansas strategies” thanks to a new collaboration between the state and KU’s Center for Research on Learning.

Instructional components of CRL’s Strategic Instruction Model will play a key role in Virginia’s effort to improve the quality of services for students with disabilities. SIM’s comprehensive approach to adolescent literacy has garnered national attention for its proven effectiveness and strong research base, and many Virginia teachers have successfully used SIM interventions for years. The new project will expand SIM’s presence to benefit even more students across the state.

Virginia has received a State Improvement Grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs for this project. CRL’s share of the project represents about 75 percent of the total award, according to co-principal investigator Keith Lenz, director of CRL’s Institute for Effective Instruction and associate professor in KU’s Department of Special Education.

CRL and Virginia educators will collaborate on three main goals during the three years of the SIG project. CRL’s Barbara Ehren is the project coordinator, working directly with the schools, universities, and state-level personnel in Virginia.

In work on the first goal, CRL-guided teams will establish comprehensive SIM

programs in four pilot schools—one middle school and one high school in each of two sites—that serve high percentages of at-risk students. The teams will ground their work in the Content Literacy Continuum framework developed at CRL.

The Content Literacy Continuum describes five increasingly intensive levels of literacy support that should be in place in every secondary school. The supports range from tools to help classroom teachers promote understanding of and mastery of content for all students to specialized clinical options provided by speech pathologists for students with underlying language disorders.

Under the CLC framework, virtually everyone in a school has a role to play in literacy instruction, though individual roles differ to meet the need for different levels of intensity of instruction.

The second goal of the project targets university faculty in Virginia who are involved in teacher preparation. Over the course of the project, staff expect to work with 50 faculty members to incorporate SIM materials into their teacher preparation courses.

The third main goal of the project will expand the capacity of a network of individuals who provide professional development workshops related to SIM and CLC to schools and districts. At present, the SIM Professional Development Network



consists of more than 1,000 members representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Guam, India, and Thailand. More than 30 members of the network are based in Virginia.

“We want to expand the number of SIM Professional Developers across the state who can work with schools to implement CLC and plant the seeds for beginning CLC work in secondary schools across the state,” Keith says.

CRL will work in concert with Virginia’s Special Education Training and Technical Assistance Centers to prepare new SIM Professional Developers in key regions. Ultimately, this expansion will support use of SIM components in classrooms across the state.

In addition to these three main goals, the project includes a significant investment in technology. CRL will develop on-line professional development activities as well as a web-based repository of instructional materials to support classroom teachers.

Co-principal investigator Don Deshler, director of the Center for Research on Learning, notes that the Virginia project holds increased significance in light of recent education laws, such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

“I see the core elements of this proposal as being in concert with important federal and state mandates and positioned to address some of the most pressing educational needs facing students with disabilities,” Don says.

Levels of the Content Literacy Continuum

Level 1: Ensuring mastery of critical content in all subject area classes

Subject-matter teachers use tools such as graphic organizers and other instructional tactics to promote understanding and mastery of content for all students.

Level 2: Weaving learning strategies within rigorous general education classes

Teachers incorporate into their content classes instruction in selected learning strategies, such as the Paraphrasing Strategy, a set of specific steps to follow when paraphrasing reading materials.

Level 3: Supporting mastery of learning strategies for targeted students

Students with literacy problems receive specialized, intensive instruction from someone other than the subject-matter teacher (special education teacher, study skills teacher, resource room teacher).

Level 4: Developing intensive instructional options for students who lack foundational skills

Students learn content literacy skills through specialized, direct, and intensive instruction from reading specialists and special education teachers.

Level 5: Developing intensive clinical options for language interventions

Students with underlying language disorders receive individual or small-group language therapy from speech pathologists in collaboration with other support personnel teaching literacy skills.

Adolescent Literacy Resources

One topic of much recent discussion in the education field is the requirement for schools to use research-based materials and methods in their classrooms. SIM—which has evolved through more than 25 years of research, development, and refinement—is perfectly positioned to respond to schools’ needs for research-based instruction in the area of adolescent literacy.

Two reports that illustrate SIM’s relevance in this regard have been released recently. Each report has been prepared under the auspices of the Alliance for Excellent Education, a bipartisan policy advocacy organization dedicated to improving secondary education at the national level.

- *Adolescents and Literacy: Reading for the 21st Century* describes what we know about adolescent literacy and the challenges schools are facing in addressing this growing problem (currently there are 8.7 million 4th- through 12th-graders whose chances for academic success are dismal because they can’t read and comprehend the materials in their textbooks).

↳ You may download this report from the Alliance for Excellent Education web site: http://www.all4ed.org/adolescent_literacy/

- *Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy* lays out a set of recommendations for how to meet the needs of adolescents who struggle with literacy. CRL’s Don Deshler was a member of a five-member panel that developed this report, which provides superb rationales for the approach that SIM takes toward adolescent literacy.

Many of the 15 recommendations have been strongly influenced by the work of CRL (specifically, recommendations 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 15).

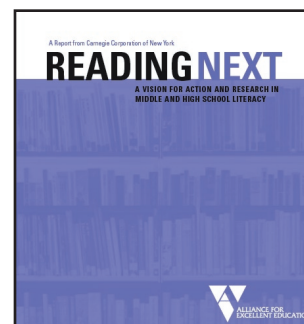
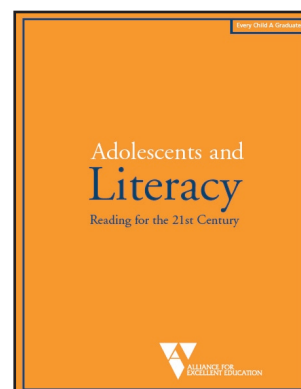
The Content Literacy Continuum is summarized in the second paragraph on page 22.

The citations listed in Appendix A for each of the 15 factors liberally lists CRL citations.

Finally, this report has been endorsed by all of the federal agencies that support adolescent literacy research as well as the major private foundations that fund adolescent literacy initiatives.

↳ You may download this report from the Alliance for Excellent Education web site: <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/ReadingNext/index.html>

These reports are great resources for you to improve your background knowledge and understanding of adolescent literacy. Additional adolescent literacy reports that are available on the Internet are listed on page 4.



Additional Adolescent Literacy Reports Available on the Web

○ Developing Adolescent Literacy in High Poverty Middle Schools: The Impact of Talent Development's Reforms Across Multiple Years and Sites (2004) (Johns Hopkins University)

↳ <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/tdms/> (Select "Results and Research," then "Developing Adolescent Literacy")

○ Adolescent Literacy and the Achievement Gap: What Do We Know and Where Do We Go From Here? (2003) (Carnegie Corporation of New York)

↳ www.all4ed.org/resources/CarnegieAdolescentLiteracyReport.pdf

○ Coaching: A Strategy for Developing Instructional Capacity (2003) (Aspen Institute)

↳ <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/images/Coaching.pdf>

○ Seeing Themselves as Capable and Engaged Readers: Adolescents and Re/Mediated Instruction (2003) (Donna E. Alvermann, Ph.D., University of Georgia)

↳ <http://www.ncrel.org/litweb/readers/readers.pdf>

○ Supporting Young Adolescents' Literacy Learning: A Position Paper (2002) (International Reading Association and National Middle School Association)

↳ http://www.nmsa.org/news/final_position_paper_to_boards.pdf

○ Adolescent Literacy: Encouraging the Development of Adolescent Readers (2002) (National Council of Teachers of English)

↳ http://www.ncte.org/library/files/Profdev/onsite/RI/OV_AR.pdf

○ The Urban High School's Challenge: Ensuring Literacy for Every Child (2002) (Carnegie Corporation of New York)

↳ <http://www.carnegie.org/pdf/literacy.pdf>

○ Reading for Understanding: Toward an R&D Program in Reading Comprehension (2002) (RAND Reading Study Group)

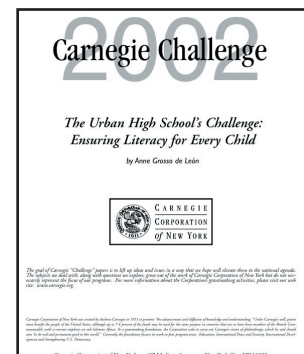
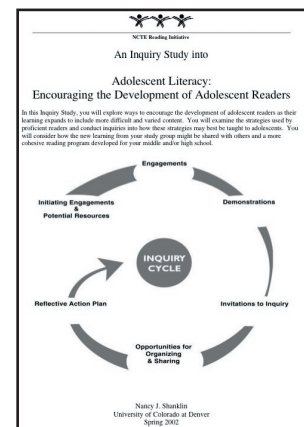
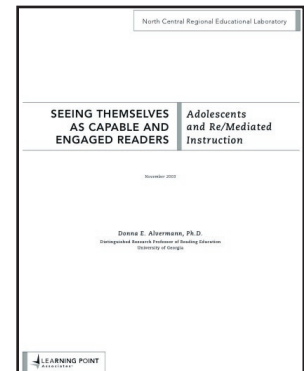
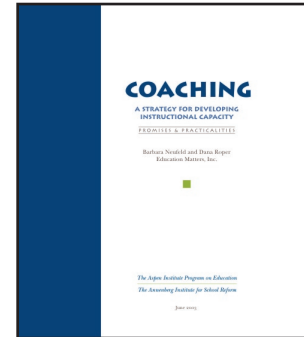
↳ <http://www.rand.org/cgi-bin/Abstracts/ordi/getabbydoc.pl?doc=MR-1465>

○ Teaching Children to Read: Reports of the Subgroups (2000) (National Reading Panel)

↳ <http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/subgroups.htm>

○ Teaching Children to Read: Summary Report (2000) (National Reading Panel)

↳ <http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/summary.htm>



The Sentence Checklist

Tia McCauley, a SIM Professional Developer and LD teacher from Marshall, Virginia, developed this extra checklist that helps her students remember more detailed information when identifying subjects and verbs.

Follow These Steps for Every Sentence

1. Highlight all **ANDs**.
2. **Circle punctuation and conjunctions** (coordinating and subordinating) in the middle of sentences...if any.
3. Cross off **TOs** (infinitives) and words after it or to the punctuation mark.
4. Cross off **ly** words.
5. Cross off **NOTs**.
 - a. Generally words on both sides link together.
6. Look for verbs.
7. Look for helping verbs in front of and behind the verb.
 - a. Verbs **do not come after** “a,” “an,” or “the.”
8. Underline from the verb to the end of the sentence.
9. Subjects generally will not be in the underlined portion unless
 - a. The sentence is a question.
 - b. The sentence begins with “here” or “there.”
10. Words that end with **'s** are not subjects.
11. Search and Check

Hot off the presses

New CRL publications provide tools for evaluating programs, answers to administrators' questions

Program evaluation

A Rubric for Educating Adolescents with Disabilities (READ) is now available from KU-CRL.

Preparing students with disabilities to succeed in rigorous general education classes and to meet standards as reflected in state outcome assessments is an exceedingly challenging assignment for all teachers and administrators.

The magnitude of this challenge was heightened with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that requires that the education of all children be grounded in “scientifically based practices.”

The READ has been developed to help those who are responsible for providing the highest quality education to students with disabilities. It can be used to build a profile of the special education program currently in place to determine areas of strength and targeted areas for improvement.

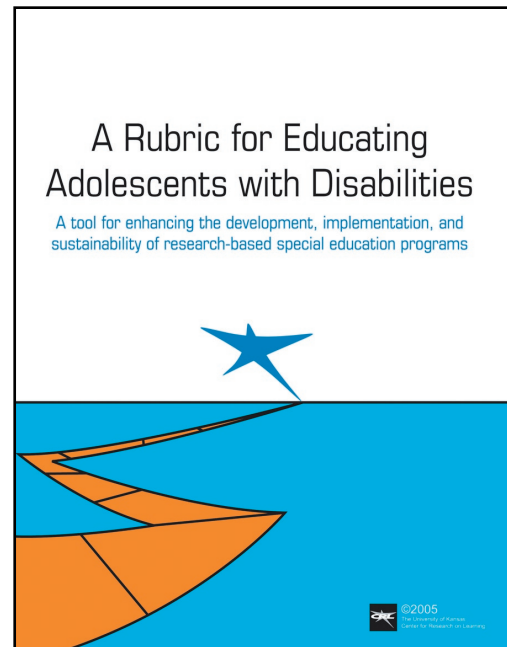
The purpose of the READ is to provide a tool for school districts, administrators, directors, and individual teachers to use to enhance the development, implementation, and sustainability of research-based special education programs.

The tool can be used to profile instructional programs for students with disabilities who are expected to earn standard high school diplomas in their district.

The READ allows school personnel to analyze their special education programs in five main areas:

1. Program design
2. Staff skills
3. Basic learning skills
4. Advanced learning skills
5. Independent adult skills

The READ is available at a cost of \$10.



How to order

To order either the *Rubric for Educating Adolescents with Disabilities* or packages of the *Strategic Instruction for Administrators* brochure, contact KU-CRL's order desk, 785.864.0617.

Answering administrators' questions

KU-CRL's *Strategic Instruction for Administrators* brochure, which features frequently asked questions and their answers, has been updated. The revised brochure includes a new description of the Content Literacy Continuum.

This one-page brochure briefly describes KU-CRL and SIM and then answers the following questions:

- How do curriculum standards developed by the state or district fit with SIM interventions?
- How does SIM respond to current education laws?
- Which schools have used SIM?
- How does a school become more "strategic" oriented?
- How can a whole school or district approach literacy strategically?
- How does a teacher learn how to teach SIM interventions?
- Are SIM interventions only for students who have learning disabilities?
- How long does it take for students to master Learning Strategies?
- What kind of progress will students make in their overall schoolwork?
- How much does this cost?

The brochures are available in packages of 20 for \$5.



Q
&A

STRATEGIC INSTRUCTION
for administrators

School boards, legislatures, taxpayers, and the community increasingly want more educational returns on their financial investment. They want to be shown that schools are doing what works.

The Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) developed by the Center for Research on Learning of the University of Kansas is a research-validated instructional model that achieves measurable results by reversing the downward spiral through which so many at-risk and special education students go.

Many state special education departments, thousands of school districts, and 400 colleges and universities use SIM.

SIM integrates two kinds of interventions designed to address the gap between what students are expected to do and what students are able to do.

Using a "how to learn" approach, SIM's student-focused interventions, including specific Learning Strategies, enable students to generalize from one task and situation to others. SIM includes tactics and skills that can be used to gain information from texts efficiently, to perform more accurately on tests, to write more clearly, to present written work more attractively, to spell more accurately, and to perform math operations more efficiently, in short, SIM enables students to deal more effectively with the process of learning.

SIM's teacher-focused interventions, called Content Enhancement Routines, encourage teachers to teach more effectively by helping them think about, adapt, and present their most important content in learner-friendly fashion.

To date, more than 40 instructional programs have been validated through numerous research studies and developed into instructional materials appropriate for teacher use in the classroom.

A schoolwide approach for integrating SIM and other validated literacy programs to improve adolescent literacy can be accomplished through a schoolwide model developed by KU-CRL, called the Content Literacy Continuum. This model defines a continuum of instructional intensity that serves as a literacy-based framework for guiding school improvement and professional development.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do curriculum standards developed by the state or district fit with SIM interventions?

A. Documented research shows SIM has had a positive effect on achievement scores. For example, 94 percent of students using SIM strategies in a large urban high school in Michigan passed the state writing assessment; students from schools with a comparable socioeconomic status had a 74.5 percent success rate on the same test. Vocabulary performance, another key demand on competency tests, has been shown to be greatly enhanced by the use of SIM interventions. National standards, too, emphasize higher-order problem-solving and thinking skills, both of which are at the heart of SIM.

Q. How does SIM respond to current education laws?

A. Not only are schools now required to show student gains, they also have to prove that they use teaching methods grounded in research. Evidence-based practices are key features in such education legislation as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Extensive research, which has been reviewed by scientific panels at the U.S. Department of Education and other public agencies, demonstrates that use of SIM interventions can improve student performance in inclusive settings or on grade-appropriate tests. Leading academic publications have documented SIM findings. [See www.kucrl.org/publications]

To learn more about SIM, contact the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning
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Excerpt

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