

Napoleon and SIM teachers

—successful strategists—

Keith Lenz

Research Associate

Napoleon could shape an army that was victorious in battle. In fact, he was so successful that his military strategies are still studied by cadets in military training programs around the world. Although we may not be accustomed to equating modern educational efforts to military actions, the principles underlying Napoleon's successful military strategies are the same as those used in successfully teaching strategies to students.

What were Napoleon's secrets?

1. He had to think like the enemy commanders in order to develop and execute plans for achieving the specific goal. To develop such plans, he had to know as much as possible about the enemy and the setting.
2. He assessed the strengths and weaknesses of his own army so he could develop a strategy that would best meet the battle challenge and ultimately defeat the enemy.
3. Into this grand strategy, he infused many small-scale tactics to be used during various stages of battle. Collectively these served to accomplish the larger vision—success over the enemy.
4. He generalized the basic elements of a well-developed strategy that is understood and well executed to any number of enemy confrontations with modifications for specific circumstances, settings, and individuals.

What IS a strategy?

Strategies for learning are similar to the military strategies

used by Napoleon. An individual's approach to a task is called a strategy—how the person **thinks** and **acts** when planning, executing, and evaluating performance on a task and its outcome. In other words, a strategy guides us in how to learn and how to perform.

Like a military strategy, the strategies used by students to accomplish a task can be successful or unsuccessful. To be successful, a strategy must be **effective** and **efficient**. Napoleon's military strategy was successful if he won the battle (effective) and had few losses in terms of men and supplies (efficient). A student would be using a successful strategy if an "A" was earned on a test and little time and help were required to do so.

Much of Napoleon's success rested in his ability to **change** his strategy to accommodate changing situations. Likewise, a strategy must be "adapted" by an individual through varied practice so that the individual can apply the strategy flexibly across situations and demands.

Strategy or Skill?

Military training places great emphasis on the skill levels of the forces. As a result, time is spent drilling and practicing movements and working for mastery of basic weaponry. The success of a military strategy is dependent on the skills of the forces involved, and it maximizes whatever skills the forces possess.

Strategies employed in academic situations also require mastery and application of basic skills. These basic skills are often embedded in the strategy as a set of steps or a procedure for meeting a specific demand. A strategy

(continued on page 2)



Marianne Dean

—high school resource teacher—

Marianne Dean, a high school resource specialist at **Rolling Hills High School** in Rolling Hills Estates, California, has been nominated by SIM trainer, **Ginger Williams**, for commendable implementation and training of SIM.

Training

Until 1979 when she began her high school teaching career, Marianne had worked primarily with elementary students. She received SIM training during the 1984-85 school year, and in 1987 qualified as a SIM trainer. In this role, Marianne wrote and implemented a Mentor Teacher proposal whereby she trained all her district's intermediate and secondary special education teachers in SIM. After training the *Paraphrasing Strategy* and the *Sentence Writing Strategy* this past year, she is currently planning to train the *Error Monitoring Strategy*, the *Test-Taking Strategy*, and the *Education Planning Strategy*.

Implementation

Marianne provides 28 students with either monitoring services, if the students are totally mainstreamed, or direct instruction if partially mainstreamed. Learning strategies instruction is an important part of the curriculum. During the 1987-88 school year, Marianne's strategy instruction included the *Paraphrasing*

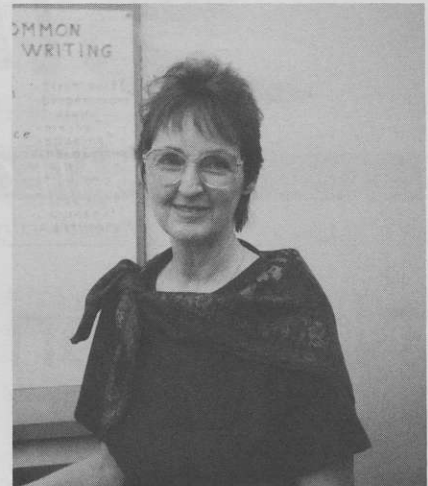
Strategy, the *FIRST-Letter Mnemonic Strategy*, the *Sentence Writing Strategy*, the *Education Planning Strategy*, and the *ASSET Social Skills Program for Adolescents*. The *Test-Taking Strategy* and more of the *Social Skills Program* will be added during the 1988-89 school year.

Management

According to Marianne: "The key to teaching such an assortment of strategies at one time is organization."

'The key to teaching such an assortment of strategies at one time is organization.'

Students have individual assignment sheets which are handed out at the beginning of the period. To keep materials organized, each student has at least one 3-ring Strategies notebook with dividers. These notebooks remain in the room near the door. Labeled file folders containing materials for each strategy are accessible in individual portable file



boxes such as 'Banker's Boxes', plastic milk crates, and so on. I have my own notebook for each strategy, and I use a class assignment sheet to keep track of where each student is in the sequence."

Enhancement

In addition to these management ideas, Marianne uses a button-making machine to create strategy buttons. Teachers are asked to wear buttons to arouse students' and/or mainstream teachers' interest when a new strategy is being introduced. Her students also wear the appropriate button as they practice the strategy, or they receive buttons as rewards for reaching mastery on the Verbal Rehearsal Step.

Note: Marianne developed the *Scoring Summary Sheet for the Sentence Writing Strategy* appearing in the *For the Classroom* column (p. 3) in this issue of **Strategram**.

... Napoleon and SIM teachers

also includes guidelines and rules for selecting the best procedures for a given problem and how to make decisions about its use. So a strategy can be a skill and much more.

Napoleon was interested in developing and using military strategies that would maximize the skill

levels of his forces and compensate for their weaknesses to win battles. Similarly, to win the battle of meeting the demands encountered in school and out-of-school settings, students must be concerned with acquiring strategies that will guide the selection and use of basic academic skills.

Strategram

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FOR THE CLASSROOM

Scoring Summary Sheet for the *Sentence Writing Strategy*

Marianne uses this *Scoring Summary Sheet* as a quick reference when scoring student work. When scoring Grade-Appropriate Practice for each sentence type, please refer to *The Sentence Writing Strategy Instructor's Manual* for additional criteria that must be met for mastery.

		Pretest	INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL PAGE NUMBER (p.)
	100%	complete sentences	(p. 15)
	50%	complicated sentences	
	66%	complicated sentences punctuated correctly sentence mix: 3 types of sentences	
Simple Sentences			
Controlled Practice	90%	on one lesson in each of the 1, 2, 3 series	(p. 48)
Grade-Appropriate Practice	100%	complete sentences sentence mix: all four kinds of simple sentences	(p. 53)
Generalization	100%	complete sentences	(p. 122)
	33%	sentences structured differently from S V	
Compound Sentences			
Controlled Practice	90%	lesson 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 series - see above	(p. 71)
Grade-Appropriate Practice	100%	complete sentences	(p. 73)
	33%	complicated sentences sentence mix: two compound sentences	
Generalization	100%	complete sentences	(p. 122)
	33%	complicated sentences sentence mix: two compound sentences	
	66%	complicated sentences punctuated correctly	
Complex Sentences			
Controlled Practice	90%	lesson 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 series - see above	(p. 88)
Grade-Appropriate Practice	100%	complete sentences	(p. 91)
	50%	complicated sentences sentence mix: one compound sentence and two complex sentences	
Generalization	66%	complicated sentences punctuated correctly	
	100%	complete sentences	(p. 122)
	33%	complicated sentences sentence mix: one compound sentence and one complex sentence	
	66%	complicated sentences punctuated correctly	
Compound-Complex Sentences			
Controlled Practice	90%	lesson 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 series - see above	(p. 109)
Grade-Appropriate Practice	100%	complete sentences	(p. 112)
	50%	complicated sentences sentence mix: one compound sentence, one complex sentence, and one compound-complex sentence	
Generalization	66%	complicated sentences punctuated correctly	
	100%	complete sentences	(p. 122)
	50%	complicated sentences sentence mix: one compound sentence, one complex sentence, and one compound-complex sentence	
	66%	complicated sentences punctuated correctly	

Moving toward SIM

Fran Clark

Coordinator of Training

Katie Alexander-Sturtridge

Editor

"I'm always so enthusiastic the first few weeks of school, but then things fall back into the same pattern—trying to help students keep up with the classroom demands."

—teacher talk—

How have special educators traditionally met these classroom demands? The tutorial model has been the most common approach—short-term assistance in content areas with the teacher being primarily responsible for keeping the student current in the regular curriculum. How do those involved feel about this approach?

Teachers express a variety of concerns and frustrations with this method of instructing low-achieving students. Some feel it is what students, parents, and mainstream teachers want. Others have accepted teaching positions where tutoring was already in place. Yet others see it as the only way for students to make passing grades in mainstream classes, therefore insuring that they will receive a high school diploma. Finally, to some tutoring is a "band-aid", that is, a temporary solution which does not allow students to learn the necessary skills or habits that generalize to independent living or learning.

Janet Knapp of LaGrange, Indiana, is an LD resource teacher for 9th and 10th graders. She continued in the tutorial role because that was

what other teachers expected her to do. Besides, she did not know what other approach to use. However, once she had received SIM training, Janet "enlightened" the faculty in her building by showing them *Learning Strategies: A New Way to Learn**, a filmstrip designed for students who are about to receive instruction in learning strategies. This filmstrip was very effective in "setting the stage" for students and teachers who were going to be involved in this new approach to learning. Janet's colleagues were receptive and supportive of her efforts to do something different.

Even after agreeing to embark on this new venture, teachers and parents, as well as students, may be apprehensive about moving from the tutoring model to the *Strategies Intervention Model* until students have acquired and generalized several of the strategies. Utilizing some of the following suggestions will help bridge the gap by providing some assistance to students until they become more independent.

- Before moving from tutorial to SIM, inform parents, students, classroom teachers, and administrators of the overall plan. State in your plan some time during the day (before or after school, study hall time, etc.) when you will be available to provide tutoring assistance at the student's request. This aspect of the plan enables you to provide the traditional services, while placing some responsibility on the student, thereby encouraging independent behavior.
- While introducing strategy instruction, teach a learning

strategy for half the class period (25-30 minutes) and provide tutoring assistance for the remainder of the period. Gradually reduce the time allocated to tutoring as students acquire and generalize new strategies.

- Allow students to schedule (perhaps two or three days in advance) time for teacher assistance with assignments or test preparation for mainstream classes. You may wish to set a limit on how much time per week (e.g., a total of 60 or 90 minutes) the student may schedule for such assistance—another step toward student independence.
- Maintain some class time each school day for tutorial assistance until the student begins to apply the strategy in mainstream class materials (during Step 6, Grade-Appropriate Practice and Feedback or Step 8, Generalization).
- Be selective. Some students may be able to do without the tutorial assistance sooner and more completely than others.
- Gradually phase out other types of assistance until SIM has become the predominant program in the classroom.
- Use resources other than yourself as tutors, i.e., parents, community volunteers, peers.

Moving toward SIM means change—change in curriculum, change in teaching and learning techniques. Then the most important change of all occurs—students steadily progress towards the goal of independent learning and independent functioning.

**Learning Strategies: A New Way to Learn.* Filmstrip may be ordered from Worldwide Media, Inc., P.O. Box 27478, Salt Lake City, Utah 84127 for \$45.00 plus \$4.00 shipping and handling.

"I PLAN" for success —a junior high school—

The IEP conference has turned into just what it was intended to be thanks to the *Education Planning Strategy* ("I PLAN"). My IEP meetings this year were vibrant, productive, and meaningful. I instructed 15 learning disabled 7th- and 8th-grade students in the strategy and had a turnout of 13 parents for the conferences.

The strategy generated a high level of excitement. The students composed a letter to their parents briefing them on what would be happening and who would be in attendance (see "I PLAN" Student Letter). I was very proud of how the students handled themselves, and the parents were surprised that their children could successfully attend a meeting with so many adults present.

I found the short-term academic goal-setting section of "I PLAN" to be very valuable. Examples of realistic student goals include:

"I want to be in a regular math class by December, 1988."

"I want to be mainstreamed in reading by the end of the first nine weeks next year."

At the IEP meetings, the guidance counselors were impressed that all the students had selected realistic life goals, especially at such a young age.

The *Social Skills Checklist* was another valuable aspect of the strategy. This list led to discussions in which students were willing to identify personal weaknesses and set goals to correct them. One student was very vocal during his IEP meeting in identifying his low frustration level and resulting outburst of anger. Several days later, he told me how he had not gotten angry at a baseball game when he was hassled for striking out—a result of strategy training.

When I began the *Education Planning Strategy*, students made statements like: "Will this strategy actually make a difference?" and "They will do what they want anyway." The results of the IEP meetings did indeed show students that their presence and input did make a difference.

*Carol Mikula, teacher
Kittanning Junior High School
Kittanning, Pennsylvania*

—a senior high school—

I wanted to let you know about the positive interaction the *Educational Planning Strategy* led to with a student of mine. This student chose to learn "I PLAN" and generalize it at his 3-year reevaluation staffing this past March.

The student enjoyed the goal-

setting activities and the simulated conferences. During the actual conference, he did a very good job of informing the team about his future goals—he wanted to go to a vocational technical school and become an auto body repair person. While we were all delighted with these goals, the staff expressed concern about the fact that he had been absent about 30 days per year since the 7th grade. Numerous interventions and individual counseling had failed to improve the situation, and it was felt that school was not a top priority.

At this point in the discussion, the student politely asked his mother to step out of the conference room. He then spent 45 minutes explaining that his attendance problems were due to the fact that his father, who had little regard for education, was making him miss school to run the family farm. The student had been frustrated by this situation for some time. Only since he had realized that he had skills and goals for the future and that these goals were in jeopardy, had he felt he could attempt to take charge of his own life. He asked the team for help. We were able to help him list options and utilize local resources in an effort to improve the home situation and continue progress toward his goals.

It was only through the confidence building, self-evaluation, and goal-setting procedures of "I PLAN" that this student was finally able to express his concerns. He left the staffing feeling extremely good about himself and determined to accomplish his career goal.

On May 5th the student enrolled in the vocational program of his choice. His future looks much brighter, and I believe "I PLAN" was instrumental in helping all of us develop an appropriate educational plan for him.

*Michael Hock, teacher
Hempstead High School
Dubuque, Iowa*

"I PLAN" Student Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian:

At the meeting on Tuesday, May 24, 1988, we will be talking about our education for next year. It is our strengths, weaknesses, goals, and social abilities to do things. The people that are going to be there are the principal, the resource room teacher, the junior high guidance counselor, the senior high guidance counselor, the speech teacher, the student and his or her parents. I will talk about what I want to learn next year. We will all be able to put our share of the conversation in it. You can ask questions about what the programs are about. This is what will be happening at the conference. We have learned how to participate in a conference this month with the learning strategy called "I PLAN". We would appreciate it if you would come. We are looking forward to it. Thank you!

**Sincerely,
The Resource Room Students**

Developed by Carol Mikula's students

Editor's Note: The *Education Planning Strategy* was featured in the last issue of **Stratagem**.

What's New

Making A Difference: From Those Who Know

—New Video—

Do you want to convey the benefits of the *Strategies Intervention Model* to your administrators?

Do teachers who are implementing want to know how others involved in this educational process view SIM?

... then the new video *Making a Difference: From Those Who Know* can help you achieve these goals.

Making a Difference: From Those Who Know is a 15-minute VHS 1/2 inch videotape narrated by a special education administrator. The videotape presents comments about SIM from regular and special education administrators and teachers, a parent, and students who are involved in strategies instruction. Topics include: the components of SIM, their impact on students, SIM's focus on generalization, and administrative support needed for successful implementation.

When accompanied by a brief overview of the model or by descriptions of student success as a result of SIM, this videotape is an effective tool for developing awareness and

greater understanding of SIM. *Making a Difference* is also recommended for use with experienced implementors to generate comments about their own successes and thus to arouse new levels of enthusiasm.

* * *

Making a Difference: From Those Who Know was developed by Frances L. Clark, Donald D. Deshler, Jean B. Schumaker, and Joyce A. Rademacher. It is available from the KU-IRLD for \$10.00 plus \$2.00 postage and handling (KU-IRLD, 223 Carruth-O'Leary Hall, Lawrence, KS 66045).

Sneak Preview

Appearing in Future Issues

- 🍏 The Progress Chart
—its care and feeding—
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