STRATENOTES

An International Newsletter for SIM Trainers

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Special issue: Content Enhancement

Many trainers have asked us to discuss the content and the organization of the Content Enhancement Routines and to provide additional training guidelines. This issue of Stratenotes takes an in-depth look at Content Enhancement Routines, what they are, and how they fit together. We also offer a few guidelines for providing Content Enhancement Routine training, and we dispel a few myths about implementation of the routines.

Pages 3 through 6 of this issue are designed as a complete, pull-out reference describing Content Enhancement Routines and graphically depicting relationships among the routines. This article addresses where the routines fit best into continuing instruction.

As all of us continue to implement these routines in schools, we will certainly find that we have missed some myths and have not captured possible relationships among routines. We encourage a discussion in the Forum section of StrateNet of how the routines are used in schools and how we might modify our thinking.

Content Enhancement Routines fall into three general sets.

- **The stage:** The Course Organizer, Unit Organizer, Lesson Organizer, Quality Assignment, and Survey routines set the stage for learning, launching a process that requires the acquisition of in-depth conceptual and factual knowledge.
- **Conceptual knowledge:** The Concept Mastery, Concept Anchoring, and Concept Comparison routines focus on the acquisition of conceptual knowledge.
- **Factual knowledge:** The Clarifying and Recall Enhancement routines focus on the acquisition of factual knowledge.

The figure on page 4 illustrates the instructional relationships we intended as we created and field-tested the routines. The figure depicts the routines as falling into course-level, unit-level, or lesson-level categories. However, many relationships exist, and the routines may be inserted into instruction in other ways to meet individual needs.

The routine prominently featured at the center top of the figure on page 4 is the **Course Organizer Routine**. This routine helps teachers introduce the subject of study at the beginning of a course. The

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Course Organizer introduces the routines that will be used during the course. As the teacher plans the units, the critical concepts, and the standards that will be emphasize during the course, the teacher also should consider which routines to include in the course.

After teachers use the Course Organizer Routine to give an overview of the course, they can use the **Unit Organizer Routine** to present units in more detail. The figure on page 4 shows two ways the routine might support course ideas and content. "The Bigger Picture" section of the Unit Organizer addresses the course questions, themes, and concepts introduced in the Course Organizer Routine. The unit questions, the "is about" statement that captures the main ideas, and the unit concepts taught and emphasized using the Unit Organizer should support the questions and concepts introduced in the Course Organizer Routine. Teachers use the Expanded Unit Map, which is constructed as part of the Unit Organizer, to help summarize what students have learned as the unit progresses.

The **Lesson Organizer Routine**, which helps teachers organize lessons within a unit, can be used in conjunction with the Unit Organizer to support unit ideas, or it can be used independently to convey course content. As a teacher presents each part of the Unit map, for example, he or she can use the Lesson Organizer to focus attention on each part of the unit. After one or more lessons, the teacher can use the Expanded Unit Map in the Unit Organizer to

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Implementing Content Enhancement Routines

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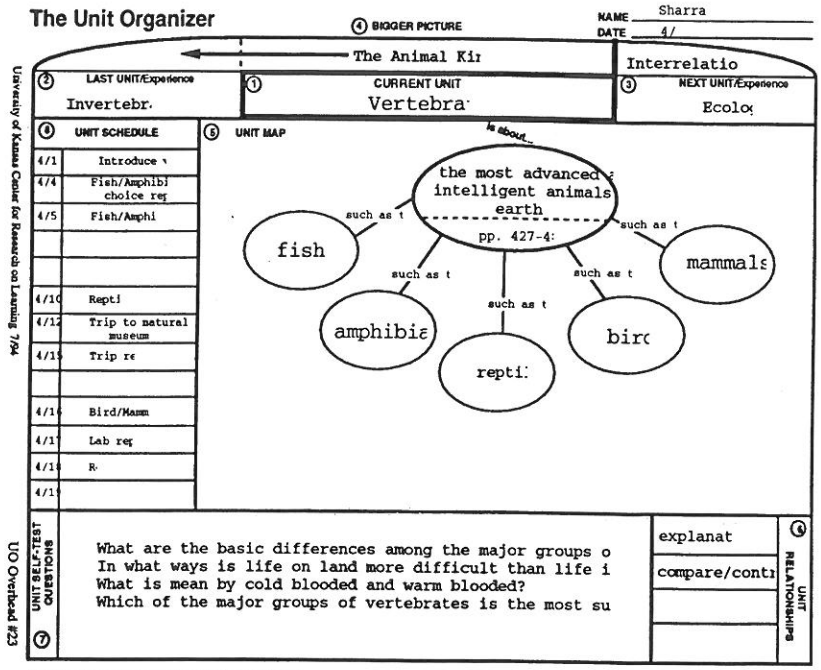
summarize the information included on the Lesson Organizer(s). Alternatively, the Lesson Organizer can be used *instead of* the Expanded Unit Map or the Unit Organizer. When the teacher substitutes the Lesson Organizer in this way, he or she needs to spend more time introducing the Unit Map included in the Lesson Organizer.

Another routine teachers can use successfully at the beginning of a course is the **Quality Assignment Routine**, which teachers use to explain to students how assignments will be given. Later in the course, teachers can use the Quality Assignment Routine again to discuss the features of big assignments. This routine is most likely to be implemented with the Course Organizer Routine and with the Unit Organizer Routine.

The Survey Routine, which teachers and students use to preview a reading assignment, such as a chapter in a textbook, usually is implemented with the Unit Organizer Routine. If the teacher uses the Survey Routine for a reading assignment within a unit, the routine will be implemented with the Expanded Unit Map of the Unit Organizer Routine or with the Lesson Organizer Routine. The figure on page 4 shows the use of the Survey Routine at both the unit and the lesson levels.



Example of the Unit Organizer

The Concept Anchoring Routine, which is used to introduce a new and usually abstract concept, can be used at the course, unit, or lesson levels. At the course level, teachers can use the Concept Anchoring Routine at the beginning of a course to introduce a few critical concepts that will run throughout a course. Teachers often use the Concept Anchoring Routine, however, to introduce concepts that are critical to comprehending information in a unit or lesson. Teachers usually make the decision to use this routine during unit planning, but may implement it as part of a lesson. Thus, the routine may be associated with the Unit Organizer or the Lesson Organizer routines.

Similarly, teachers can use the **Concept Mastery Routine** to pull together information about concepts at the course, unit, or lesson levels. The routine can be used to introduce a concept, but it often is used to help students organize information about which they have some knowledge. It may be used at the beginning of a course to provide necessary boundaries for effective learning or at the beginning of a unit to help students consolidate information about important concepts, or it may be implemented as a lesson or part of a lesson. Teachers do not have to use both the Concept Anchoring and the Concept Mastery routines in the same unit or lesson. The figure on page 4 shows one unit in which the Concept Anchoring Routine is used, and another in which the Concept Mastery Routine is used.

After students are familiar with concepts, teachers use the **Concept Comparison Routine** to compare characteristics of two or more concepts. During unit planning, the teacher may decide that students need to understand the comparative relationships between two important concepts in a unit. The teacher notes this in the Unit Relationships box on the Unit Organizer, and the students and teacher then explore the relationships as part of the Expanded Unit Map. The comparison also could be part of decisions related to lesson planning and the use of the Lesson Organizer Routine because it focuses on manipulation of information within a unit. The Concept Comparison Routine can be used to compare

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The Content Enhancement Series

The **Course Organizer Routine** helps teachers introduce courses.

The routine helps teachers adopt the necessary vision and mind-set for including and maintaining the use of strategies and routines in their courses over the year. It also helps teachers plan for and create the type of learning community they want to build in their classrooms.

To implement the Course Organizer Routine, teachers

- create a set of course questions
- create a visual map of the units to be included in the course
- identify the rituals that relate to learning strategies and teaching routines that will be used and emphasized throughout the course
- identify the principles of "community" that will be honored and reinforced
- identify the standards by which students will be evaluated
- identify the types of communication systems that will be put in place to facilitate sharing information between teachers and students

The **Unit Organizer Routine** focuses on how teachers can "frame" and then teach a unit of information with students. A unit is any "chunk" of content that a teacher selects to organize into lessons and that ends with a test or closure activity. Typically, a subject-area course is divided into several such units. By framing a unit, the teacher helps students see and understand the "big picture" of the unit. Specifically, the Unit Organizer Routine helps teachers introduce and build a unit so that everyone can

- understand how the unit can be part of bigger course ideas or a sequence of units
- see a method for organizing knowledge
- define the relationships associated with knowledge
- clarify what has been done in relation to what must be done
- monitor progress and accomplishments in learning
- recognize what has been learned through self-questioning

The Unit Organizer Routine can be used to help students become oriented to where they have been, where they are, and where they are going in learning.

Our Content Enhancement routines are designed to help teachers organize and present information in a manner that benefits a wide range of students.

The **Survey Routine** helps teachers lead students through a pre-reading survey of different reading assignments (such as chapters, books, or stories). It provides an overview of a reading assignment. The purpose of the routine is to make students aware of the main ideas associated with the reading passage and to help students focus on the most important information in the passage as they read it later. Through the use of this routine, the students and teacher

- discuss the title of the reading passage
- make a prediction about the contents of the passage
- identify relationships among the current reading passage and other passages within the unit of study
- read and paraphrase the introduction of the passage
- determine the structure of the passage
- name the main parts
- identify key information within the passage
- read and paraphrase the summary of the passage

The **Lesson Organizer Routine** focuses on how teachers "frame" lessons that make up a unit and then share these plans with students. The routine shows how to use a graphic to introduce, anchor, and gain closure on a lesson that lasts one or more days. It is used for explaining what is important in a lesson and how the information or skills will be learned. Teachers use the Lesson Organizer Routine to introduce and build a lesson in which students

- understand the main idea of the lesson
- relate the lesson to their background knowledge
- understand how the lesson is structured and how the information is organized
- distinguish the most important parts of the lesson content from the less important
- understand the tasks and expectations associated with the lesson

The **Quality Assignment Routine** helps teachers present and ensure learner comprehension and awareness of high quality assignments during group instruction. General education teachers can use this routine to

- plan assignments that all students can complete at a high level of quality
- present assignments to students
- evaluate assignment products and give feedback to students

Using this routine, teachers also teach their students how to record assignments and use a strategy called "REACT" to ensure that they have all the information they need and that they can set goals and make a plan for completing the assignment.

Many Content Enhancement Routines use graphics, often referred to as devices, to help organize or present information.

The **Concept Anchoring Routine** focuses on how teachers help students connect new concepts to previously learned concepts to increase student understanding and retention of new information. The routine shows how to use a graphic, the Anchoring Table, to present a new, difficult concept using a familiar concept selected by the teacher. Teachers present and summarize similar characteristics possessed by the two concepts. Then the teacher and students can explore

- salient characteristics of the familiar concept
- similar characteristics possessed by the new concept
- how the shared characteristics enhance learning

This routine actively engages the students in creating a summary statement that shows understanding about why the analogy is meaningful.

The **Concept Mastery Routine** focuses on how teachers can help students understand and master key concepts within curriculum content. The routine shows how to use a graphic, the Concept Diagram, to

- identify a target concept
- place that concept within a larger framework
- explore students' background knowledge of the concept
- specify salient characteristics
- analyze both examples and nonexamples
- construct a definition of the concept

This routine actively engages the student in testing a new, previously unencountered item to determine whether it belongs to the target concept group.

The **Concept Comparison Routine** focuses on how teachers help students compare and contrast two or more concepts. This routine shows how to use a graphic, the Comparison Table, to specify two or more concepts and to explore characteristics of each. Then, salient characteristics that are not common between or among the concepts also are explored. The routine also encourages higher order thinking because students are guided in identifying larger categories into which the similarities and differences can be grouped. This routine actively engages the student in creating a summary statement that demonstrates understanding about the similarities and differences between or among concepts.

Four routines are being prepared for publication:

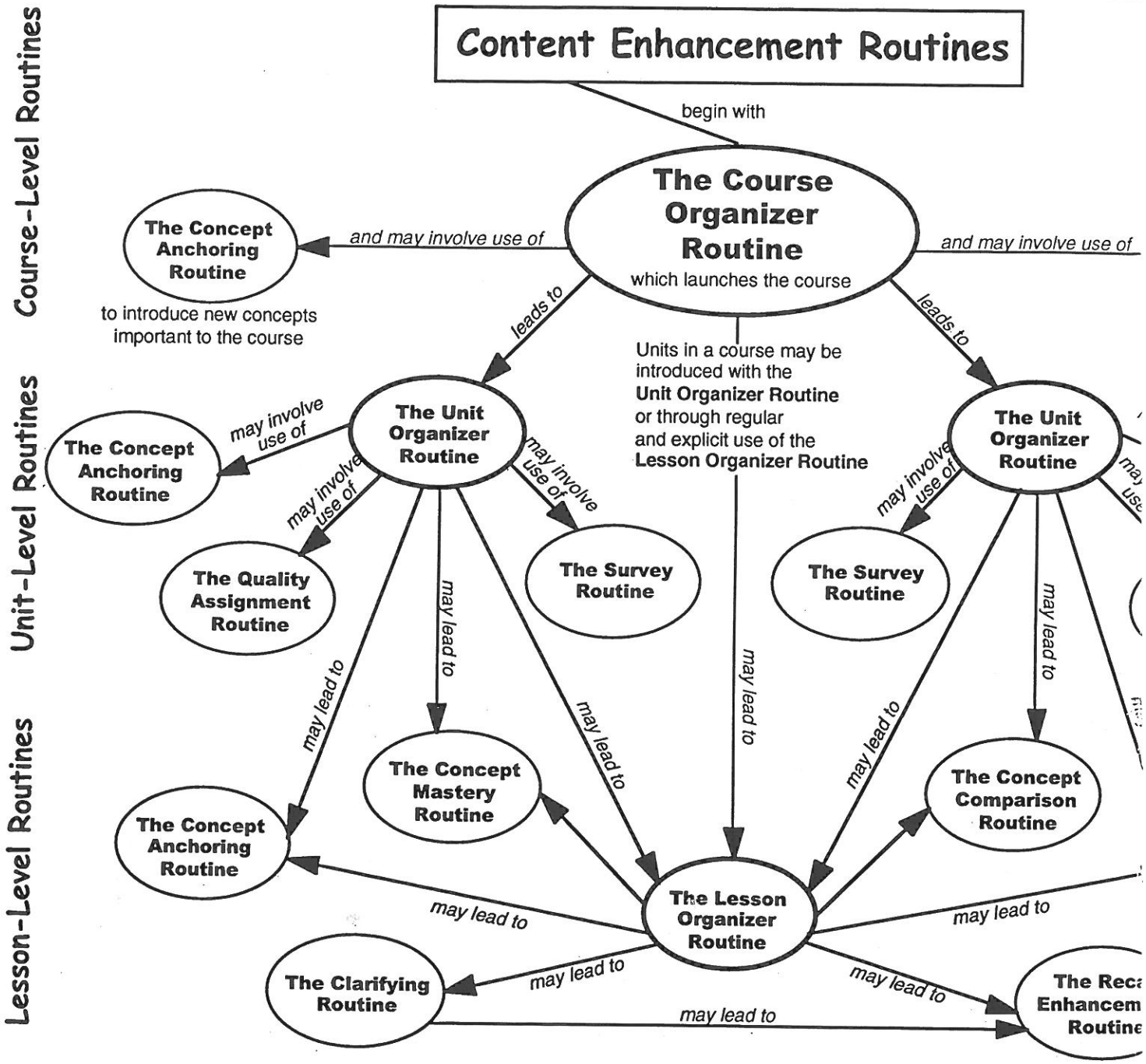
- The Course Organizer Routine
- The Quality Assignment Routine
- The Clarifying Routine
- The Recall Enhancement Routine

The **Clarifying Routine** focuses on how teachers help students to identify, explore, and organize information that supports the comprehension of factual information. A graphic organizer is used to help teachers

- identify a critical supporting detail
- explore key information about the detail
- relate what the student already knows to the detail
- clarify accurate and confusing uses and interpretations that might be associated with the detail
- summarize what students should remember about the detail and how it supports the understanding of bigger ideas and concepts in a lesson

The **Recall Enhancement Routine** focuses on how teachers can help students create remembering systems during group instruction to help students organize and recall a set of information they have been taught. General education teachers can use this routine to

- organize a set of information they have taught students
- involve students in creating a recall device to help recall
- help link the recall device to background knowledge
- explore how the recall device can be used to help recall
- test recall to ensure that students are using the recall device effectively



Myths about Content Enhancement

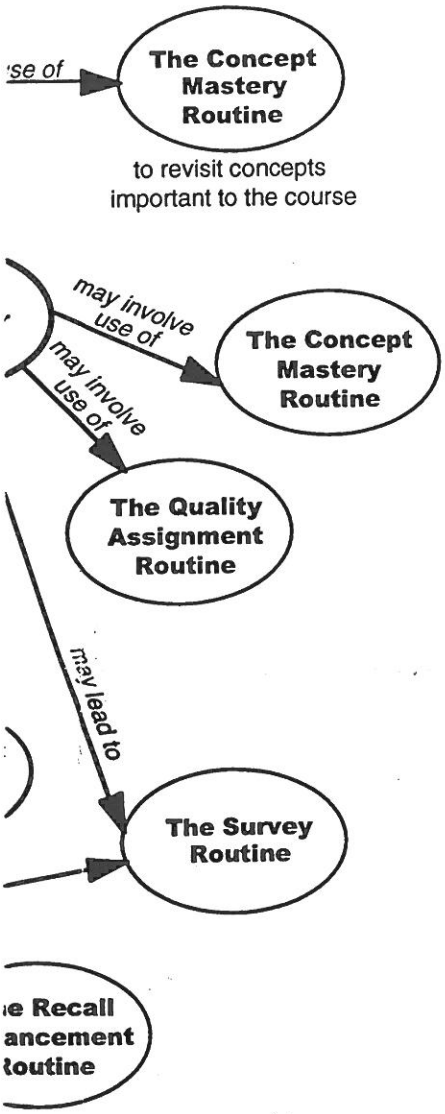
Here are four common myths we want to dispel about Content Enhancement Routines. You may know of others. If so, please let us know, and we'll address them in future issues of *Stratenotes*.

Myth: General education teachers can learn and implement Content Enhancement Routines more easily than special education teachers can learn and implement learning strategies.

Reality: Content Enhancement Routines are just as challenging, and teachers learning them need just as much support from the trainer. Ignoring this reality will ensure that teachers will not implement these routines correctly, and teachers will become disappointed with the results.

Myth: Content Enhancement Routines are not for use by support special education teachers.

The Content Enhancement Series



We are always looking for ways to improve our training, so we want everyone who is providing training in Content Enhancement Routines to tell us what is and is not working for them. In general, we have found the following guidelines helpful in providing Content Enhancement Routines training.

- Launch a Content Enhancement Routine series with the Concept Mastery Routine. Its focus on concepts and distinguishing concepts from factual information and examples serves as a basis for other routines. The Concept Mastery Routine helps teachers prepare for using the Course Organizer, Concept Anchoring, and Concept Comparison routines.

- Show the interactive development inherent in the Content Enhancement Routines process. For example, collaboratively develop a familiar concept such as "inclusion" or "democracy" during training. Model how teachers should interactively develop a device with students. Make sure you have prepared a draft before class begins.

- Allow about three hours of instruction for each routine. Provide ample opportunities for practice, sharing, and discussion.

- Provide some partially completed examples derived from a Content Enhancement Routine for the teachers to complete. Use concepts that all teachers can relate to. For example, develop practice materials comparing characteristics of such topics as cooperative learning, inclusion, or feedback for the teachers to complete.

- Provide poorly constructed devices for groups of teachers to critique and fix. Have the teachers compare an example and a nonexample of a device. For example, develop a poor set of course questions and have teachers apply the criteria for developing good course questions.

Reality: Special education teachers need to use Content Enhancement Routines just as much as general education teachers do.

Myth: Content Enhancement Routines enable general education teachers to be independent of other teachers in promoting inclusive practice.

Reality: Content Enhancement Routines are best implemented and maintained when they are used as a tool for promoting communication between teachers. The success stories of effective Content Enhancement Routine implementation almost always have been the result of collaborative efforts between teachers.

Myth: If too many teachers use the routines in a school, students will become bored with them.

Reality: Teachers often modify standard teaching procedures to make them more interesting. The more frequently students see and experience sound, explicit instruction, the more confident they become in what they know and what is expected of them. In general, students tell teachers that they prefer the use of the devices and the routines. Teachers should use these routines as a springboard for instruction that both maximizes learning and is interesting for students.

Enhancing content to help students learn

(Continued from page 2)

more than just concepts. It can be used, for example, to compare two or more battles or two or more examples. When the routine is used in this way, it helps students learn information that supports understanding of unit concepts.

When teachers need to present or review factual information rather than conceptual information, the **Clarifying Routine** can help students identify and understand factual information that supports concepts. This routine, which is implemented as part of fulfilling lesson plans, is most often associated with the Expanded Unit Map of the Unit Organizer or with the Lesson Organizer Routine.

Finally, once information has been presented to students, they must be able to understand it and store it in a way that can be recalled for later use in answering questions or performing tasks. Here, the **Recall Enhancement Routine** can help. The routine can be implemented at the lesson level and as a good follow-up to the Clarifying Routine.

We expect the relationships among the Content Enhancement Routines to evolve as we learn from implementing them in more classrooms. We look forward to hearing about your experiences.

How to Contact Us

StrateNet

StrateNet, our electronic network, allows you to contact any member of the SIM staff or other members of the SIM Trainers' network electronically. StrateNet offers a directory that makes it easy for you to address your messages.

E-mail

For those who haven't yet signed on to StrateNet but have Internet e-mail accounts, we also can be reached at the following e-mail addresses:

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Of course, you can always call us at (913) 864-4780, fax us at (913) 864-5728, or write to us at 3061 Dole, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045.

We look forward to hearing from you

Another new face at CRL

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning welcomes Andy Barker as our new FirstClass administrator. Besides supporting the FirstClass server (the backbone of our StrateNet electronic communications network), Andy provides computer support in the Center's office.

He is a junior at KU seeking a degree in architecture and business administration. During his free time (which isn't often, he says), Andy enjoys camping, playing on a summer softball team, and his newest interest, photography.

Andy replaces Wally Casquino, who will receive a master's degree from KU this spring. Wally has moved on to a full-time position. We wish Wally good luck in his new endeavors.

Regional meeting roundup

The final regional SIM Trainers' update meetings for this year were held in February and March.

Joe Crank and Barbara Millikan coordinated the Far West regional meeting Feb. 21-22 in Las Vegas. Anthony Bashir of Emerson College in Boston gave the kenote address, "Delivering Language Sensitive SIM." Other presentations included "Synectics as a Method for Developing Analogies," by Barbara Millikan, an "after dinner message" by Conn Thomas, and a Surface Counseling presentation by Joe Crank. Keith Lenz of the CRL staff presented information about several strategies and routines.

The North Central regional meeting was held in conjunction with the Learning Disabilities Association annual conference Feb. 21-22 in Chicago. Don Deshler and Jean Schumaker from CRL attended and presented sessions on several strategies and routines. Committee members Donna Michals, Sue Meyer, and Nancy Stone provided on-site support.

The Southeast region met Feb 28-March 2 in Charleston, South Carolina. Jerri Neduchal coordinated the meeting with the assistance of Sheri Fiskum and Eva Mitchener. CRL staff attending were Jean Schumaker, Keith Lenz, and Jan Roth.

Highlights included presentations by Sheri Fiskum and Jerri Neduchal, "A New SIM Attitude"; Bonnie Burch, "Pig Math"; Marty Beech, "Higher Educational Standards for All Students—Can we still use the Strategies Intervention Model?"; Karen D'Avignon and Joan Nejezchleb, "Strategies in the Inclusive Classroom with an Emphasis on DISSECT, PENS, and SLANT"; and Berna Levine and Giselle Stone, "Setting the Stage for a Successful Strategies Training." Jerri Neduchal, Sheri Fiskum, and Bonnie Burch hosted a social in their suite during which attendees relaxed and exchanged ideas.

1996-97 Calendar of Events

May 28-31, 1997–Pedagogies for Diversity-Inclusive Teaching in the Secondary School Setting Workshop, Lawrence, KS

July 10-12, 1997–National SIM Trainers' Conference, Lawrence, KS

July 22-26, 1997–Strategic Instruction Model Workshop-Level I, Lawrence, KS

July 22-26, 1997–Strategic Instruction Model Workshop-Level II, Lawrence, KS

July 22-26, 1997–Strategic Instruction Model Workshop on Content Enhancement, Lawrence, KS

July 28-August 1, 1997–Workshop for Potential SIM Trainers, Lawrence, KS

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Don't forget to register for the National SIM Trainers' Conference!

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