STRATENOTES

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Planning and Inclusion

Last month, we included a piece addressing whether or not implementation of SIM was consistent with the **inclusion** movement. This month, we would like to talk a little bit about what we have learned about inclusion from the research that Keith Lenz has been directing on the Planning Grant.

The purpose of the Planning Grant is to explore ways that regular classroom teachers plan for the individualization of instruction for students with disabilities in the context of content-area regular classrooms. We have conducted this research using a pool of 50 secondary level (grades 7-12) science and social studies teachers. From this research we have developed a way of describing how teachers who are effective in teaching content to students in academically-diverse classes approach instructional planning at the course, unit, and lesson level. Across our studies, as we have talked to teachers and watched the planning process, teachers seem to be effective when they:

1. Select critical outcomes. This may be the most important step in the planning process. The effective content-area teacher seems to stand back from the vast amount of content he *could* cover and asks himself "What is really critical and important for students to learn to truly understand this information? ...What is the major point?" It is impressive when we see teachers include learning strategies as a critical outcome. However, even the most effective teachers are reluctant to "give up" time to focus on process when there is so much content to cover. This persistence on coverage is a major barrier to inclusionary models, and there seems to be no evidence that adherence to a coverage model benefits even the most able college-bound students in secondary content classrooms.

2. Map critical content. At some point the effective teacher stands back and asks herself, "How would I like students to think about this content? . . How could they organize this information in chunks so that they could see the parts and organize it for studying?" This organization then becomes an explicit part of how teachers represent the content for students and serves as a road map for learning as well.

3. Analyze difficulty. The effective teacher eventually asks, "What might make the critical content (and strategies) difficult to learn?" In tracking teacher comments, we have found that teachers perceive that information becomes difficult for students when it involves too much content; is not likely to be of interest; does not appear to be relevant to students' lives; is too complex; assumes too much student background knowledge; is poorly organized; or is too abstract.

4. Reach enhancement decisions. Once the effective teacher has determined that the critical information is difficult, the teacher asks, "How can I enhance or transform this information so that it is not so difficult?" Part of this process includes making decisions about specific instructional devices that can be used to reduce the difficulty of information. The device can be a graphic, story, concrete aid, analogy, etc. While many teachers seem to select and use such instructional devices, the effective teacher goes beyond this and asks, "How can I help this device 'grow up' to be part of an effective classroom teaching routine?" At this point, we see the teacher spending time developing and planning how the device will be used. Often the process of selecting a device and building a teaching routine around it challenges the teacher to explore what she really knows about the content and she begins to see aspects of the information that she was not aware of.

5. Teach Strategically. The effective teacher uses two instructional principles to guide the delivery of difficult information: *informed* instruction and *explicit* instruction. Informed instruction involves telling students about the device and making sure they understand how they can use it to help them learn. Explicit instruction involves a CUE for students that a device is being used. The teachers will then use or DO the device as they have planned. Finally the teacher will REVIEW the device and what has been learned. The use of the device in this CUE-DO-REVIEW manner creates the teaching routine.

6. Evaluate mastery. As part of the lesson, the teacher evaluates whether the critical content has been mastered. Evaluation is not postponed until the test; it happens immediately and provides the teacher with information about their planning and their teaching. It is the on-the-spot reality check of whether learning is on target. If the decision has been made earlier that this content is *critical* to the course, then the teachers must evaluate whether they can continue.

7. Reevaluate outcomes. One of the planning activities that we have seen effective teachers engage in continuously is the reconsideration of their decisions. They seem to ask, "Is this really that important?" If a student does not master the critical content that has been selected, what does that say about instruction? If it is critical, then aren't we committed to teaching it to all students? It is this step that challenges teachers to reflect and reconsider the focus of their courses and how they are teaching to achieve these outcomes.

If you haven't noticed by now, the first letter of each of the seven characteristics listed above forms the acronym SMARTER. (We couldn't resist!) However, we have not used this as a planning strategy to train teachers to become more effective planners. This is because many experienced teachers have their own planning strategies that incorporate many of these principles. It is inappropriate to ignore their planning and teaching experiences and expect them to use a planning strategy constructed by someone else (However, we hope that the above paradigm might be useful in working with new teachers!). In essence, we have used the seven characteristics described above as a framework or mental script to talk to teachers about using teaching routines, generating important planning questions for at-risk learners, and reflecting on how best to meet the needs of students in academically diverse classes. We believe the most important steps toward responding to the challenges of the inclusion movement may be the analysis of classroom demands and the decisions about at-risk students.

HAVE YOU SUBSCRIBED TO *STRATEWORKS!?*

We are now able to identify our active SIM Trainers through ***Strateworks!*** If you have not returned the Network questionnaire included in the last Stratenotes, **BEWARE!!** You may miss the January issue of Stratenotes. We will soon be adjusting all of our mailing lists for future mailings and updates based on responses to this questionnaire. If you do an overview and train teachers in at least one strategy each year, we think that ***Strateworks!*** Is for you. If you have not returned the questionnaire, **do it today!** If you can't find the questionnaire that we sent you, let us know and we can FAX or mail you another one, or you can call us and complete the questionnaire over the phone.

Updating the Learning Strategies Curriculum Overview

Enclosed is an updated visual of the strands of the Learning Strategies Curriculum. These visuals show where the LINCS strategy and the SLANT strategy are placed in the strands. The LINCS strategy involves the use of three kinds of memory devices imagery, key words, and LINCing stories (stories created by students that link the meaning of new word to the key word) to help the student learn and remember vocabulary words. SLANT is a strategy that helps a student participate actively in class, transform information presented in class into his own words, and enhance his relationship with the teacher. The SLANT Strategy can be used to promote learning to meet the

demands within all three strands of the Learning Strategies Curriculum.

Are You Ready For *Strateline!*

Strateline! Is the name of our new computerized bulletin board service that will be in operation in the next few months. You access ***Strateline!*** through a computer via a telephone line and a modem. (A modem is a device that hooks your computer to a telephone line.) We have come of age -- the computer age! Information from the KU-IRLD and other SIM Trainers will be available at your fingertips. We have the program running and are currently deciding what information we will be making available on ***Strateline!*** For those of you who are unfamiliar with computerized bulletin boards, here is how they work. First, you will need a computer (most any IBM, Macintosh or compatible will do). Second, this computer will need to have a communications software program installed and a modem. If you do not have a communications software program and a modem, you will need to purchase them. Third, we will supply you with a telephone number that you can use to call us. You simply put the telephone number in the communications program and execute the appropriate commands to have your computer dial our computer. When our computer answers your call, you will be introduced to ***Strateline!*** The first time you call you will be asked to complete a questionnaire and to select a secret password. After the initial call, we will confirm your trainer status and your enrollment in ***Strateworks!*** Only those individuals enrolled in **Strateworks** will have access to all of the services provided on ***Strateline!*** (We will be providing more information about accessing and signing on to ***Strateline!*** as the start-up date gets nearer.) Once you and ***Strateline!*** are connected, you will be able to: 1) leave personal messages for anyone here at the KU-IRLD and receive personal messages from the KU-IRLD staff and any other ***Strateworks!*** trainer, 2) order strategies and training materials, 3) transfer training materials and new and old articles about strategies training and other issues from a training library, 4) search for the names of other active SIM trainers in the Network and leave them messages, 5) access training ideas and materials developed by other trainers from a trainer's exchange area on the service, 6) send us your ideas and training materials through files on your computer, 7) access news and current training information about the Network, SIM, and the KU-IRLD and all of the other services of ***Strateline!*** on a 24 hour basis, and 8) help us find many other ways to support trainers. We will be selecting several test sites for ***Strateline!*** in the next month; if you are interested in participating in this pilot, let us know right away. In the next Stratenotes, we will be sending you a questionnaire to obtain information about your "computer life" and to solicit your questions and preferences about ***Strateline!***, so be thinking about how you can get on board!

TRAINING QUESTIONS?

Trainer Certification. As most of you know, Fran Clark has taken a position at Wichita State University. Fran continues to be involved with the process of "training of trainer's", and will be conducting the Potential Trainers Training Workshop in August and the Preservice Teachers Trainer's Workshop in May. Fran is also responsible for certifying new trainers. Individuals in the process of becoming SIM trainers should send materials and address certification questions to Fran at 316-689-3322, Wichita State University, School of Education, 1845 Fairmount St, Wichita, KS, 68208.

General Training, Trainer, and SIM-related Questions. Your first contact should be Jan Roth at the KU-IRLD (913-864-4780). Jan Roth has been hired to field and sort training questions and problems. Jan has agreed to *facilitate* not *coordinate* communication within the training Network. Jan Roth has excellent management skills and has worked for the past 10 years on and off for the KU-IRLD. Most recently she has worked with Keith Lenz and Janis Bulgren to coordinate the field research on the Teacher Planning Grant and the Teaching Routines Grant. Jan has a background in high school Biology. Jan will

handle telephone calls, correspondence, and logistics related to scheduling training sessions. Specific questions related to SIM and training will be relayed to Don, Jean, and Keith. In about two months, the Computerized Bulletin Board System (see **Strateline!** above) will be up and running, and trainers will be able to contact the KU-IRLD 24 hours a day with questions.

Classroom Teacher Training Opportunities

We have initiated a series of initial and advanced training sessions for classroom teachers due to the number of teachers in rural and private schools who do not have inservice training opportunities. In addition, many teachers have requested advanced training opportunities due to the variable scheduling of training in specific strategies in their area.

We will be hosting a week-long training session this summer in Lawrence for classroom teachers who have already been introduced to SIM and have been trained in **and** can document implementation of the PARAPHRASING and SENTENCE WRITING STRATEGIES (no exceptions). The cost and dates for this week have not yet been set. The content of this intensive week of training will include training in WRITER, DISSECT, FIRST, and TOWER. Implementation of trained strategies will be expected.

Do you have these new SIM training materials?

Available from Edge Enterprises, Inc. P.O. Box 1304, Lawrence, KS 66044:

LINCS A Starter Strategy for Vocabulary Learning $6.50*

LINCS A Starter Strategy for Vocabulary Learning Trainer's Packet $4.50*

Collaborative Problem Solving $10.00*

Strategic Math Series Trainer's Packet $6.50

SLANT: A Starter Strategy for Class Participation $3.00

Available from KU-IRLD, 3061 Dole, Lawrence, KS 66045

SLANT: A Starter Strategy for Class Participation Trainer's Packet $3.00

Stratenotes Schedule

Stratenotes will be published nine times during the year. Stratenotes will not be published in July, August, or December. The June issue of Stratenotes will be published as a special comprehensive issue summarizing major issues and announcing major events for the coming academic year.

Updated 1993 Calendar of Training Events

February 27	SIM Trainers' Regional Update Meeting San Francisco., CA. (LDA Conference)
April 7	SIM Trainers' Regional Update Meeting San Antonio, TX. (CEC Conference)
May 25-29	College/University Preservice Teacher Trainers' Workshop Lawrence, KS. ($385 + expenses)
July 8-10	National SIM Trainers Conference (Special 15th Anniversary Celebration!) Lawrence, KS.
August 2-6	Workshop for Potential SIM Trainers Lawrence, KS. ($475 +
August 9-13	Advance Training in Learning Strategies for Classroom Teachers