

# Stratenotes

## The new face of www.kucrl.org

Julie Tollefson  
KU-CRL

For the better part of the past year, the KU-CRL Communications Team has quietly but feverishly worked to beautify, modernize, and organize our online image. Several converging influences prompted us to undertake a massive redesign of our web site, www.kucrl.org. The site was woefully antiquated in the quickly evolving world of the web, and our content had outgrown our original organizational plan for the site.

Our goals, then, in this project were to streamline the content, reorganize the content, ease navigation around the site, and comply with new standards developed by our parent institute, the University of Kansas.

During this project, we consulted a representative group of visitors to our web site, including KU-CRL staff members, SIM Professional Developers, and classroom teachers. In formal surveys and informal conversations, we sought feedback on how these individuals used the site, what content was most in demand, and what features they would like to see.

The result is a brand-new, user-friendly site full of information about the Center and our products.



### ◀ KU Template

The first thing you will likely notice when you visit the new KU-CRL web site is the addition of links to the University's web site. These links are part of a template developed by KU. All KU units are expected to adopt this template. The intent of the university is that all units will represent KU consistently.

We have complied with this expect-

tation and adopted the KU template.

At the same time, our task was to build a strong KU-CRL web presence representing our mission and the content most frequently sought by visitors to our site. This included, naturally, the Strategic Instruction Model and Content Literacy Continuum but also more global topics such as adolescent literacy or whole-school improvement.

### CONTENTS

- The new face of www.kucrl.org, page 1

- The faces behind the phases, page 3
- StrateReaders update, page 4



## Navigation

Visitors have several avenues available for navigating through the new site. The top of the home page lists permanent links to the main sections of the site. The central part of the home page features links to news and topics we think should be highlighted. And the bottom part of the page lists additional links both to various pieces of information on [kucrl.org](http://kucrl.org) and to the web sites of our divisions. We'll look first at the central and bottom portions of the home page, then explore each new main section of the site in more detail.

### Central ▶

**Headlines & features:** These links are designed to highlight recent news from the Center and important topics. We have featured two important topics on this initial release of the new web site: adolescent literacy and whole school improvement. Each link will take visitors to more a detailed description of how our research and products address current needs in these areas. We also have assembled lists of links to additional content on our site, such as relevant newsletter articles, and to outside web sites that support our work.

**Calendar:** The right column on the home page now lists coming workshops, regional meetings, and other SIM or KU-CRL events.

**SIM & CLC logos:** The newly adopted SIM and CLC logos take prominent positions on the home page. Both logos link to more in-depth information.

### Bottom ▶

A trio of links provide access to specialized pages on the site. The SIMville link works the same as it always has. You still will be asked for a password to visit this part of the site. The KU-CRL Intranet link

is open to our staff members only. The StrateReaders link takes you to the virtual book club blog, where you can participate in discussions of the current book selection. (See page 4 for more information about StrateReaders.)

**Quick Links:** This drop-down menu is our attempt to provide fast access to the most frequently sought content on our site. Our Quick Links can be

- *Technology in schools*—links to our ALTEC division web site
- *eLearning Design*—links to our eLearning Design Lab web site
- *KU-CRL divisions*—links to descriptions of all four of our divisions
- *Professional development for teachers*—links to a listing of summer institutes open to classroom teachers and college and university faculty



revised or expanded easily to reflect changing needs of site visitors. The following are the current links in the Quick Links menu:

- *Adolescent literacy*—a duplicate of the adolescent literacy link in the central portion of the page.
- *Whole-school improvement*—a duplicate of the whole-school improvement link in the central portion of the page.
- *Adult literacy*—links to the web site of our Division of Adult Studies
- *Instructional coaching*—links to the Instructional Coaching web site

### Main sections ▶

The main sections of the site are represented by permanent links across the top of the home page and every internal page.

**About:** This section encompasses the history of the Center; information of interest to the media; descriptions of our four divisions; a listing of KU-CRL researchers and brief descriptions of their interests; a staff listing; and contact information for the Center, the SIM order desk, and each division.

*Projects:* This section is an almost-comprehensive listing of projects under way at the Center with links to more information or individual web sites where appropriate. We say it is almost comprehensive because things change so quickly around here, we have a hard time keeping up. ☺

*Conferences:* This section contains information about conferences sponsored by KU-CRL, including the International SIM Conference, regional SIM update meetings, and Instructional Coaching. As we plan other conferences, they will be listed in this section, too.

*Library:* The section contains our publication list, still sorted by author's last name or by category; an archive of select newsletter articles that have appeared on the web site over the years; and presentations KU-CRL staff members have made in various venues. Find presentations by date, author/presenter, title, or conference name.

*Materials:* This section describes the materials available for purchase by the general public: *Strategram*, CDs and DVDs, and brochures. Visitors may print or download order forms for *Strategram* and other materials.

### More to come

Our hope is that the new kucrl.org design will be flexible enough to allow for continued growth without becoming unwieldy. But we're not finished yet! The site design likely will evolve bit by bit as we encounter speed bumps. Plus, we have Phases 2 and 3 of the global redesign project

## The faces behind the phases

The kucrl.org redesign would not have been possible without the outstanding work of two members of our communications team: **David Gnojek**, KU-CRL's graphic designer, and **Ryan Jones**, our student web developer, spent countless hours analyzing, sketching, and re-designing every aspect of the site. They covered a giant display board (representing the site) in sticky



notes (representing web pages), thoughtfully discussing the ramifications of, for example, moving Sticky A from the library to the materials section. The results of their efforts are fantastic.

to look forward to.

*Phase 2:* In Phase 1, we did not touch the vast amounts of SIM information posted on our site. Phase 2 will work exclusively with this content, organizing it and making it more easily accessible to site visitors who want everything from a brief overview to an in-depth understanding of the model.

*Phase 2* begins immediately; we hope to complete this phase by mid-March.

*Phase 3:* Phase 3 will address SIMville. Since its inception, SIMville has become the repository of a great deal of very good materials to support the

work of SIM Professional Developers. The collection has outgrown its current organization. Phase 3 will begin at the completion of Phase 2. Our target will be to have much of the design and organization work completed by the summer conference.

*Beyond Phase 3?* We don't expect Phase 3 to be the end. As our knowledge and our products continue to grow, the site will reflect that growth. Also, your comments can help shape the future of the site. If you have suggestions or requests related to any aspect of the web site, send them to [jtollfson@ku.edu](mailto:jtollfson@ku.edu).

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## CALENDAR

### January 22-24, 2007

Instructional Coaching  
Lawrence, Kan.  
Contact: Mona Katz or Kathy Schmidt (crl@ku.edu | 785.864.0626)

### January 25-27, 2007

Coaching Classroom  
Management  
Lawrence, Kan.  
Contact: Mona Katz or Kathy Schmidt (crl@ku.edu | 785.864.0626)

### 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)

### January 27-30, 2007

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

### 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 (jfle  
tcher@winningwaysinc.com)

(More Calendar on  
page 5)

# StrateReaders update

Jean Piazza

*SIM Professional Developer, Cody, Wyo.*

We launched our new interactive, virtual book club, StrateReaders, in September, and it didn't take long for contributors to "roll up their sleeves," dig deep into the first book, and bring it to life. One of our intentions with this book club is to provide a summary of the comments and contributions. In the context of the questions posed to the reader—what this book meant personally, professionally, and in our SIM world—here is what our StrateReaders had to say about *The World Is Flat* by Thomas L. Friedman.

## Personally

- A flat world means I can be involved in online learning, have a second job without having to pay for gas, multitask on my computer, and build new relationships that span common interests and not simply common geography.
- I have wanted a reason to go back and think more deeply about this book and now I also have a venue to discuss it.
- The "flattened" world has affected my family directly due to the nature of my husband's work and outsourcing.
- I am amazed at the variety of products and services I purchase that are outsourced.
- China's potential impact on global ecology and their environmental reforms: What if they export this newfound expertise in environmentalism to us?
- This book club is part of my professional learning plan.
- It is scary to innovate in public where all mistakes are witnessed and far-out ideas are ridiculed or ignored, yet innovation is our driving force; it is about creating new opportunities.

## Professionally

- Will a flat world speak to technology being the great equalizer for children

with learning differences?

- The statement "Standards don't eliminate innovation, they just allow you to focus it" is saying standards don't tie us down as educators, but rather free us to teach artfully.
- UPS's motto—"Trust Us"—is really what we are asking our students, parents, and fellow educators to do. We cannot do our work without building trust.
- While the flattening and the Internet have the potential to level the playing field, they also enhance competition, as many more will be able to compete.
- Support of Jim Knight's frequent reminder to us that innovations that have the greatest effect and last longest are those that are easy to use and powerful.
- We need to keep the personal one-to-one time with kids.
- The impact of technology on students' handwriting skills – both positive and negative.
- We must get the public's attention and work together as partners to help our kids become expert thinkers and problem solvers.

## SIM world

- Book chats like these stimulate my growth.
- Learners will require being critical thinkers to create career prospects.
- It is encouraging that America rewards imagination.
- How do we teach kids to think more "outside the box" so they can compete in our fast-paced and ever-changing world?
- Many children with processing deficits will be even more handicapped if they are unable to multitask at a faster pace.
- Offer more online professional development and follow-up.

- Online training, networking, and collaborating can be a highly effective for self-starters.
- What if our student worksheets, etc., were online?
- Harness e-texts so students could practice learning strategies at their grade level with the support of e-text readers to mediate their reading levels while they work on comprehension tasks through strategy instruction?
- What if we offered differentiated e-texts for all model passages?
- The partnership with Teachscape in our “flattening” SIM world – Teachscape can economically address the rules-based part of our work with consistency

and fidelity while we, the professional developers, bring the human touch, our added value.

- We are moving toward insourcing, and trust is clearly deeply embedded within our community ethos.
- SIM materials made virtual for projection, manipulation, as well as use in virtual classrooms.

To paraphrase one of our contributors, “it’s reflections like yours that make our virtual book study successful for all.” Thank you to all who read the book, visited our blog site, shared a thought or idea, or did all three! Remember, StrateReaders is a place where great minds come together!

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

# TREASURES OF SIM

CONFERENCE: JULY 18-20, 2007

PRECONFERENCE: JULY 16-17, 2007

Look for conference details  
in the January issue of *Stratenotes*:

- Keynote speaker
- Registration forms
- Opportunities to present
- Special events

## 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: SE SIM Update  
Contact: Jerri Neduchal  
(jerrinsisinc@aol.com)

### May 29-June 2, 2007

SIM Learning Strategies  
Institute for Preservice  
Teachers  
Lawrence, Kan.  
Contact: Mona Katz or Kathy  
Schmidt (crl@ku.edu |  
785.864.0626)

### May 29-June 2, 2007

Teaching Content to All:  
Effective College Teaching  
Lawrence, Kan.  
Contact: Mona Katz or Kathy  
Schmidt (crl@ku.edu |  
785.864.0626)

### 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)

### June 27-30, 2007

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

### June 27-30, 2007

SIM Institute: Intro to Content  
Enhancement  
Lawrence, Kan.  
Contact: Mona Katz or Kathy  
Schmidt (crl@ku.edu |  
785.864.0626)

## INSIDE:

- **The new face of [www.kucrl.org](http://www.kucrl.org):**  
KU-CRL's web site has undergone an extreme makeover. See what's new and meet the staff members who made it happen.
- **StrateReaders update:**  
One book down, four to go! Check out this summary of discussions of our first virtual book club selection.

## Strateworks Renewal 2006-2007

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate where you prefer to receive mail: ☐ home ☐ work

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please add me to the SIMTRAINER-L e-mail discussion list ☐

VISA/MasterCard Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorization: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail completed form and your payment of \$35 (U.S.) to KU-CRL  
Joseph R. Pearson Hall, 1122 West Campus Road, Room 517  
Lawrence, KS 66045-3101**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

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The University of Kansas

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