What's Simple about Enhancers?

We've all heard of the relatively complex Content Enhancement Routines (e.g., The Unit Organizer Routine, the Concept Mastery Routine, etc.), but what about something more simple that teachers can use minute-to-minute as they present content to their students? **Simple Enhancers** seem to fit the bill! Simple Enhancers are devices that teachers can use to make their content come alive for students every day. Examples of these devices are: stories, analogies, pictures, demonstrations, and games. (Figure 1 shows a more complete list of examples generated by some teachers.)

Figure 1: Simple Enhancers Contributed by Teachers

√ Stories	√ Examples
√ Pictures	√ 3D Objects
√ Music	√ Cartoon
√ Notes on board	√ Analogies
√ Experiential activity	√ Maps
√ Role Playing	√ Games
√ Charts	√ Rhymes
√ Songs	√ Raps
√ Vocal stress	√ Mnemonic devices
√ Movie	√ Film strip
√ Tie-in to prior knowledge	√ Demonstrations/ Models
√ Notes on overhead transparency	√ Body Language/ hand movement

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Some excellent teachers invent and use these devices spontaneously, but, often, the way they use the devices does not enhance students' understanding and memory of the content. Research at the Center for Research on Learning has identified some principles that must be applied as simple enhancers are designed, and some methods by which they are to be presented to students if student learning is to be enhanced.

Principles

First, the teacher needs to identify the most important content in a lesson that is not going to be enhanced with the more complex routines. Second, as the teacher searches for simple enhancement devices for these pieces of critical information, the teacher should keep in mind that the perfect device needs to make an abstract concept or idea concrete, tie the new information into already known information in some way, or make the new information memorable in some way.

For example, the abstract concept "sectionalism" might be made concrete by peeling an orange in front of the students and explaining how forces (one's hands) can tear the orange into sections, just like forces tore the country into sections at the time of the Civil War. New information about the functions of the parts of the eye can be tied to "old information" about the functions of the parts of the camera. The helping verbs can be made memorable by teaching students a song and gestures about the helping verbs or by teaching them a first-letter mnemonic device. (Figure 2 shows other principles that are useful when designing simple enhancers.)

Figure 2: Principles of Content Enhancement Contributed by Teachers

Make it...

√ interesting	√ fun
√ relevant/personal	√ practical
√ easy	√ learner friendly
√ concrete	√ visual
√ non-threatening	√ organized
√ memorable	√ sequential
√ novel	√ surprising
√ portable	√ understandable
√ simple	

Activate students'...

√ participation	√ senses
√ thinking	√ emotions

Provide models for notes
Ensure success
Point out relationships
Point out structure

Presentation Methods

Once a simple enhancer is designed, it must be presented to students using the CUE-DO-REVIEW Sequence if it is to enhance student learning. First, for the "CUE," the teacher needs to name the device and the content to be learned (e.g., "I'm going to use this orange to explain what sectionalism means" or "I'm going to tell you a story to help you understand how the different parts of the brain function."). Then the teacher needs to emphasize the importance of learning the information or give a rationale for learning the information (e.g., "This is important, for the concept of sectionalism is the foundation for all we'll be learning in the next two weeks. If you understand sectionalism, you'll understand this whole unit.").

For the "DO" part of the sequence, the teacher presents the device, being certain to carefully tie the device to the content to be learned. KU-CRL research has shown that if the content to be learned is not carefully tied to the device in a very explicit way, many students (especially at-risk students) do not make the connection themselves. For example, if an orange is simply peeled in front of students and the sections are shown, some students can tell you after class that sectionalism is like the sections of an orange but cannot tell you how the sections relate to the Civil War.

For the "REVIEW" part of the sequence, the teacher, at the end of the lesson or the next day, asks students questions about the content that was enhanced, reinforcing the connection between the simple enhancer and the content. For example, on the next day and the day before the test, the teacher might ask students to explain how an orange is a symbol of what happened before the Civil War. The teacher and students might sing the helping verb song every day for a week and then the teacher might have each student sing the song individually for an oral quiz. In other words, after the device is originally presented, it needs to be part of the ongoing dialogue between students and teacher if enhanced learning is to be ensured.

Simple Enhancer Workshops

As you are presenting a series of Content Enhancement Workshops to a group of teachers, you might include a half-day session on simple enhancers. A possible sequence for the session is as follows.

I.   **Introduce and define "content enhancement"**
1. Define the words "content" and "enhancement." Use any simple enhancers that you can to define the words, making sure to give a good model of how to "CUE" and "DO" each simple enhancer. For example, have several textbooks available (e.g., for math, science, social studies) and refer to the information in those textbooks as "content." Summarize the story of Cinderella and how her fairy godmother "enhanced" or "transformed" the way she looked. You might even have a magical wand available to enliven your story! Alternatively, use a story about a magician you have watched recently who has transformed something plain or simple into something wonderful.
2. Explain that content enhancement means taking content (or information) and enhancing (or transforming) it in such a way that the information becomes meaningful and memorable. Explain that the teachers can become "magical" enhancers themselves if they follow a particular mind set.
3. Introduce the mind set overhead (Figure 3), and explain each part of the mind set. Again, use as many simple enhancers as you can to introduce each part including examples from your own experience.
4. If you have time, after you introduce the idea of a "master" in an apprenticeship relationship on the mind set overhead, co-construct a Concept Diagram on the concept of "apprenticeship" with your participants.

Figure 3:   Think of yourself as:

√ A Content Expert
√ An Expert Learner
√ The Master in an Apprenticeship Relationship
√ A Searcher
√ A Transformer
√ An Evaluator of your own teaching

II.   **Introduce Simple Enhancers**
1. Explain the idea of a simple enhancer. Explain that it is a simple device that helps a teacher make a difficult idea come alive for students. Give one example of a simple enhancer that you have used (e.g., the story about Cinderella).
2. Ask the participants to name other simple enhancers you have used so far in the workshop session. Make a list of them on a blank overhead transparency. Ask them what idea(s) you were trying to teach associated with each enhancement device. List the idea next to each enhancer. (This is the "REVIEW" part of the routine.) If you made a Concept Diagram of "apprenticeship," and someone names the Concept Diagram as a simple enhancer, explain that the Concept Diagram is a complex enhancer.
3. Ask the participants to think about the list of simple enhancers you have used and to brainstorm the principles associated with the creation of simple enhancers. Give them the stem, "Make it . . . what?" to give them a start. Make a list of the

principles they generate on a blank overhead transparency. See Figure 2 for ideas and to use to prompt the teachers in your session.

4. Ask the participants to think about the simple enhancers they have used and that they have seen used, and to brainstorm as many types of simple enhancers as they can. You might have them begin by turning to their neighbor and explaining one simple enhancer they have used. As a large group, make a list of types of simple enhancers on a blank overhead transparency. Show examples of some simple enhancers that teachers have designed in previous workshops or that you have designed for your students.

5. Ask the participants to think about their upcoming content and to design a **new** simple enhancer for their students based on the principles generated by the group. Have them share their ideas with their neighbor or within a small group. As the participants work and share, circulate among them, identify the best ones that represent a variety of subject areas, and ask a few participants (two or three) to share their simple enhancers with the whole group.

III. Explain the CUE-DO-REVIEW Sequence

1. Display the CUE-DO-REVIEW overhead, and explain that simple enhancers must be presented to students in a certain way if students are to benefit from their use. Explain each part of the CUE-DO-REVIEW Sequence, and refer back to the examples you used in your presentation to illustrate each part of the sequence (e.g., "What did I say right before I told you the story of Cinderella?", "How did we review the _____?").

2. Give another model of how to use the whole CUE-DO-REVIEW Sequence with one more simple enhancer.

3. Ask the participants to think about the new simple enhancer they have designed and to write out the CUE-DO-REVIEW Sequence for the enhancer. Leave the CUE-DO-REVIEW overhead transparency on the projector so they can use it as a guide. Circulate among the participants and provide help as needed. They may have a great deal of difficulty with this concept, so allow plenty of time to work with everyone.

4. Have the participants do the CUE-DO-REVIEW Sequence with their partner. Circulate among the participants, and provide help as needed. Select a couple of participants to present the CUE-DO-REVIEW Sequence to the whole group. Be sure to select individuals who will provide excellent models of the whole sequence.

5. If you have time, ask the participants to design additional simple enhancers and to plan the CUE-

DO-REVIEW Sequence for each enhancer. If they have learned the Unit Organizer Routine or the Lessons Organizer Routine and have planned units or lessons, have them plan simple enhancers to use within each unit or lesson.

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Michael Pressley
by Roger Martin

Tolstoy, Faulkner, et cetera. Everybody knows there are great writers. But great readers? Michael Pressley thinks so. A bald guy who wore a blazer, a bow tie and an extremely rumpled pair of pants on the day I heard him speak, Pressley is an expert on learning. The KU Center for Research on Learning had him out from the State University of New York at Albany to be a leadoff hitter for the National SIM Trainers' Conference this year.

Here's what Pressley has figured out about the behavior of great readers. First, they're active. Even before they wade into a book, they look through it and study the table of contents. As they read, they try to link what they're reading now with what they read earlier in the book. Some even take notes.

Second, skilled readers register what's happening inside them as they read. They note when a textbook is dry. When it's hard, they say to themselves, "I don't get it," then adjust their reading strategy until things clear up. Even good readers have to work hard to get the meaning out of a book or article.

Third, skilled readers are critical of what they read. They approach a book with an attitude, an expectation that it was written by a mortal, not a god, and that it will have particular biases and slants. They'll read between the lines looking for the author's ideological bent. They cheer and swear and doubt that text.

As I say, interesting stuff. So I thought, "Why not treat his talk like a brief textbook and grade myself as a reader of *The Book of Pressley*?"

First, I asked, "Was I active before I waded into the speech?" Yeah, yeah. I went into the library john and saw this guy with a gleaming pate, a bow tie and a beard, and I said to myself, "This is the keynoter." I noticed he was taking a LOT of time splashing water on his face, and I started guessing what that might mean.

Next, I asked, "Did I attend to my inner responses to his talk?" Again, the answer is yes. The practice of journalism demands it. I signed relief at the clarity of this talk. He used only a couple of those really awful phrases you sometimes hear at these things, like

"conscious inference-making" or "affectively charged."

Finally, I asked, "Was I critical?" and "Did I figure out his bias?" I think so. He said he'd been observing fourth- and fifth-grade teachers but had never heard one say about a piece of work, "This is bunk," and then added, "We ought to be teaching that — because a lot of stuff is bunk." I thought, "This guy's got a 'Question Authority' bumper sticker on is car. He's a product of the 1960's."

So I guess I was an OK reader, although I'm sure it helped that I graded this exam myself. With my new knowledge, I'm ready to read the clerk, the termite inspector, and the travel agent. When you think about it, everybody and every event in our lives is a story, waiting to be read, actively, critically, emotionally. Pressley wasn't just talking about reading.

He was talking about living fully.

Roger Martin is the Director of Communications of the Office of Research and Public Service at the University of Kansas. He recently attended the National SIM Trainers' Conference in Lawrence, Kansas, to obtain material for a piece that was read on the local NPR affiliate, KANU-FM.

STRATELLITE CONNECTION

Program #5 of the *Stratellilte Connection* video series has recently been released. Persons who attended the National SIM Trainers' Conference in June were given a copy of the tape. Study group organizers have been sent materials for their study group meetings in the fall. Anyone who wishes a copy of this fifth video tape needs to let us know. A few of the free videos are available. Once these are all distributed, video #5 will be available with the other *Stratellite Connection* video tapes for $15 each from the KU-CRL office.

AGENDA for Program #5

Applications of Strategies with Gifted/LD Students
Karen Lyerla, Lawrence High School, Lawrence, KS

Applications of Strategies in English as a Second Language Classes
Dave Moynahan, Garden Grove, CA

Training Ideas: Implementation

Word Identification:
    Testimonials
    Teaching Ideas
        Applications with LINCS
        Applications in Elementary
        Elementary Classroom Activities

Segment Index
(hour:minutes:seconds)

0:00:18	Start of Program
0:01:42	Application: Gifted/Learning Disabled
0:21:50	Application: English as a Second Language
0:33:14	Training Ideas on Implementation

0:45:39	Word Identification Testimonials
0:56:15	Word Identification Teaching Ideas
1:05:41	Word Identification Classroom Applications
1:18:30	End of Program

Possible Topics for Study Group Dialogue and Exploration

1. What are some of the implementation problems that you are having with teachers whom you train? What are some of the solutions that you have tried? What has worked for you?

2. Discuss ideas presented in the video for teaching World Identification and other activities that you have used. Discuss how you might share these ideas with teachers in future workshops.

3. When teaching English as a Second Language students who lack skills, how do you build in broad based language experiences?

4. Share any experiences that you have had with students who are gifted and who also have learning disabilities. Discuss ways that you have used or might use the learning strategies with these students.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORGANIZE A STUDY GROUP?
PLEASE CONTACT JANET ROTH
AT 913-864-4780 OR
KU-CRL, 3061 DOLE,
LAWRENCE, KS 66045.

Upcoming Regional Update Meetings

All trainers are invited to attend any of the Regional Meetings and are required to attend at least one update meeting every two years.

Midwest Regional SIM Trainers' Update Conference "Gateway to Learning"

Jean Schumaker and Keith Lenz, Keynote Speakers

**St. Louis, Missouri
October 11-12, 1996**

You are cordially invited to join us at the Midwest Region SIM Trainers' Update Conference. This fabulous event will be held in St. Louis on **Friday and Saturday, October 11 & 12, 1996.** The conference hotel will be the Holiday Inn at the airport which is called the St. Louis Airport/Oakland Park Holiday Inn or the short name, "Oakland Park Holiday Inn." The hotel can be directly reached at 1-800-426-4700.

When calling the hotel to register, please identify your group as "KU Midwest Region SIM Trainers." Our group room rates are $74.50, single or double occupancy. A block of rooms will be held until September 26. We have been advised that there are several conventions in St. Louis that weekend, so it will be important to book a room as soon as possible.

This conference will provide updates on new manuals, concurrent sessions on a wide variety of topics, and opportunities to discuss successes and issues with your fellow trainers as well as teachers from our area. We have also invited SIM teachers to attend the conference. Separate strands of training will be offered for trainers and teachers, but trainers may attend any of the other "teacher" sessions. To accommodate our staff, the conference for teachers will begin on Thursday, October 10 in the afternoon; we are planning concurrent sessions from 3:00-6:00 pm. So if you arrive early on Thursday afternoon, you are invited to join us for those sessions also. There will be no added cost for these sessions.

Registration begins at 8:00 am on Friday. The keynote session will begin at 8:30 am and sessions will conclude by 5:00 pm each day. Coffee, tea, and bagels or assorted pastries will be served both days and are included in the $30 registration fee. The cost of lunch is not included in the registration fee, but you can pay for it when you register (approximately $8-10 per day).

The pre-registration deadline is August 30th, and the final registration deadline is September 20th. Please contact Mary Ellen O'Hare or Bev Colombo (314-569-8259 or 8429) for the complete registration packet.

Northeast Regional SIM Trainers' Meeting
"Making Connections: A Retreat to the Future"

Don Deshler, Featured Speaker

Rensselaerville, New York
November 8-9, 1996

We have reserved the entire Rensselaerville Conference Center in Rensselaerville, New York, for our third annual Northeast Region SIM Trainers' Meeting on **Friday and Saturday, November 8-9, 1996.** The Center is located in the Helderberg plateau in an ideal rustic setting 45 minutes southwest of Albany, New York. Because it is located in a secluded area, there are no nearby restaurants or lodgings. We have reserved the entire complex including all 45 overnight rooms. Accommodations will be limited and on a first come basis.

The registration fee includes one night's lodging (Nov. 8), four meals, and all training materials. Manuals will be sold at the conference. Check-in time on November 8th is 11:00 am - 12:00 pm, and lunch will be served from 12:00 - 1:00 pm. The sessions begin at 1:30 pm. The registration fee is $200 registration fee for a single occupancy room, and $175 per person for double occupancy. Participants must pay for the entire conference even if a meal is missed.

Schedule:
Friday, November 8, 1996

Check in	11:00 am - 12:00 pm
Lunch	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Sessions with Don	1:30 pm - 3:00 pm
Sessions	3:30 pm - 5:30 pm
Dinner	6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Social	8:00 pm - 9:30 pm

Saturday, November 9, 1996

Breakfast	8:30 am - 9:30 am
Sessions with Don	10:00 am - 11:45 am
Lunch	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Breakout Sessions	1:30 pm - 3:00 pm
Closing	3:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Please contact Janet Roth at the KU-CRL office (913-864-4780) for further information.

1996-97 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 11 & 12, 1996- **Midwest Region** SIM Trainers' Update Meeting, St. Louis, MO.

November 8-9, 1996- **Northeast Region** SIM Trainers' Update Meeting, Rensselaerville, NY.

February, 1997- **Far West Region** SIM Trainers' Update Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.

February 21-22, 1997- **North Central Region** SIM Trainers' Update Meeting in conjunction with LDA, Chicago, IL.

February 28 and March 1, 1997- **Southeastern Region** SIM Trainers' Update Meeting, Charleston, SC.

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MEET BELINDA CONRAD

We are pleased to announce that Belinda Conrad is our new office manager at KU-CRL. She has worked for the University of Kansas since 1977 and brings a great deal of experience to the position.

Her main hobbies and interests are volleyball and animals. Her current household consists of four dogs, two cats, two parrots, two ferrets, two guinea pigs, two gerbils, two lizards, and, for some reason, only one rabbit!

We are very pleased to have her with us, and she looks forward to meeting you via phone, mail, or in person when you come to Lawrence. Welcome, Belinda!

It's time to renew or subscribe to STRATEWORKS for 1996-97.

Keep up-to-date on the latest ideas, developments, and new materials on teaching students and developing strategic learners from the researchers at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning. Stratenotes will provide you with information on your regional meetings, study group activities, and satellite broadcasts.

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- ✪ 9 issues of **Stratenotes**, the newsletter for trainers [published yearly (September thru June, except December, Don Deshler, Jean Schumaker, Keith Lenz and Jan Roth contribute their expertise.]
- ✪ 2 recent publications from KU-CRL
- ✪ Access to the computerized Electronic Network, known as **StrateNET** (trainers will obtain information from the Center and be able to communicate with other trainers to share materials and information with each other.)
- ✪ Listing in the National Directory of SIM Trainers
- ✪ Access to ordering SIM Materials for workshops

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Stratellite Connection Program #5 Information

1996-1997 Calendar of Events

Note: Due to the increase in shipping rates, our minimum shipping charge will now be $4.00 rather than $3.00.

University of Kansas
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Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities
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