



# STRATENOTES

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## **Generalization of Content Enhancement Routines**

How often do we tell teachers they need to teach a learning strategy not only through the acquisition phase but through the generalization phase as well? All the time, right? We have studied and embraced the theoretical concepts that support the value of generalization. Furthermore, we agree that if we don't teach a strategy until students are aware of the situations in which they can use the strategy, know how to alter the strategy to meet unique situations, practice the strategy in a variety of settings, and continue to use the strategy when they need it, we have pretty much wasted both our time and the student's time. We know how difficult this can be when we are dealing with the learning strategies. In addition, generalization is certainly important for other instructional procedures as well.

Therefore, we must deal with how we think about generalization of the Content Enhancement Teaching Routines. Thinking about generalization regarding Content Enhancement Teaching Routines involves additional levels of complexity than when thinking about learning strategies. With the Content Enhancement Teaching Routines, we must consider teachers as well as students and instructional devices as well as strategies. Therefore, the following questions present themselves: What should we be looking for as we watch teachers implement routines in their classrooms? How do we know that students are learning to use the device and the routine to help them learn?

If you have looked at either **The Lesson Organizer Routine** or **The Concept Mastery Routine** you know that we must consider the two new elements of *teaching routines* and *teaching devices* in addition to *strategies*. We refer to a "device" as the instructional tool, often in the form of a graphic organizer contained on a single page. We use "routine" to refer to how we present the device to the students in a way that they can better understand critical content (i.e., the Concept Diagram or the Lesson Organizer). This is accomplished through the use of Linking Steps which are unique to each Content Enhancement Teaching Routine because they are designed to guide how we

deliver the information contained on the selected device (i.e., the steps cued by the acronyms CONCEPT or CRADLE).

Furthermore, in order to establish a set of guiding procedures that are familiar to the students, we have devised an overall process for making sure students know about each device and how it is helping them learn; we call this the Cue-Do-Review sequence. In "Cue," we tell the students what is going to happen and what we expect of them; in "Do," we use the linking steps designed specifically for each device; and in "Review," we link the content to the device to assure understanding. In a word, the Cue-Do-Review sequence is how the device "grows up" to be a routine.

It is important to understand that behind every teaching routine is a "strategy". (Enclosed in this Stratenotes is an overhead that you can use in your training to help you make the distinction between a "strategy" and a "routine".) Teaching routines have been designed for teachers to use in order to compensate for the absence of a strategy on the part of students. For example, if a student could generate his/her own advance organizer, we would not need to give the student an advance organizer using **The Lesson Organizer Routine**. If the student could analyze a concept and sort out the characteristics and exemplars of a concept, we would not have to identify and help students explore and define concepts through **The Concept Mastery Routine**. Yet, students will make greater strides toward generalization of the strategy if, in using a teaching routine, teachers specifically focus on the process involved in the linking steps which guide the development of content understanding through the use of the teaching device.

Therefore, as we use routines to compensate for poor learning strategies, we need to realize that every time we use a teaching routine we really are *modeling* the learning process and *talking* about the learning strategies needed to learn the content. As teachers and trainers, we need to begin to work for *natural* integration of these routines into our teaching. We need to help students see how teaching devices enhance learning and that how we use and talk about these devices is part of becoming strategic learners.



When teachers use these routines frequently, naturally, and fluently across many different teaching situations, generalization is beginning to occur for them. Similarly, when students regularly look for devices and ask how they can link what they know to the content presented in these devices across a variety of learning situations, generalization is beginning to occur for them.

So, how do we know that generalization of teaching routines is occurring or not occurring for teachers and students? Here are some possible guidelines:

## **Teacher Generalization**

### **GOOD SIGNS**

1. Preparation of the device is included as a part of regular planning activities; devices are immediately and naturally considered as part of the overall teaching approach.
2. The device is used as part of helping students understand different levels of the content (i.e., coursewide ideas, unit ideas, lesson ideas).
3. Class discussions emerge about how learning is taking place, why learning the content is either easy or difficult, and how learning could be enhanced; the teacher talks with students about how the device helps them use strategies for learning.
4. The device is used as a classroom routine consistently throughout the year; students tend to see the routine as a "comfort zone" for learning and taking risks to learn.
5. Students know about the device and immediately know how to jump in and collaborate with the teacher.
6. Extensive and consistent use of routines promotes more reflective planning and successful teaching.
7. The information presented through the device is used repeatedly and in important ways during instruction.
8. The information in the device is a central part of evaluations of learning.

### **WARNING SIGNS**

1. The routine is used only at the suggestion of a special education teacher; each device is seen as intrusive and "too much work".
2. It is difficult for the teacher to see how the device can be used at different levels of teaching (i.e., coursewide ideas, unit ideas, lesson ideas).
3. The device is used as an activity only to learn content and students don't have opportunities to discuss the process involved in the device that

they are using to learn.

4. The teacher hesitates to use the routine regularly because students appear bored with the routine and see it as wasting time or as more busy work.
5. After several uses, the teacher still has to explain the device and has trouble getting students to be involved.
6. The devices are prepared quickly and, as a result, don't help students over the difficult learning barriers to learning the content (i.e., the routine falls on its face when it is used with students).
7. The teacher does not request that the student use the information presented in the device in new ways
8. The teacher does not consider information presented in the device as a central part of evaluations of learning.

## **Student Generalization**

### **GOOD SIGNS**

1. Students know all about the devices after several uses and don't need directions on how the routine will be played out in class; questions are about the content and not about the device.
2. Students are jumping ahead of the teacher and predicting what is coming next.
3. Students plan how the device could be used to help them learn content in classes where the teacher is NOT using the routine.
4. Students are excited at the opportunity to study and understand important and difficult content.
5. Students can help lead the teacher through the routine; students can use the process of exploring the content prescribed by the routine without having to use the specific device (i.e., "...since I don't have a blank concept diagram handy, please give me a piece of paper, so I can diagram this vocabulary word....").
6. Students can take the information presented through the device to complete assignments and tasks that demonstrate competence in understanding the content.
7. Students recognize the value of a device and even request that teachers use a specific device to help them learn.
8. Every student in a class sees a way to use the device to promote learning.

### **WARNING SIGNS**

1. Without continuous prompts, students are lost when the device is used; they ask questions about where to write information, and information is

- written in wrong spaces on the device.
2. Students are not aware that the device is being used to help them learn or most students need to be dragged through the routine by the teacher; the high-achieving students are the only ones involved in the routine.
  3. Students moan when the teacher cues the routine, and they ask why they have to do this again.
  4. Students complain that the routine is a waste of time and that the work is too hard; students make few attempts to take notes or complete any written work related to constructing the device.
  5. Students cannot explore the content without the use of a specific graphic associated with the device; manipulation of the device by the teacher confuses and frustrates them.
  6. Students cannot explain the information in the device; they can't take the information in the device and use it in different ways
  7. Students do not see the device as a tool that they can use to help them organize learning tasks; they don't see the strategy behind the use of the device and the routine.
  8. Students see the device and the routine as useful only for low-achieving students.

## Corrections on Manual Information

The Sentence Writing Strategy Instructor's Manual. This manual does not have the new instructional stages as was stated in the last *Stratenotes*.

Additionally, The Education Planning Strategy manual is now being revised. It will emphasize transition planning as well as other types of educational planning. We now project that it will be ready in late Spring of 1994, and not early in 1994 as stated in last *Stratenotes*.

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## CEC Update Session Registration

Enclosed in this issue of *Stratenotes* is a registration form for the Update Session for SIM Trainers at the CEC Conference in Denver. As noted in a previous issue of *Stratenotes*, all Trainers will need to attend an update session every two years in order to maintain their certification. (We began keeping track of attendance at Update Sessions at the beginning of 1992, so if you haven't attended an update session since 1991, you might consider coming to this one!) The session will be held on Friday, April 8 from 8:30AM to 5:00PM. All registrants will receive notice of the place. To make the necessary arrangements, we will need to have your registration forms by March 1, 1994.

## Leadership Preparation Position Open

In the Fall of 1994, a 3-year Leadership Preparation Position will be available for someone interested in pursuing a Doctorate in Special Education at the University of Kansas under the guidance of co-advisors Don Deshler and Jean Schumaker. Applicants being sought are those individuals interested in becoming national leaders in the field of Special Education. The position includes an \$18,000 a year stipend, waiver of out-of-state tuition, and money for professional travel expenses and materials. Individuals interested in the position should contact Don or Jean for additional information and application requirements and materials. The application deadline will be February 1, 1994.