



STRATENOTES

A National Newsletter for SIM Trainers

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A SIM TRAINER?

Being a SIM Trainer means more than having passed certain requirements and having a certificate to hang on your wall. It means being an integral part of an organization of professionals devoted to ensuring that children receive good instruction. This organization is called the SIM Trainers' Network, and it was founded in 1983 when 15 professionals gathered around a table in a conference room in New Orleans and made a commitment to work together to put validated instructional methods in the hands of teachers such that they might provide appropriate instruction to their students. Those 15 people kept their commitment (they are all active members of the Network), and the Network has grown to more than 900 members located throughout the U.S. and Canada. It is still growing. This summer, groups of potential trainers will receive their training in Kansas, Montana, Connecticut, Texas, and Florida, and groups of other potential trainers have recently received training in Kentucky. About one-third of the members are professors at teacher-training institutions. The remainder are professionals in the education field; they are teachers, administrators, and staff development personnel.

No matter how many trainers there are in the Network, the Network cannot be a living, breathing, learning organization unless its members are committed to giving it life. The major goal associated with the Network, putting validated procedures in the hands of teachers in a way that enables them to provide appropriate instruction to students, cannot be met unless its members fulfill the meaning of being a SIM Trainer. What does being a SIM Trainer mean? It means a number of things;

among them are the following:

It means staying current. There are a number of ways SIM Trainers can stay current. They can attend SIM Regional Meetings and/or the SIM National Meeting. They can watch the Stratellite Broadcasts. They can subscribe to *Strateworks* and read *Stratenotes* and *Strategram*. They can obtain the latest articles on SIM developments from the KU-CRL through the mail or through the computerized bulletin board system called "StrateNET." They can read journals in the education field. Being a SIM Trainer means continually "sharpening one's saw" in terms of knowing the latest and adjusting one's actions accordingly. For example, it means knowing that a certain manual has been revised and changing one's training notes to allow for those revisions. It means using new terms (e.g., "Stages of Acquisition" instead of "Steps of Acquisition") in automatic ways. It means knowing that a certain educational practice is being widely used and creating ways for teachers to use strategic instruction in tandem with that educational practice.

It means being a model. Staying current means nothing if what is learned is not put into practice. Thus, being a SIM Trainer means putting validated instructional methods into practice and serving as a model user of those validated practices. At the minimum, it means using those validated practices in workshop sessions while training teachers and pointing out to them how the practices have been used. Whenever possible, it means using the practices any time one teaches, be it in a public school classroom, a university classroom, or a faculty meeting.

It means setting up demonstration sites. Although several wonderful demonstration sites exist, the Network badly needs demonstration sites in every state where people can see integrated SIM programs in action and a variety of applications of

SIM Training Network



SIM. Thus, being a SIM Trainer means either creating a demonstration site in one's own classroom and district or working actively with others to create a demonstration site. The demonstration site might be limited to a single classroom or extend throughout a school and a district. Ideally, a demonstration site would serve as a model for a full range of strategic instruction as well as content enhancement methods.

It means working cooperatively with other SIM Trainers. Throughout our work at the KU-CRL, one thing is abundantly clear: we get a lot more done if we work as a team than if we work alone. Throughout the country we see this principle at work. In locations where SIM Trainers are working together, a lot happens! Some groups of Trainers have been working together for years, and the payoff is great in terms of the impact they have had in their area and on each other. This past year, at least 27 new study groups were organized and met to watch and discuss the Stratellite Broadcasts. In the coming year, more groups will be forming.

It means training teachers to use validated practices in a sustained way. In order that integrated SIM programs be put into place in schools across the nation, trainers need to train teachers in a sustained fashion over time. That is, as new SIM developments become available, these developments need to be provided to teachers in such a way that they can build "whole" programs for strategic learners. Although piecemeal training (i.e., training in one strategy in one school and another strategy in another school, etc.) can be beneficial in some cases, it does not result in integrated programs that will produce generative strategic learners.

It means fighting for validated practices. New educational "fads" are continually being introduced

and eventually rejected. Being a SIM Trainer means fighting the current created by the proponents of each fad. It means finding ways to be a champion of strategic learning and, if necessary, to integrate strategic learning with the new fad. It means believing that validated practices that help students succeed are worth fighting for and living according to that belief, regardless of the latest policies, dictates, and financial crisis.

It means giving something back to the Network. As we get better at working together and developing systems through which we can communicate better as a Network, there will be many opportunities for contributing to the Network. Being a SIM Trainer means volunteering to be a study-group organizer or a meeting organizer, it means calling the organizer of a regional or national meeting and volunteering to help or give a presentation. It means writing an article for *Strategram* or *Stratenotes*, writing an article for a journal or local newsletter, writing a chapter for a book, telling a success story or bringing items to share at a SIM Regional or National Meeting. It means contributing ideas, handouts, and other materials to StrateNET, the computerized bulletin board system. Basically, it means sharing your ideas, time, and effort with others to make the Network a vital force.

Fortunately, the Network is lucky. There are many SIM Trainers who take these responsibilities to heart and contribute to the Network on a daily basis. Clearly, being a SIM Trainer means being part of a very special group of people who care about kids, teachers, and good instruction. We know what a struggle promoting good instruction can be, and we appreciate each SIM Trainer's contributions. They inspire us and keep us going! We extend our gratitude to all of you for what you've done in this now concluded school year, and we're looking forward to working with you during the one that is coming up.



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Dr. David Johnson to Speak at the National SIM Conference

Dr. David Johnson will be attending the National SIM Trainers' Conference in Lawrence this summer. He will be presenting the Keynote Address on Thursday, July 6. Dr. Johnson is internationally known for his work on cooperative learning structures. Since Dr. Johnson's recent interest has been promoting cooperative organizations, we have invited him to give us his thoughts on creating a cooperative SIM Network as well as on creating cooperative schools. In addition to his Keynote Address on Thursday morning, he will be conducting a workshop session in the afternoon. Both sessions should provide us with much food-for-thought for future directions.

Dr. Johnson is continuing in his role as a consultant on the Cooperative Strategies Project. He helped researchers create the *SCORE Skills Program* and the *Teamwork Strategy Program*, and he is currently working with researchers to develop three additional Cooperative Strategies. Thus, Dr. Johnson has been a contributing force with regard to SIM work.

Dr. David Johnson is a Professor of Educational Psychology with an emphasis in Social Psychology at the University of Minnesota. In 1972 he received a national award for outstanding research from the American Personnel and Guidance Association, and in 1981 he received a national award for outstanding research on intergroup relationships from the American Psychological Association. He is the winner of the 1984 Helen Plants Award and the 1986 Research Award in Social Studies Education. He is currently listed in Marquis' *Who's Who in the World*. For the past 20 years, he has served as an organizational consultant to schools and businesses in such areas as management training, team building, ethnic relations, conflict resolution, interpersonal and group skills training, drug abuse prevention, and the evaluation of effective outcomes of school systems. Dr. Johnson is

an authority on experiential learning and a practicing psychotherapist. He is a recent past editor of the *American Educational Research Journal* and has been president of the American Educational Research Association.

An Exciting New U.S. History Text

Dr. Doug Carnine and his colleagues have written a U.S. History textbook specifically for use with at-risk students. The instructional approach on which the textbook is based is called the Big Accommodations Program. It focuses on teaching students generative principles and concepts that underlie subject-area content. For example, one of the major concepts that is emphasized in the text is the concept of leadership. To deepen student understanding of the concept, the characteristics of leadership exemplified by people such as Jefferson, Washington, and Lincoln are examined. Because the textbook is built around major concepts and "Big Ideas," it coordinates well with the Content Enhancement Routines. Staff members of the KU-CRL are currently working with Dr. Carnine to produce Concept Diagrams, Unit Organizers, and other devices to be used with the text.

Some of the instructional features that are built into the text are:

- Clearly written text organized around big ideas
- Key vocabulary words defined
- Frequently interspersed questions
- Alternative forms of test questions
- Concept maps
- Cumulative review of critical concepts and vocabulary
- Discussion questions designed to involve all students.

Research conducted by Dr. Carnine and colleagues is indicating that the textbook is effective for special education students in mainstream and special class settings. A free copy of a student text is available for review for course adoption. Write to Considerate Publishing, 296 West 8th, Eugene, OR 97401; Phone: 503-485-1163

NEWS FROM THE NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL MEETING

The dream of five energetic trainers in the North Central Region became a reality when the conference that they had carefully planned for over a year took place on May 5th and 6th. The first North Central Regional Meeting was held at the Glenbrook South High School in Glenview, Illinois, under the excellent leadership of Donna Michals, Susan Meyer, Nancy Stone, Luanne Todd, and Peg Wolff. Thirty seven SIM trainers attended from an eight-state/one province area. The eight states and one province represented were Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Michigan, North Dakota, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Ontario.

Trainers came together to learn from each other and from presentations by Cindy Bentley, Don Deshler, Joyce Hack, Jean Horsky, Jean Schumaker, Luanne Todd, and Peg Wolff. Opportunities to logon to StrateNET were provided by Donna Michals. Sessions were conducted on training in Self Advocacy, Unit Organizer, Self Questioning, Concept Anchoring and Visual Imagery. Trainers from the region shared their expertise and knowledge in other sessions. Another special event was the recognition of trainers. Having recently completed their certification requirements, Sue Woodruff and Maureen Johnson, members of the Potential Trainers Class of 1994, were presented their certificates in recognition of their status as Certified Inservice Trainers. Congratulations, Maureen and Sue!

Thanks go to all the persons who made this event happen. We especially appreciate Donna Michal's and Nancy Stone's efforts to host this meeting at their high school. Next year Shari Schindele and her fellow trainers in Minnesota will host the regional meeting in Minneapolis.

Glowing reports of the conference have come back to KU-CRL. Here is part of a quote from a StrateNET message to Janet Roth from Sue

Woodruff. "The North Central Regional Meeting was wonderful. Everything was excellent, and the committee did an excellent job planning it. I was so enthused by the time I left, that as soon as I got home I made my reservations for July for the National meeting. I don't think I'll ever miss another one. See you in July. Sue"

STRATENET

Have you tried to use StrateNET? Be sure to look for Strategies at A Glance prepared by Luanne Todd, Illinois. These are excellent tools to let administrators and teachers know what the purpose is of each of the strategies and routines. You may download them from the Downloadable files. If you just want to read them, look under Conference in the SIM Components file.

STRATELLITE CONNECTION

Due to a large increase in fees which we have to pay to broadcast over Ku Band and C Band, we are considering whether we should broadcast over C Band only. If you are watching or taping the broadcasts, please let us know which band you are using. If you have not already sent this information to us, we very much appreciate your help. This information is so important to us.

KU-CRL AND NEBRASKA TRAINERS CONFER VIA VIDEO

On May 18, at 5:30 p.m., a group of trainers from Nebraska, under the capable leadership of Alice Senseney, interacted with Don Deshler, Jean Schumaker, Keith Lenz and Jan Bulgren via a video-conference hookup. The subject of the hour-long meeting was Content Enhancement. Trainers presented questions to the CRL staff,

and a discussion followed regarding the use of the materials in various training situations. One of the discussions was around the meaning of the word "concept" and various ways that "concept" has been defined. Although all of the participants had to get used to the jerkiness of the images and delayed sound in the broadcast, the conference was judged a success. This was an excellent way for all of us to become better acquainted. Nebraska educators taking part in the conference were Anne Millea, JoAnn Graham, Marci Janssen, Cindy Krause, Alice Senseney, Rosemary Manges, Don Kasparek, Mary Beth Rathe.



1995 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- July 6-8, 1995 - Eldridge Hotel in Lawrence, KS: *National SIM Trainers' Conference & Update Meeting*
- July 18-22, 1995 - Lawrence, KS: *Initial & Advanced Training Workshops in Learning Strategies*
- July 31-August 4, 1995 - Lawrence, KS: *Potential SIM Trainer's Workshop*
- October 5, 6, & 7th 1995 - Glade Springs Resort, Daniels, WV. *Northeast Regional Update Meeting*
- October 13 & 14, or 20 & 21 Iowa, *Midwest Regional meeting*
- February 9 and 10, 1996 Las Vegas, NV, *Farwest Regional meeting*
- March 1 & 2, 1996 Charleston, SC, *Southeast Regional Meeting*

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NATIONAL SIM CONFERENCE

Eldridge Hotel, Lawrence, KS
July 6-8, 1995

Thursday, July 6, 1995

- 8:00-8:45 Registration
- 8:45-10:00 Opening Session with Keynote
Address by Dr. David Johnson
- 10:15-11:15 Breakout Sessions
- 11:30-1:00 Luncheon to Honor SIM Leadership
Award and Gordon Alley Award
Recipients
- 1:15-3:15 Workshop by David Johnson
Workshop on Assignment
Completion
Field Trip on Education and the
Internet
- 3:30-4:50 Workshop on Paired Associates
Workshop on Surface Counseling
- 5:00-5:30 Regional Meetings
- 7:30-8:30 Social with Eldridge Hotel History
and Tour

Friday, July 7, 1995

- 7:45-8:30 Continental Breakfast and Poster
Session
- 8:30-4:45 Sessions on Content Enhancement
- 8:30-11:45 Concurrent Sessions on:
Assignment Completion, SCORE
and TEAMS, Math Strategies
and others
- 11:45-1:15 Lunch Break
- 1:15-4:45 Concurrent Sessions on Paired
Associates, Self Questioning,
Surface Counseling, Cracker
Barrels, etc.
- 1:15-3:15 Field Trip on Education and the
Internet
- 5:00 - 7:00 Social at Jean Schumaker's Home

Saturday, July 8, 1995

- 8:30 - 9:15 General Session
- 9:30 - 12:30 Workshop for Preservice:
Introducing Beginning and New
Teachers to Inclusive Teaching
- 9:30 - 11:45 Concurrent Sessions
- 11:45 - 1:15 Lunch Break
- 1:15-3:15 Concurrent Sessions on Assignment
Completion, Surface Counseling,
Paired Associates
Field Trip on Education and the
Internet

The University of Kansas

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