



StrateNotes

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning • August 2006 • Volume 14, Issue 9

Calendar

October 11-13, 2006

Instructional Coaching
Institute
Lawrence, Kan.

Contact: Mona Katz or
Kathy Schmidt (crl@
ku.edu | 785.864.0626)

October 15-18, 2006

Instructional Coaching
Conference
Lawrence, Kan.

Registration closed.

For waiting list, contact
kathy817@ku.edu.

January 17-18, 2007

Florida Update
Altamonte Springs, Fla.

Contact: Mary Little
(projcentral@mail.ucf.edu)

January 26-27, 2007

West Regional Update
Harrah's Las Vegas Hotel
3475 Las Vegas Blvd
South, Las Vegas

888.458.8471 | group
code: SHUKC7

Contact: Barbara Millikan
(barbara_millikan@
beavton.k12.or.us) and
Susan Miller (millersp@
unlv.nevada.edu)

February 1-3, 2007

Northeast Regional
Update

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Washington National
Airport

1480 Crystal Drive,
Arlington, Va.

www.ichotelsgroup.
com/h/d/cp/1/en/hotel/
wasna/transportation |
703.416.1600

Contact: Joan
Fletcher (jfletcher@
winningwaysinc.com)

(More calendar on
page 2)

Conference confirms SIM garden is thriving

Julie Tollefson
University of Kansas
Center for Research on Learning

In our garden, my husband and I use a sheet-mulching technique to control weeds and build rich soil in which to grow the vegetables, herbs, fruit, and flowers that add flavor and beauty to our table and home. We layer compost, cardboard, and straw up to a foot high, then add water. Given time, these layers blend together to form new, fertile garden beds.

Today's complex educational environment—and the multitude of efforts under way to improve it—bear a striking resemblance to this gardening method: Layer upon layer of initiatives, standards, and requirements contribute elements designed to increase student performance and enhance teaching. For the gardener charged with blending these elements, the challenge is ensuring that the right conditions are in place to create a healthy mix from which successful educational reforms can grow.

One layer in this garden consists of national initiatives—both public and private. Nearly every national organization associated with education has issued a report decrying dropout rates, poor adolescent literacy performance, or secondary school shortcomings.



This issue of Stratenotes summarizes common themes and reports on the happenings at the 2006 International SIM Conference.

“Three or four years ago, the main thing pushing it was poor performance,” says Don Deshler, KU-CRL director. Now, “there’s been a little bit of a shift from the emphasis on closing the gap to raising the bar.”

That shift comes in the wake of growing awareness that advances in technology have allowed countries such as China and India to prepare for and compete for high tech jobs. In many ways, the students in these countries may be better poised to take advantage of these technological opportunities than are students in the United States.

Another layer is the No Child Left Behind Act. Its requirements and influence on school systems and educators continue to have significant consequences for students across the country.

UNVEILED!

SIM



Strategic Instruction Model

KU-CRL is thrilled to announce the adoption of a new, official **SIM logo**. See more at www.kucrl.org/simlogo!

More calendar

March 1-3, 2007

Southeast Regional Update
Holiday Inn Historic District
125 Calhoun Street, Charleston, S.C.
843.805.7900 or 877.805.7900 |
group name: Southeast SIM Update
Contact: Jerri Neduchal
(jerrinsinc@aol.com)

June 19-22, 2007

SIM Reading and Writing Strategies
Lawrence, Kan.
Contact: Mona Katz or Kathy
Schmidt (crl@ku.edu | 785.864.0626)

June 19-22, 2007

More SIM Strategies
Lawrence, Kan.
Contact: Mona Katz or Kathy
Schmidt (crl@ku.edu | 785.864.0626)

July 16-17, 2007

SIM Preconference

July 18-20, 2007

International SIM Conference
Tentative location: SpringHill Suites,
Lawrence, Kan.
Contact: Mona Katz or Kathy
Schmidt (crl@ku.edu | 785.864.0626)

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“While there are still some details to be worked out, coming in and establishing standards for all kids to meet is something that I think has propelled all of us to significant heights. It’s just brought the best out in us,” says Don.

Countering Climate Change

The result of all these complex elements mixing and supporting each other is a garden ripe with exciting opportunities and daunting challenges: opportunities to plant the seeds of success for all learners, and challenges to meet the many very serious needs in so many schools.

As we rise to meet these opportunities and challenges, climate change in many schools may require that we adapt our approaches to teaching and professional development. Jean Schumaker, KU-CRL’s associate director, dramatically illustrated today’s school realities with excerpts from a letter describing a new teacher’s first week in the Teach for America program:

Monday was my first day. It couldn’t have gone worse. The low point might have been when one of my eighth-graders tried to jump out of my third-story window. Oh wait, maybe it was when one of the others spit on the floor at my feet. Well, let me take that back. It was probably when they added six new kids to our already packed class of 22; eight of them now sit on tables or on the floor...

...25 of my 28 kids are aunts and uncles, six of them have family members in jail currently, one of them is a mother herself, and four of them have drug-dealer parents.

The events this teacher reports, unfortunately, are not isolated. As we move forward in our SIM work, we must be prepared to conduct that work under less than ideal conditions.

“Those are the kinds of students that we’re challenged to help and the kinds of schools that we’re challenged to help,” Jean says. “These children don’t need just one thing. They need a comprehensive effort that really helps their schools help them.”

Sharpening Our Tools

Increasingly, SIM Professional Developers are being asked to broaden their knowledge and experience to provide guidance for such schools and the students who attend them. Gone are the days when a SIM PD could specialize in one or two strategies. That approach, says Jean, “is not giving kids the breadth of skills and strategies that they really need to succeed.”

During the summer’s International SIM Conference, an emphasis on the Content Literacy Continuum underscored the importance of cultivating an extensive knowledge related to school reform and adolescent literacy as well as developing an array of tools to respond to varying needs. Of the conference’s more than 35 sessions, five explicitly focused on CLC, a framework for evaluating schools and determining where to focus professional development energy. Many more sessions integrated CLC within other topics.

In conjunction with filling our personal tool sheds with a variety of implements to cultivate growth in schools, we are confronted with the need to conquer two additional thorny issues: We need to build the capacity of the network to take on the many requests for help we receive, and we need to do so in a manner that preserves the quality, integrity, and reputation of SIM.

Both Don and Jean issued calls to you, the members of the SIM Network, to help build the number of professional developers who know SIM well by recruiting and supporting the most talented teachers and fledgling PDs you encounter as you go about your work in the field.

“We’re asking you to mentor people in your areas,” Jean says. “We need you all to bring young people along. Key in on your stars and really bring them along as you mentor.”

Nurturing Partnerships

Expanding our reach while preserving the quality of SIM is pushing us to think creatively about how we leverage the talents of KU-CRL researchers and SIM Professional Developers. One outcome is that we recognize now more than ever the value of cultivating partnerships to

help us do our work more efficiently on a broader scale.

After a great deal of study and extensive discussions, we have reached a formal partnership agreement with Teachscape, a technology-enabled professional development services company. Teachscape's goal is to collaborate with school districts to improve student achievement. Our partnership is designed to extend the work of the network and to free more time for SIM Professional Developers to focus less on providing basic information and more on providing the experiences and support that teachers need to succeed in the classroom.

"In essence, what they represent is a way in which we can come up with what we believe is a high-quality blended model, leverage some high-quality online elements, and combine that with live professional development so that we can perhaps reconfigure the way that we spend our time," says Don.

The first products from this partnership are in development, and we'll share more information about the partnership and its results as we move forward.

Similarly, our partnership with the Strategic Learning Center will relieve some of the pressure of meeting school and district needs and free KU-CRL to concentrate on research and development of new and improved educational solutions.

"For us to continue to generate interventions, validate them, and be on the cutting edge as a research center, we've got to shift some of our time from the professional development and dissemination side. You just can't spread yourself as thinly as we have," Don says.



Abundant Harvest

Our SIM garden has seen an explosion of growth in recent years, much like the basil in an herb garden toward summer's end. Here's a taste of the SIM produce currently maturing in the corner lot:

- Xtreme Reading is one of two programs chosen to participate in a national adolescent literacy study.
- SIM is a significant component of three of the eight Striving Readers grants.
- The Stupski Foundation of California enlisted KU-CRL's participation in school reform efforts and set up a meeting this summer between KU-CRL and the Gates Foundation.
- The National Governors Association solicited front-line stories from KU-CRL school sites to be featured in a meeting in September designed to help teams formulate statewide adolescent literacy plans. States will send four-member teams to the meeting, and one member must be the state's governor.

Our SIM "Co-op"

By far the most important partner in our growing cooperative remains every member of the SIM Network. KU-CRL is committed to continuing to develop and support the SIM Network. In fact, we are asking more of you now than we ever have in the past.

Drawing inspiration from Randal Pinkett's commencement address at Rutgers University, Jean called on SIM Professional Developers to respond to the power of "and" as we endeavor to meet the needs of whole schools and all students, no longer limiting our work to resource rooms and students with learning disabilities:

We're asking you to teach them about strategies, *and* we're asking you to set up reading programs for all the students in the school who are having difficulty reading *and* make sure they include writ-

ing strategies in all their English classes *and* make sure that they have some study strategy classes in the school so that the students get the skills they need for completing assignments, getting ready for tests, taking tests, and so forth.

And we're asking you to work with the speech-hearing folks in the school *and* we're asking you to make sure that the kids who need to learn some basic skills can. Also we're asking you to teach the general education teachers about Content Enhancement *and* to make sure those subject-area classes are learner friendly so these kids can learn basic information. *And* we're asking you to make sure strategic tutoring programs are in place in before- and after-school programs *and* that behavioral management systems are in place so that the kids are actually sitting in their seats and can attend to the instruction and get their work done.

Through collaboration, creative thinking, and a willingness of all to get our hands dirty, we believe the network is up to the challenge.

"The cumulative effect of the power of 'and' will really pay off," Jean says. "We believe in you guys. We really believe you can do all these things if you're working together."

SIM Leadership Award

The SIM Leadership Award recognizes individuals who have shown exceptional leadership and excellent service to SIM by helping educators become strategic teachers and, as a result, students become strategic learners and who have been leaders in the SIM Network.

Victoria J. Cotsworth

*Site Coordinator, GEAR-UP Project
Schlagle High School, Kansas City, Kan.*

Vicki Cotsworth, a SIM Professional Developer since 1986, has assumed numerous leadership roles within the network, including coordinating an update conference in Maho Bay and mentoring many Potential Learning Strategy Professional Developers. For five years, Vicki provided SIM instruction for the Kansas Governor's Academy, in which 50 districts participated. In recent years, she has written and developed materials for the Xtreme Reading project, and her classroom has served as a site for KU-CRL videos, piloting the *Paraphrasing Strategy*, and work on the *Self-Advocacy* and *Reading Strategy* CDs. Vicki has taught the SIM Reading and Writing Institute at KU-CRL for two years, has been a guest speaker about SIM countless times in graduate-level courses at the University of Kansas, and is the site coordinator for the KU GEAR-UP project in Kansas City, where she teaches and supports implementation of SIM strategies and routines.



Jim Knight

*Pathways to Success Project Director
University of Kansas
Center for Research on Learning*

Jim Knight became involved with SIM when he took a job teaching community college students in Toronto. When he sought help in reaching his class of failing students, he found SIM. He became a certified SIM Professional Developer in 1989, then began his doctoral program at KU in 1992. Four years later, he became a full-time KU-CRL researcher, pursuing his interest in professional development and systemwide change. He has been instrumental in developing new ways to deliver professional development experiences to teachers and is now one of the "go to" people for the National Staff Development Council, often speaking about coaching at NSDC meetings. He stars in a DVD on coaching just released by NSCD, and Corwin Press will publish his text on instructional coaching this fall. Jim's thinking has had a profound effect on the way in which KU-CRL and the SIM Network think about and conduct staff development and school change initiatives.



Frieda Lee Schwartz

*Staff Developer
El Paso, Texas,
Independent
School District*

Lee Schwartz became a Learning Strategies Professional Developer in 2001, quickly followed by Content Enhancement certification in 2002. She headed

a schoolwide program to implement SIM from 1993 to 1997, then helped develop a districtwide SIM initiative in 2000. Lee has nurtured SIM in her district, arranging for and facilitating Content Enhancement and Learning Strategies Potential Professional Developer Institutes in 2003, 2004, and 2005. In addition to her work in El Paso, Lee took SIM to Alaska in 2004, providing six days of workshops for the Anchorage School District. She also has presented SIM to Bureau of Indian Affairs schools in New Mexico, South Dakota, and North Dakota.

SIM Administrative Leadership Award

The SIM Administrative Leadership Award honors a person who is associated with the SIM Professional Developers' Network and who serves in an administrative position. The award recognizes individuals for outstanding leadership and contributions in promoting SIM and other research-based practices.

Mary Little

*Principal Investigator, Project Central
University of Central Florida*

Project Central identifies and disseminates information about resources, professional development, and relevant research to educators throughout Florida. Its ultimate goals are to provide the ingredients necessary to ensure quality outcomes for all students, and it has long included SIM among its programs. In her leadership role with Project Central, Mary Little has aggressively worked to increase the level of state support allocated to SIM initiatives and has been instrumental in linking SIM professional development with other state initiatives, including various Florida reading projects. Now, SIM is viewed as an integral piece of the state's education system and not as just a special education initiative.



Janet Roth Spirit Award

The Janet Roth Spirit Award recognizes individuals who dramatically affect lives through their relentless infusion of energy and positive spirit into the work of others, who affect the very tone, temperament, and environment in a positive way. The award was named for its first recipient, Janet Roth, KU-CRL's long-time director of professional development. Janet's attention to every detail and her concern for individual members of the SIM Professional Development Network added an extra sparkle to the work of the network. This award honors that spirit in others.

Jean Schumaker

*Associate Director
University of Kansas
Center for Research on Learning*

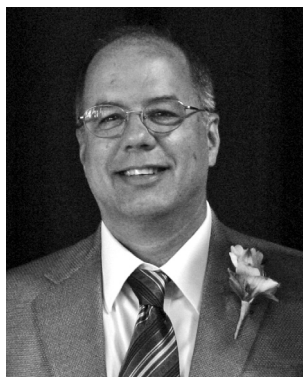
Three years after completing her Ph.D. at KU in 1975, Jean learned of a job that she thought would be perfect for her. It was an opening with the new Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities that combined all of her interests: work with adolescents, academics, research design, and grant writing. Almost 30 years later, Jean has been a driving force behind the growth and success of what is now the KU Center for Research on Learning. Her vision for the Center to become a leading educational force on campus and throughout the country has been integral to its success. Her dogged determination to go the extra mile has ensured that members of the SIM Network have the instructional materials and support products to enable them to work effectively with children. Equally important has been the role she has played to ensure that KU-CRL has had the financial resources necessary to carry out its mission. Her work has had a dramatic effect on the lives of thousands of struggling adolescent learners and the teachers who work with them. The energy and enthusiasm she has exhibited as she has conducted this significant work reflect the very spirit this award is intended to honor.



Gordon R. Alley Partnership Award

The Gordon R. Alley Partnership Award acknowledges the outstanding contributions of individuals for their work in enabling the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning to fulfill its mission. Gordon, one of KU-CRL's founding members and key investigators, was a highly valued partner to his colleagues. He generously shared his expertise and time to enable others to reach their goals. The Gordon R. Alley Partnership Award is given to other professionals who contribute to the work of the Center in the same spirit.

Mark Cooper
Professor of Early
Childhood and
Special Education
and Director of the
Mashburn Institute,
University of Central
Arkansas



For the past 10 years, the Mashburn Institute has been devoted to providing professional development on SIM interventions to teachers in central Arkansas. Through Mark Cooper's persistent and visionary leadership with the Arkansas State Department of Education and other key educational leaders throughout the state, SIM has now been adopted by special education, general education, and alternative education as the key secondary school instructional model. Mark's most recent book, *Bound and Determined to Help Children with Learning Disabilities Succeed*, is consistent with many SIM interventions and has become a centerpiece of the Mashburn Institute for preparing teachers to work more effectively with struggling learners to nurture a more positive outlook within these students.

SIM Innovation Award

The SIM Innovation Award is given to schools, programs, or individuals who have demonstrated highly innovative and effective applications of the Strategic Instruction Model. These applications have included the collection of data showing successful outcomes.



Susan Engelmann, executive director of secondary education, and Steve Gering, deputy superintendent, Kansas City Kansas Public Schools

Kansas City Kansas Public Schools

Kansas City Kansas Public Schools and KU-CRL have forged a partnership focused on literacy goals. To date, the partnership has resulted in descriptive data and intervention data that have the potential to inform the field about the skills and characteristics of struggling adolescent readers. In addition, studies under way in KCK will provide information about the effectiveness of SIM reading strategies designed for large classes taught by general education teachers. KCK Public Schools also has committed to work with KU-CRL in future random assignment studies of SIM interventions.



Are you a StrateReader?

<http://stratereaders.kucrl.org/>

What: Interactive, virtual book club focusing on the current literature addressing our changing world and the implications for education, professional development, leadership, educational reform, and the like. Featured books will be recommendations from KU-CRL and book club members.

Who: SIM Professional Developers, SIM educators, and anyone interested in joining and contributing.

When: A new book will be read every two months. See StrateReaders Unit Organizer for current book list and reading schedule (www.kucrl.org/stratereaders). Members will have the opportunity to share reflections, thoughts, and ideas about the book on the StrateReaders blog, then join a conference call for a live discussion at the end of each reading period.

How: Visit the StrateReaders blog at <http://stratereaders.kucrl.org> to get started (see picture below). You will be able to respond to any posting by clicking on the "Comments" link below the post (or "No Comments" in the example shown below). When you click on this link, you will be able to read any comments that have been posted previously, and you will have the opportunity to add your own comments. If you have any questions, please e-mail the KU-CRL communications team (jtollefson@ku.edu or dgnojek@ku.edu).

Note that all comments will be held until a blog administrator has approved them for posting. Our goal is *not* to inhibit discussion. We are hoping that by holding posts temporarily, we will keep unwanted posters (those who send spam or use inappropriate language, for example) from disrupting our thoughtful discussions.



Why: While we are all experts in SIM, this is no longer enough to be effective in today's educational world. We must also have a common base of knowledge from the larger educational and business world and the ability to interact with this information and each other.

You can find more information and a Unit Organizer for the 2006-2007 book club selections at www.kucrl.org/stratereaders.



StrateReader Unit Schedule

September-October

The World is Flat
by Thomas L. Friedman
Conference call: Oct. 31

November-December

The New Division of Labor
by Frank Levy
and Richard J. Murnane
Conference call: Dec. 12

January-February

*School Reform
from the Inside Out*
by Richard Elmore
Conference call: Feb. 27

March-April

*Data Wise: Step-by-Step Guide
to Using Assessment Results to
Improve Teaching and Learning*
By Kathryn Parker Boudett,
Elizabeth A. City,
and Richard J. Murnane
Conference call: April 24

May-June

Leadership and Sustainability
by Michael Fullan
Conference call: June 26

July

StrateReaders meeting
at annual SIM conference

Conference notes

Familiar faces in new roles



Patty Graner as the new director of professional development. Patty, who assumed her duties in June, is very close to completing her doctorate degree at the University of Kansas. Her background of classroom teaching and working with schools at all levels and in all types of professional development and reform efforts represents a vital set of skills for the network.

"You prepare for a lot of things in life, and sometimes you don't know what you're preparing to do."

—Patty Graner



Suzanne Robinson

Suzanne Robinson as the new executive director of the Strategic Learning Center in Seattle. Suzanne, who moves to the SLC from the University of Kansas, has a background in secondary education, has conducted research for KU-CRL, and has built her methods classes around SIM.

Semi-retirement

Jean Schumaker will be retiring from her KU-CRL position this fall but will still be actively and integrally involved in SIM. In comments during the conference closing session, she said, "I'm not retiring from SIM. I do see a huge future for SIM. It's a different future from the past that we've had, and that's exciting to me."



Keynote speaker



Keynote speaker **Elizabeth Moje**, University of Michigan School of Education, talked about results of her literacy research, which often takes her into shopping malls and other places popular with the adolescents she focuses on.

Special guests

More than 250 people attended the 2006 International SIM Conference, including a number of guests involved in specific SIM initiatives such as the Virginia State Improvement Grant.

Kaleidoscope

This year's kaleidoscope session took a slightly different format from that used in years past. Presenters chose a book of interest to the SIM Network, summarized its main points, and linked its content to our work with SIM. Book topics ranged from education to business to communication techniques.

DVD orders

You may purchase DVD or VHS copies of many of the conference sessions. See the order form on page 9.

2006 Conference Session DVD Order Form

DVDs of several of this year's conference sessions are available for purchase at a *cost of \$10 per session*.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

VISA/Mastercard #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Authorization: _____

☐ Check here if you need videotapes instead of DVDs.

☐ Kaleidoscope Session

☐ **A. Adjusting the Lens: Viewing SIM from an Administrator's Perspective** *Short, Graving-Reyes, & Geisek*

☐ **B. ALTEC All-Stars**, *Schaapveld*

☐ **C. Behavior Coaching**, *McKale & Knight*

☐ **D. Closing Session: Future of SIM**, *Deshler*

☐ **F. Computerized Instruction of Learning Strategies: It works!** *Lancaster*

G. Content Literacy Continuum: What do I Need to Know? Choose from three sessions:

☐ **CLC Learning Group 1: What's it All About?** *Graner & Lenz*

☐ **CLC Learning Group 2: Getting Started**, *Colombo & Slater*

☐ **CLC Learning Group 3: Making it Work**, *Ehren & Tralli*

☐ **I. Cultivating a Model Garden in Content Enhancement**, *Neduchal*

☐ **J. Dealing with Teachers Who Don't Want to Deal with Us**, *Knight*

☐ **K. Enhancing Content Area Literacy and Learning in Secondary Schools**, *Moje*

☐ **L. The Essay Test-Taking Strategy**, *Schumaker*

☐ **M. Focusing Together: Promoting Self-Management Skills in the Classroom**, *Rademacher & Cheever*

☐ **N. Forging a Partnership with Teachscape for Blended Professional Development**, *Atkinson & Deshler*

☐ **P. How to Sell SIM**, *Fletcher*

☐ **Q. Instructional Coaching**, *Knight*

☐ **R. Interactive Multimedia Instruction for Teaching Oral Language Skills**, *Vernon*

☐ **S. Introduction to the Graphic Interactive System for Teaching (GIST): Getting Started**, *Briggs, Steffen, Sumner, Nelson, & Lenz*

☐ **T. Keynote Address: Adolescent Literacy In and Out of School**, *Moje*

☐ **U. Leading and Co-Constructing Learning with GIST: Moving from Planning to Teaching**, *Cheever & Lenz*

☐ **Leading CLC Initiatives: If I Only Knew What I Know Now**, *Fletcher, Graving-Reyes, Spriggs, Tralli, Woodruff, & Ehren*

☐ **W. Moving Schools Forward with CLC and Instructional Coaching**, *Lenz, Ehren, Knight, & Woodruff*

☐ **X. Myths and Realities of Adolescent Literacy**, *Brasseur, Ehren, Hock, & Deshler*

☐ **Y. Planning and Teaching Integrated Sets of Content Enhancement Routines in Content Area Courses Using GIST**, *Bulgren*

☐ **Z. Providing Professional Development in GIST: Tips for Success**, *Steffen, Briggs, Lenz, Sumner, & Nelson*

☐ **AA. Research Roundtable A, STRUCTURE Your Reading**; *McCaulley & Ehren*; *Explicit Inquiry Routine*, *Scheuermann*

☐ **BB. Research Roundtable B, Word Mapping Strategy**, *Harris*; *Inference Strategy*, *Fritschmann*

☐ **CC. Results of the First Year of a Two-Year Intensive Reading Course for High School Students**, *Hock & Brasseur*

☐ **DD. The Road to Success: A SIM-Based Transition Curriculum**, *Johnson*

☐ **EE. SIM in Higher Education**, *Duchardt*

☐ **FF. Teaming through Teachscape: How Can We Maximize Our Impact by Leveraging a Blended Model of Implementation through Our Partnership with Teachscape?** *Atkinson & White*

☐ **GG. Using New CDs for Student Instruction**, *Schumaker & Vernon*

☐ **HH. Using New CDs in Professional Development**, *Schumaker & Lancaster*

☐ **II. Welcome: Overview of Conference**, *Deshler*

☐ **JJ. Xtreme Reading: A New SIM Reading Course**, *Bulgren, Hock, Schumaker, & Deshler*

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