

Absolutely not!

Jean Schumaker

Associate Director, Center for Research on Learning

Over the last year, the staff members at the Center for Research on Learning have received several inquiries centering on the same question: Are we discarding strategies instruction and embracing content enhancement methods? The answer to this question is the title and focus of this piece. The simple answer is "Absolutely NOT!" The complex answer really has several parts.

Calendar

May 26-30, 1998
Pedagogies for Academic
Diversity in Secondary
Schools Workshop
for Preservice Educators
Lawrence, KS

July 9-11
National SIM Trainers'
Conference
Kansas City, MO

July 21-25, 1998
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop Level I
Lawrence, KS

July 21-25, 1998
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop Level II
Lawrence, KS

July 21-25, 1998
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop
Content Enhancement
Lawrence, KS

July 21-25, 1998
Workshop for Potential
SIM Content
Enhancement Trainers
Lawrence, KS

Aug. 3-7, 1998
Workshop for Potential
SIM Learning Strategy
Trainers
Lawrence, KS

First, we recognize that over the past few years, with the emphasis on inclusion, students with disabilities are receiving their educational experiences more and more in the general education classroom. We have seen, in some areas, special education teachers no longer having the venue to teach learning strategies to their students because their students no longer come to their room, and they (the teachers) are expected to be in general education classes for part or all of the school day. Nevertheless, this does NOT mean that we are giving up on strategies instruction. In fact, this is the farthest thing from our minds because we are convinced more and more each week that

- Students with disabilities and other at-risk students can become independent learners.
- Learning strategy instruction is a key intervention in helping students with disabilities become independent learners.
- *Intensive* instruction in learning strategies is required if students with disabilities are to make the kinds of gains in information-processing skills needed to become independent learners.

We are convinced about these points because we have now conducted more than twenty-five research studies focused on learning strategy instruction and the conditions under which it produces mastery. The bottom line is this: **Regardless of the setting in which the strategic instruction occurs, if students with disabilities do not receive instruction that includes multiple and frequent opportunities for practice of the strategy combined with appropriate and individual feedback, they do not learn new skills. On the other hand, if they are provided with the necessary opportunities for practice and appropriate feedback, they make steady gains and reach mastery.** Additionally, we have not seen these kinds of gains made by secondary students with disabilities in any other way with any other intervention. ►

Far West/Midwest Regions Meet

More than 50 trainers gathered for the joint Far West/Midwest Regional Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, on February 20 and 21 to enjoy the luxury of the Bally Hotel and the pleasure of sharing ideas with SIM Trainers from all over the country.

Thanks to Barbara Millikan, Gail Cheever, and Joe Crank for planning and coordinating the meeting. In addition to the sessions led by Don Deshler and Jean Schumaker from the Center for Research on Learning, presentations were offered by Susan Miller and Jan Butz on "Issues to Consider in Preservice Strategy Training," by Gail Cheever on "The Survey Routine," by Barb Glaeser on "The Integration of Reading Strategies in Grades K-12," and by Conn Thomas and Ann Hoffman on "Strategic Planning."

Sessions led by Don and Jean included "Using SIM in Today's Schools," "Partnership Learning," a discussion of an article on reading by Michael Pressley, "The Quality Assignment Routine," and "The Clarifying Routine."

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Thus, we are committed to learning strategy instruction and ensuring that it rides through the latest "storm" engulfing the nation. We are committed to working with you and the educators in our schools to find venues in which intensive learning strategy instruction can take place. Through your help and creativity, we have all seen that intensive and effective learning strategy instruction can take place in a variety of places and programs. We've seen it work in general education English classes, in summer-school programs, in short-term pull-out arrangements (see article on page 3 and the lead article in *Strategram* Volume 10, Number 2), in strategies courses, in ESL classes (see *Strategram*, Volume 8, Number 3), and in subject-area classes, as well as resource rooms. We are committed to protecting and expanding these venues for strategy instruction as we see the pendulum swinging back in favor of more intensive and individualized instruction for at-risk learners.

So where do the Content Enhancement Routines fit in? We see Content Enhancement methods fitting in everywhere as a partner with strategy instruction. In fact, Content Enhancement methods can be used to teach learning strategies. That is, learning strategy teachers are using Content Enhancement methods to jazz up their learning strategy instruction. For example, they are using Course and Unit Organizers to explain to students where they are going. They are using Simple Enhancers to make each day's lesson meaningful and exciting.

We also see Content Enhancement methods being used by the general education teachers who teach at-risk students subject-area courses. The use of these methods makes subject-matter content more "friendly" for students. Thus, they are able to understand and remember it better.

We all need to keep in perspective what learning strategy instruction and content enhancement methods contribute to the overall goal of

producing independent learners. Content Enhancement methods enable students to improve their grades on tests about 10 to 15 percentage points, on average. In essence, they are methods that can boost a student up about one letter grade on classroom tests. A student who is within spitting distance of a passing grade can pass; a student who is receiving grades below 45 percent might not. Content

We all need to keep in perspective what learning strategy instruction and content enhancement methods contribute to the overall goal of producing independent learners.

Enhancement methods have not been shown to produce better reading achievement or better writing achievement. They have not been shown to turn at-risk learners into independent learners or learners who are better able to approach learning tasks *on their own*.

In contrast, the learning strategy interventions have been shown to produce independent learning activity on the part of at-risk learners. High school students who were reading at the fourth-grade level can learn to read materials written at the ninth-grade level and above. Students who could not write complete sentences can progress to writing themes and research papers. Students who could not study for tests and who were failing their tests can learn how to study large quantities of information and earn As and Bs in content courses. Granted, these kinds of gains take time and require considerable effort on the part of teachers and students. They are certainly well worth the work, however, when we consider the quality of life these students will encounter if they do not make such

(Continued on page 8)

Accreditation team praises SIM effort

Sue Woodruff, a SIM Trainer from Muskegon, Michigan, has good reason to beam these days.

A recent report from the North Central Association Outcomes Accreditation Team praises the Strategic Instruction Model and the efforts of Sue and her co-workers to improve the reading skills of students at Muskegon High School.

"We are especially enthused with your reading program adopted from the University of Kansas," the team wrote in its report. "Sue Woodruff and the dynamic instructors in this program are making giant strides with helping students. Several members of our team visited the classroom and witnessed this program in action. How fortunate MHS students are to have such assistance. The ability to read with confidence is a fantastic life skill to give a child. The commitment to this reading program is wonderful. It requires support from everyone; teachers releasing students, students taking ownership, dedicated and patient instructors, the community believing in the program, and the board of education recognizing and accepting the need to wholeheartedly support implementation both in philosophy and cost. The program has the potential to

be a model for other schools."

The Communication Committee of Muskegon High School's School Improvement Team devised a "SIM intervention" as a way of reaching low-achieving poor readers within their English classes. English teachers released students to a "strategies" classroom for four to six weeks, where students received instruction in DISSECT. The team has been able to document incredible success with these students (see Figure 1).

Sue, who has been co-chair of the School Improvement Effort for the last three years, gives her principal, Arlyn Zack, high marks for his support of their efforts. When funding was cut, preventing Arlyn from hiring two teachers he wanted for the SIM intervention, he rerouted money from the high school capital outlay and textbook accounts so that he could get the program going. Funding has since been restored, and the group continues to garner support for the program.

Another English teacher recently retired from MHS, Marilyn Whitlow, was recently trained in two of the three reading comprehension strategies. She will be trained in other strategies as time goes on and will specialize in working with small groups of students

Support materials unavailable

The appendix of each of the strategy manuals lists suggested commercially available materials to use with the strategy. The following materials are no longer available from the listed resources: *Countries and Cultures* from Science Research Associates, *Dimension in Reading Series: Manpower and Natural Resources* from Science Research Associates, and *Double Action Series* from Scholastic Book Services.

Timed Readings by Edward Spargo and Glenn R. Willston is available from Jamestown Publishers, which is now a division of NTC/Contemporary Publishing Company at 4255 West Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood, IL 60646-1975. The phone number is (800) 621-1918 or (800) USA-READ. The fax is (800) 998-3103.

www.ku-crl.org

Visit our Web site for up-to-date information from the Center for Research on Learning. The site now includes a list of articles published by CRL staff members. It also features information about the 1998 National SIM Trainers' Conference.

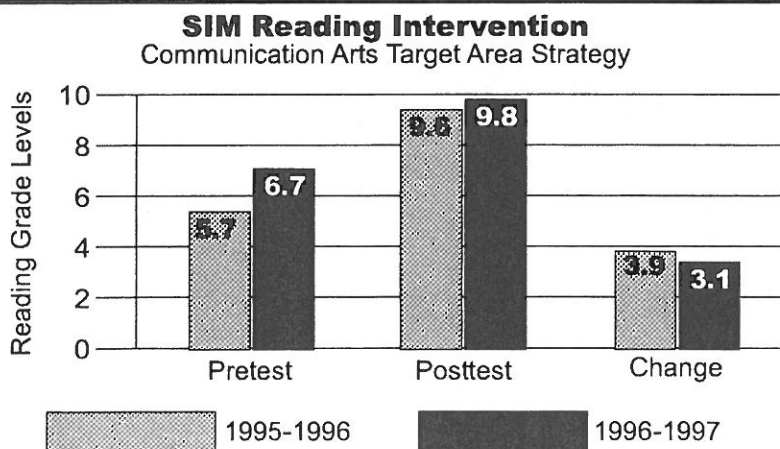


Figure 2

News from the field

Terry Freese, special education teacher and SIM Trainer, and Bill Henton social studies teacher, have combined forces to change what each felt was an inefficient and often ineffective class-within-a-class model to an inclusive teaching model in eighth grade social studies.

In a class of 17 students, in which 75 percent have individual educational plans, the Neosho, Missouri, team teaches organizational, understanding, and recall routines that are then used by all students. In the most recent chapter test, 56 percent of the CWC class earned grades of A or B. In comparison, in a class of 21 students in which no students have IEPs, 53 percent earned an A or B on an identical test.

Strategic instruction promoted by Terry and Bill includes teaching routines such as the Course Organizer to launch a course and Unit Organizers to introduce units throughout the course, the Survey Routine to promote the comprehension of reading materials, and a variety of concept routines. They teach specific strategies, such as FIRST-Letter Mnemonic and Paired Associates, within the course content. Bill and Terry have seen positive results for *all* students.

on reading comprehension strategies. Kathy Lutkus and Jan Graham are working with students who are reading below grade level.

"We begin with screening students and making a recommendation of who might benefit," Sue said. MHS now has 2.7 full-time strategies instructors working with general education students. (Resource students already receive this instruction in a special education setting.) Special education students are eligible for the program if they are in mainstreamed English classes.

Arlyn remains so committed to SIM that he accompanied Sue to the Far West/Midwest Regional Update Meeting last month in Las Vegas.

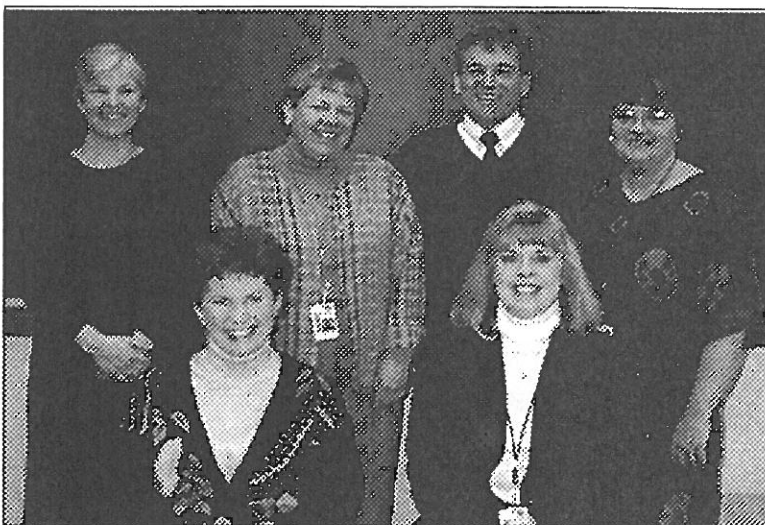
All of this high-profile success has resulted in a growing interest in SIM in Michigan. Dennis Hunt, the NCA team member who reviewed the Communication Committee efforts and who teaches developmental reading to low-achieving students in Battle Creek, Michigan, wants to receive SIM training. In addition, the two co-chairs of the visiting accreditation team want to have people in their buildings trained, and a number of teachers from outside of Muskegon have expressed interest in summer SIM workshops. A statewide training project sponsored by

KU-CRL and the Michigan Association of Learning Disabilities Educators (MALDE) is scheduled for June 22-26. As news travels, Sue said, more interest is generated.

"Particularly intensive and effective instruction is critical for students at the secondary level," she said. "They are often discouraged and downhearted. They need to see results within a relatively short period of time. Teachers have a hard time believing, and are somewhat skeptical, when looking at our results. That is why I love to *show* them and have them talk with both the kids and teachers. This program works! It works for us because of many factors—administrators who believe even kids with learning disabilities can learn with particularly effective instruction and who facilitate the process, teachers who are able to 'touch' kids and develop a partnership in learning, and students who become dedicated and committed to learning."

Although the outcomes accreditation process involved extensive data collection and analysis and a lot of hard work, Sue firmly believes the results have been worthwhile.

"The efforts are really beginning to pay off for us at Muskegon High School," she said. **CRL**



Muskegon High School SIM Intervention Team
Back, from left, Jan Graham, MaryAnn LaGuire, Arlyn Zack, Sue Woodruff. Front, from left: Kathy Lutkus, Marilyn Whitlow.



SIM Trainers: Join us in KC this summer

This summer, our journey along the Yellow Brick Road takes us to Kansas City, for three days of nonstop exploration and celebration. We'll explore important aspects of the Strategic Instruction Model, and we'll celebrate the many accomplishments of SIM Trainers as well as the 20th anniversary of the Center for Research on Learning.

This year's national conference theme, Follow the Yellow Brick Road, celebrates both the past and the future of our journey along the road to our goal of improved instruction and success for students with disabilities and learning problems. Our Emerald City is in sight, but we know we have much more traveling to do to get there.

During these three days, you will have ample opportunities to work with nationally known experts Rich Lavoie and Floyd Hudson, to meet one-on-one with CRL staff members, to meet the authors of the Learning Strategies and Content Enhancement manuals, and to enhance your skills to help teachers work effectively with students with learning disabilities.

Among the special opportunities planned for this year's conference is a full-day preconference session focused on innovative staff development strategies.

In your free time, you will find Kansas City's shopping, museums, restaurants, blues and jazz clubs, and more to be top notch. Check out your free-time options on the World Wide Web at www.visitkc.com or www.kansascity.com, and find more information about the conference itself at www.ku-crl.org. Make your plans now to join us for this very special conference.

When

July 8, 1998 (Preconference)

July 9-11, 1998 (Conference)

Where

Crowne Plaza Hotel

4445 Main Street

Kansas City, Missouri

Free parking for all conference participants.

Reservations

(800) 2-CROWNE

(800) 227-6963

Say you are attending the

National SIM Trainers'

Conference at the Crowne

Plaza in Kansas City, MO. Give

the code letters "UOK."

Reservations must be made before June 15, 1998.

Room rates

\$92/night, single or double plus

12.1% room tax

Transportation

KCI Shuttle

5 a.m. to 11 p.m.

\$21 round trip; \$12 one way

You may obtain shuttle service

at ticket counters at all airport

baggage claim areas or by

dialing "5000" on any White

Courtesy Telephone. Say you're

attending the National SIM

Trainers' Conference at the

Crowne Plaza. Reservations are

not needed from the airport to

the hotel; however, reservations

are needed for shuttle service

from the hotel to the airport.

(800) 243-6383

or (816) 243-5000

Conference registration

All three days
(July 9-11, 1998)

Early Bird: \$95

After May 1: \$130

Two Days

Early Bird: \$75

After May 1: \$110

One Day

Early Bird: \$50

After May 1: \$85

Preconference registration

Full day

\$30

Half day

\$20

Both prices include buffet lunch.

Registration form

A registration form was included in the January issue of *Stratenotes* or you may request one from the Center for Research on Learning by calling (785) 864-4780.

Conference events and materials

Your three-day conference registration fee includes the following:

- Thursday lunch
- snacks at the Thursday social
- Friday banquet
- Saturday continental breakfast
- training materials
- favors

One or two-day registration fees cover training materials, favors, and special events occurring on the days for which you are registered.

Wanted: Wizards of SIM

Do you have any great training tips you'd like to share with other SIM Trainers? Do you have a project or idea that would lend itself well to a poster? Do you want to be a Wizard of SIM?

If so, please consider participating in this year's "Wizards of SIM" session during the 1998 National SIM Trainers' Conference. The session will be Saturday morning, July 11. In addition to the traditional poster session, we will feature a "kaleidoscope" minisession in which trainers share three-minute tips with participants who will then rotate from presenter to presenter.

So, please plan to share some of that magic with us! If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Gwen Berry, Pat Gildroy, or Paula Lancaster at the Center for Research on Learning. All three may be reached through StrateNet or by calling (785) 864-4780.

And...put on your thinking (wizard!) hats!

National conference featured speakers

Rich Lavoie

Richard Lavoie, who holds several degrees in special education, is headmaster at Riverview School in East Sandwich, Massachusetts. Riverview's mission is to provide state-of-the-art services to adolescents with special educational needs.

Among Lavoie's credits are the video "Understanding Learning Disabilities: How Difficult can this be? The F.A.T. City Workshop."

In this workshop, parents, educators, psychologists, and social workers

Rich Lavoie will open the conference with a keynote speech at 8:45 a.m. Thursday, July 9. He will also present a special workshop later in the day.



participate in a series of classroom activities that cause *Frustration*, *Anxiety*, and *Tension*. The tape allows viewers to look at the world through the eyes of a child with learning disabilities.

Floyd Hudson

Floyd Hudson, whose "class-within-a-class" (CWC) model is one of the most frequently used service delivery models in schools today, is a staunch advocate of the Strategic Instruction Model. He incorporates both learning strategies and content enhancements into different CWC configurations. Given the challenges confronting teachers in delivering intensive skill/strategy instruction within the context of inclusive settings, Hudson's work on service delivery systems across all grades is especially relevant.

Hudson is highly in demand as a keynote speaker and presenter of educational workshops. He has worked with hundreds of school districts throughout the world.

Hudson, who received the 1997

Floyd Hudson will present a keynote address Friday morning, July 10, followed by a special workshop.



Award of Excellence from the Kansas CEC Federation and who is the former president of the Division for Learning Disabilities of the CEC, was invited to the White House to present to congressional and White House staff on the importance of legislation supporting learning disabilities.

Hudson is a professor of special education at the University of Kansas and is a former high school teacher, special education teacher, principal, and director of special education.

Innovative training skills preconference session

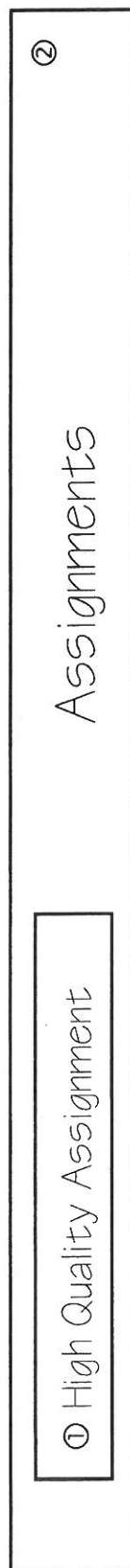
We have set aside a special day dedicated to learning new training techniques and practicing skills. Two preconference workshops focused on innovative staff development strategies are planned for Wednesday, July 8.

Morning session: Partnership Learning, led by Jim Knight

Afternoon session: Learning from Students in SIM Workshops, led by Mike Hock

For more information, contact KU-CRL at (785) 864-4780.

Concept Diagram



Always Present	Sometimes Present	Never Present
Has a clear learning purpose.	Promotes practice.	Is "busy" work.
Motivates students to complete it.	Prepares for upcoming learning.	Is the same thing over and over.
Activates student thinking.	Extends learning.	Is boring.
Contains clear directions.	Promotes creativity.	Is discouraging.
Can be completed by all students.		Is confusing.

You asked for it

This figure is part of a Concept Diagram that was developed for presenting with the Quality Assignment Routine. Several trainers who saw Jean Schumaker present this diagram during the Far West/Midwest Regional Update Meeting last month in Las Vegas requested a copy of it.

Quality Assignment manual available

The newest manual in the Content Enhancement Series, the *Quality Assignment Routine*, by Joyce Rademacher, is now available.

This routine helps teachers present and ensure learner completion 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
- 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.

Look for more information about this routine in a future issue of *Strategram*.

The *Quality Assignment Routine* is available for \$8 from Edge Enterprises, (785) 749-1473.

Absolutely not


(Continued from page 2)

gains and if they do not progress to advanced types of training and education.

To conclude, CRL staff members are **ABSOLUTELY NOT** giving up on learning strategy instruction. In fact, we are working every day to determine how to make it more efficient and effective and how to teach teachers to implement it better. We see evidence all the time that

educators who are seriously implementing learning strategy instruction are getting the kinds of gains that are translating into higher quality life experiences for their students, and that's a very gratifying experience for all of us.

We hope that you will join us in ensuring that learning strategy instruction is a vibrant force in helping at-risk learners reach their potential as contributing members of our society.

We know that becoming experts about learning strategy instruction plus Content Enhancement methods is a big task. We urge you to emphasize both in your training sequences because, when used hand-in-hand, they can produce large payoffs for students. If you cannot emphasize both, we urge you to choose to emphasize those interventions that produce the greatest gains and long-term payoffs for students and teachers. 

In memorium

We are sad to report the death of John Schuman, husband of our office manager, Belinda Schuman. John died Saturday, March 21, in a plane crash. John was a carpenter and an avid skydiver. He and Belinda were married in October 1996 on the 27th anniversary of his first jump.

Messages of sympathy may be mailed to Belinda at 1414 E. 18th Street, Lawrence, KS 66044.

Follow the Yellow Brick Road

National SIM Trainers' Conference

CRL

July 9-11, 1998 • Kansas City, Missouri
(Preconference July 8)

See details, page 5

FIRST CLASS

University of Kansas
STRATENOTES Volume 6-Issue #6
CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON LEARNING
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