*H*eard in the SIM neighborhood

Pssssst!!! Have you heard which SIM Trainer recently spent two weeks in India? Which SIM Trainers have linked increases in reading scores to Learning Strategies instruction? Which SIM Trainer is so dedicated to the SIM cause that she went straight from the maternity ward to her next training commitment, taking her newborn tyke with her? Here at the Center for Research on Learning, we're hearing about the amazing things you're doing out there. Here's a rundown of some of the things that have come to our attention.

Reading achievement and SIM
Deb Wickwire, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

Last year, Deb had to develop a performance review for her program in the Lincoln Intermediate Unit. All of the managers had to use a Total Quality Management-measurable method to show the worth of their programs. Their results were presented to a board of directors.

"I decided to show the effectiveness of using the strategies as part of the curriculum that we use to instruct our Learning Support students," Deb said. The following is part of the project she presented to the board.

Deb's research assessed how the implementation of Strategic Instruction Model Learning Strategies affected student achievement in reading in the Dover (Pennsylvania) Area School District.

The population studied comprised 262 students in kindergarten through grade 12 who attended one of 18 Learning Support classes within the district. The study encompassed a wide range of students who have been identified as having specific learning disabilities, mild mental retardation, or mild neurological impairments. All students have been evaluated, have individualized education plans, and received specialized instruction in the areas of weakness outlined in their IEPs.

The program involved 18 teachers and 16 instructional assistants. Some of the teachers have been specifically trained in the Strategic Instruction Model. Instructional groups consisted of six to 13 students each.

To assess the effectiveness of the Strategic Instruction Model program, the study used a modified experimental/control group design and collected pretest and posttest scores. ►

Trainer news

- **Kim Short** of Cary, North Carolina, taught a learning strategies course at North Carolina State University last summer and started a new job at an experimental middle school in the fall.
- **Terry Slockett-Freese** of Neosho, Missouri, was named last year's Gold Star Educator of the Year for the Neosho School District.
- **Mary Anne Tharin** of Raleigh, North Carolina, retired at the end of April 1998 and received a Governor's Award for her service. She continues to work on contract to help complete several state board initiatives.
- **Anthony Tomasso** of Westfield, New Jersey, along with two other staff members, gave a well-received presentation to the board of education concerning the preservation of special education.

Send your news to Julie Tollefson at the Center for Research on Learning, 3061 Dole, Lawrence, KS 66045 or e-mail Julie at jtollefson@ukans.edu.

The study collected data to assess the influence SIM techniques had on students' reading achievement. Average achievement gains of students who were taught SIM methods were compared to average achievement gains of students who did not receive strategies instruction or who no longer received direct strategies instruction.

Each student was evaluated yearly for five years using a standardized reading assessment.

Deb's results indicated that students who received instruction in SIM Learning Strategies had a greater gain in reading achievement when compared to the overall average during the five-year study.

"This truly was not a pure research model," Deb said, "but I do believe it shows that students who receive SIM training do achieve more than students who do not."

Summer SIM reading institute

Anne Hartig, Bel Air, Maryland

Last summer, four SIM Trainers employed with Baltimore County Public Schools trained 60 teachers to teach 240 middle school students (a one-to-four ratio) strategies designed to improve reading: *LINCS, Word Identification* (DISSECT), and *Paraphrasing* (RAP).

The purpose of the program was to target students in need of additional assistance in reading. Reading teachers, special education staff, and principals recommended students for inclusion in the program. Likewise, principals selected teachers to participate in the training.

Pretest and posttest reading ability scores were taken using tests provided by the strategies as well as STAR, a computer -based norm-referenced test.

> *'I do believe (the study) shows that students who receive SIM training do achieve more than students who do not.'*
> **—Deb Wickwire**

In the four four-day sessions, STAR program data revealed gains of two months. Using the strategies, gains were measured in all areas tested with students' ability to increase vocabulary comprehension and retention *(LINCS)* the most significant: an overall gain of 69 percent (low 58 percent ; high 85 percent).

Gains also were demonstrated from use of the *Paraphrasing Strategy* (RAP) with average overall gains of 59 percent for correct paraphrasing and 31 percent for comprehension.

The area of least increase (and least need) was in students' ability to decode unfamiliar words *(Word Identification)*. Fluency increased an average of 5 percent, and comprehension increased by 10 percent.

These students are being monitored throughout the 1998-1999 school year to see whether gains are being maintained. Schools that have made concerted efforts to meet with the

> *'It appears that this combination of strategies is a promising approach for students in need of specific skills to remediate reading deficiencies.'*
> **—Anne Hartig**

students to review the strategies and facilitate the continuance of generalization have made fantastic progress. Students receiving special ➤

education services report feeling better prepared for general education classes. Report cards and increasing numbers of students being moved from self-contained to general education classes seemed to support the success of this pilot program.

It appears from incoming data and anecdotal reports from students, parents, and teachers that this combination of strategies is a promising approach for students in need of specific skills to remediate reading deficiencies.

The summer reading program is expected to continue for Summer 1999 with 60 additional teachers and up to 240 additional middle school students. It is hoped that the program can be expanded to selected high schools; however, this will be contingent upon funding from federal grant sources.

Of elephants, soldiers, and SIM

Shari Schindele, Maple Grove, Minnesota

Shari spent two weeks in India in December, and this was not her first trip. Four years ago, Shari spoke in India at an international conference on learning disabilities. This year, the conference was in Chennai (no longer called Madras, Shari reports, because cities are now called by their Indian names). On the first day of the conference, Shari spoke about Content Enhancement Routines. On the last day, she gave a keynote presentation about the Strategic Instruction Model that pulled together all of the pieces from the first three days of the conference.

Shari and her husband, Harry, then traveled by train to Coimbature, an industrial city in the south of India, where she trained staff in Visual Imagery and Self-Questioning strategies.

"They were so excited about the strategies and are eager for me to return," Shari said. "It's quite an experience, but I take weeks to recover when we return."

After the training, the couple flew back to Chennai, where Shari demonstrated use of the Lesson Organizer Routine, which Lalitha Ramanujan had selected—along with the Concept Mastery Routine—for her staff's training. Shari had trained the teachers in the routine the week before, and they wanted to see it in use.

"Lalitha asked if I would use the organizer for a lesson in 'commerce,' and I thought she said 'commas.' I felt very comfortable about that, since I'm an English teacher, so I went to the school in the morning and was presented with a lesson that was all about importing and exporting (and all the attendant ramifications). I said to the teacher, 'But I thought I was doing a lesson on commas.' She looked very puzzled, and said 'Yes-s-s-s?' This was just another example of the problems we encountered with language. We all spoke English, but we spoke it very differently."

Shari describes her trips to India as "a bit unusual." During her 1994 trip,

> **'It's quite an experience, but I take weeks to recover when we return.'**
> **—Shari Schindele**

bubonic plague was rampant. When she flew to Sri Lanka to give presentations there, armed soldiers were stationed at every corner, and she had to sign a form at the airport pledging to see a doctor if she developed any of the listed signs of the plague. Because of a recent bombing in which more than 50 people at a political rally had been killed, she was advised to stay away from political rallies.

The trip wasn't all armed guards, disease, and threats, though. Shari ➤

Revised *Sentence Writing* manual

The *Proficiency in the Sentence Writing Strategy: Instructor's Manual* (formerly known as the *Sentence Writing Strategy: Instructor's Manual*) is now available.

The manual was revised after teachers requested an "easier version" of the *Sentence Writing Strategy* to teach foundational concepts and rules. The *Sentence Writing Strategy* program now features two parts: *Fundamentals in the Sentence Writing Strategy* and *Proficiency in the Sentence Writing Strategy*.

The *Fundamentals* instructor's manual and student lessons have been available for several months. Likewise, the *Proficiency* student lessons have been available for some time. Now, revisions to the *Proficiency* instructor's manual have been completed, ensuring that information in it matches information in the *Proficiency* student lessons.

The revisions to these manuals will be described in more detail in a future issue of *Strategram*

Ordering information

From KU-CRL, 3061 Dole, Lawrence, KS 66045. Phone: (785) 864-0617 Fax: (785) 864-5728
Fundamentals in the Sentence Writing Strategy: Instructor's Manual ($12.50)
Proficiency in the Sentence Writing Strategy: Instructor's Manual ($17.00)
From Edge Enterprises, PO Box 1304, Lawrence, KS 66044. Phone: (785) 749-1473 Fax: (785) 749-0207
Fundamentals in the Sentence Writing Strategy: Student Lessons ($11)
Proficiency in the Sentence Writing Strategy: Student Lessons ($11)

Implementation tip

Linda Estes, a SIM Trainer in the Klein (Texas) Independent School District, offers financial incentives to participants in her workshops who implement what they have learned. Participants in a Recall Enhancement Routine workshop, for example, were asked to complete the following six tasks by a specified date. They received a certificate of attendance for the workshop plus the opportunity to earn $75 if they complete the project. Linda reports this approach usually ensures that more people try the routines.

1. Actively participate in the guided practices of the workshop.
2. Complete one device each of the three Recall devices most commonly used for retaining and retrieving information.
3. Teach and incorporate at least one recall device into your next teaching unit over information on which the students will be tested.
4. Give your chapter or unit test and allow the students to re-create their devices on the test or on scratch paper to be turned in.
5. Analyze the percentage of correct answers over this information.
6. Submit the following for completion of your project:
   - completed extra pay form
   - paper copy of the three routines you developed
   - tests and scrap paper
   - percentage of correct answers related to the use of recall device

said one of the highlights was a stop at an elephant orphanage.

At the end of her first week in India this year, India's citizens marked the anniversary of the burning of Islamic mosques six years earlier.

"Passengers on trains and planes had to arrive hours early and go through extensive checks in order to ensure that no bombs would be carried on board," Shari said. "We actually traveled into the heart of the problem (Coimbature) without realzing it. When we left that city, we walked out to the plane, which was lined with armed soldiers."

The Saturday before they were to leave India, Shari almost collided with an armed soldier on the stairs of her hotel. A political official from a neighboring state (similar to our governor) was in the hotel, where he was being guarded because of concerns about the Tamil Tigers.

A great partnership....

Sharon Saunders, Prior Lake, Minnesota
Deb Shepley, Burnsville, Minnesota

And in another story of SIM Trainers going above and beyond the call …

Sharon and Deb completed three days of training in Northern Minnesota in January. That, in itself, is not amazing. What is amazing is that Deb gave birth to her third son on January

> **Deb gave birth to her third son on January 5, then taught with Sharon on January 9.**

5, then taught with Sharon on January 9. They all then went to Grand Rapids on January 11 for the three days of training. Deb's husband and new baby joined the group, as did Sharon's mother and daughter. Sharon reports that the training went well. The only modification they made was to allow time in their schedule for Deb to feed Jake.

Not only do we find Deb's dedication amazing, but our hats are off to Sharon, too, for being willing to train with Deb knowing that she might have to pick up the pieces if Deb couldn't make it.   **CRL**

National conference information

The Center for Research on Learning and the International SIM Trainers' Network have come a long way in 21 years. We've made a difference in many lives. Now, make plans to join the Center as we look toward the 21st Century and the opportunities it presents.

The 1999 National SIM Trainers'

Strategies for the 21st Century

Conference will be July 8-10 at the Holidome in Lawrence. This year's theme is "Strategies for the 21st."

More information about the conference, including a call for presentations and registration form, was published in the January issue of Stratenotes. If you missed that issue, call the Center at (785) 864-4780 for more information.

L👁👁k what you're missing: StrateNet

Sue Woodruff, a SIM Trainer from Muskegon, Michigan, recently shared this true story on StrateNet. Sue says she is trying to look for links to Learning Strategies in everyday events so she can tell them later to reinforce the points she makes during training. Look for more great stories in the **Stories** folder on StrateNet, then take a few minutes to share your own favorites.

Stephen's First Hockey Playoffs

Point

• *Winning isn't everything; it's how you play the game.*
• *The SUCCESS Formula*
• *Effort + Knowledge lead to success.*
• *We're not always going to be the best, but when we work really hard and feel good about our own performance, we can walk away proud and happy.*

If you're a longtime StrateNet participant, you probably have noticed some changes in the last few weeks. We're reorganizing the information available on StrateNet and trying to tailor the content to make it a vital part of the SIM Trainer's repertoire. Three new folders, or conferences, have been added:

- The **Language-Sensitive SIM** conference is available for you to discuss your ideas, comments, and suggestions related to the lead article, written by Barbara Ehren, in last month's *Stratenotes.*
- The **Stories** conference is a place to share your favorite stories and to look for new stories to reinforce particular points during training.
- The **Suggestion Box** is designed as a convenient place for you to submit your ideas and suggestions for the Center for Research on Learning.

In addition to the new folders, at least one of our existing folders is showing new life. Visit **Open Forum** to join current discussions about the use of film clips during training sessions, the *Self-Advocacy Strategy* on CD-ROM, and more.

You must have a valid StrateNet user ID and password to log on to StrateNet. If you do not, contact Andy Barker, StrateNet administrator, at the Center. You may e-mail Andy at abarker@ukans.edu, or you may call him at (785) 864-4780.

See page 6 for instructions for accessing StrateNet, and see the information at right for instructions for posting messages to StrateNet conferences.

How to post a message to a StrateNet conference

There are several ways to create and post messages to StrateNet conferences. In the examples on this page and on page 6, we will use the **Stories** folder as the destination for the message.

From the Web

- Select the letter icon on your desktop. A message form appears.
- Type "Stories" in the To: field or do the following:
  - Select the "Directory" link at the bottom of the page. A Directory Search Form will appear on your screen.
  - Type "Stories" and click on the search button. A Stories icon and link will appear on your screen. **Note:** This is useful when you don't know the full name of the conference or person to whom you want to send a message. You may type just part of the word or phrase, and the search results will display all Directory entries that match your request.
  - Click on the Stories link. Your message form will reappear, with "Stories" in the "To:" field.
- Type your message in the area provided.
- Click on the Send button to send your message to the **Stories** conference on StrateNet.

This was my son's first year in hockey; he was in the "Squirts" Division. If you don't know much about hockey, Squirts are the third- and fourth-graders; basically, they are your 9- and 10-year-olds. He had a great coach, his dad got involved and helped out, and they had a lot of fun, but they didn't win many games. They didn't always get absolutely clobbered, but they didn't win many games, either.

One night Stephen was goalie, and the final score was 9-4 (our side lost). It is really hard to sit in the stadium and watch your little boy take a beating on the ice as goalie, but he survived and actually enjoyed it! He even volunteered to play goalie for several games. Each time he played and tried his hardest, he became a better goalie. His dad and his coach gave him a lot of helpful hints. He watched every Red Wing game that came on prior to his bedtime. He practiced hour after hour in ➤

How to post a message to a StrateNet conference

Using the FirstClass software

- Select "New Message" from the Message pull-down menu at the top of your screen.
- Type "Stories" in the To: field or do the following:
  - Select Directory from the Conferencing pull-down menu at the top of your screen.
  - Type "Stories" in the Pattern field at the top of the Directory window and press enter/return. A list of Directory entries that match your search request will appear in the bottom part of the window. **Note:** This is useful when you don't know the full name of the conference or person to whom you want to send a message. You may type just part of the word or phrase for which you are looking.
  - Double-click on "Stories." Your message form will reappear, with "Stories" in the "To:" field.
- Type your message in the area provided.
- Select "Send" from the Message pull-down menu at the top of your screen or click on the Send icon at the top of the message form. Your message will be sent to the Stories conference.

How to access StrateNet

StrateNet is available to any SIM Trainer who maintains a current Strateworks membership and who has Internet access. After you have opened an Internet connection, you may log on to StrateNet in one of two ways:

- through the Center for Research on Learning's World Wide Web site using your Web browser (for example, Netscape or Internet Explorer)
- using the FirstClass client software available from the Center's site

Each method is described below.

WWW and StrateNet

The advantage of using this method to access information in StrateNet is that you do not have to install any software other than what you already use for surfing the World Wide Web.

- Point your Web browser to the Center's Web site (www.ku-crl.org).
- Follow the StrateNet links to the StrateNet Web login page.

- Click on the Login button.
- Type your user ID and password in the pop-up box.

After you enter a valid user ID and password, your StrateNet desktop will appear in the browser window. (See Figure 1 on page 7).

The folders, or conferences, to which you have access will be displayed on the left side of the screen. A red flag will indicate that a conference contains a message you have not yet read.

To read messages, click on the folder you want to open. For example, if you have unread mail, click on "Mailbox." Your mailbox messages will be displayed in the large box on the right of your screen. To read a message, click on the subject.

To return to the list of folders and conferences, click on "Up one level" on the left side of the screen. You will return to the display you saw after typing your user ID and password.

Hockey Playoffs

our front yard with his friends. When he was "on" or "in the zone," his teammates congratulated him on his great saves, and he even tied one game and won one game as goalie. In the end, though, my son's team usually lost. They didn't end up in dead last, but they ended up second to last in the final standings. It had come time for the playoffs! It was March; the long season was just about over. The kids had become really excited about playoffs.

I had watched Stephen over the months improve in so many ways. He was an unsure skater to start; now he was fast and could maneuver well. In the beginning, he acted almost afraid of the puck; now he was digging and aggressively going after the puck. He had learned to play the various positions, and his coach had stressed good sportsmanship. One thing he

LOO**k**

what you're missing on StrateNet!

hadn't learned was how to score a goal. In all of the games (sometimes two a week), he had never scored a goal; he hadn't even been credited with an assist. The team had improved tremendously, but so had all of the other teams. The kids' hopes were high going into playoffs. They dreamed of a championship and being winners!

Well, the team, all decked out in orange and black, lost that first playoff game. They played hard and lost fair and square. The final score was 6 - 3.

FirstClass software and StrateNet

You may find that using a Web browser to access information in StrateNet is a slow process. Using the FirstClass software, instead, may speed up the rate of information transfer. To use this method, you must install the FirstClass client software on your computer. This software is available for download, free, from the Center's Web site. To download the software, do the following:

• Point your Web browser to the Center's Web site (www.ku-crl.org).
• Follow the StrateNet link to the StrateNet information page.
• Click on the "Download" link on the left side of the StrateNet Web page.
• Select the FirstClass software for either the Windows or Macintosh platform. **Note:** The file is rather large and could take a long time to download.

Once you have installed the FirstClass software on your computer, you can use it to access StrateNet.

• Open the FirstClass software.
• Type your user ID and password in the fields provided in the Login window.
• Click on the Login button.

When you are connected, you will see your StrateNet desktop on your screen. (See Figure 1 below). The folders, or conferences, to which you have access will be displayed on the desktop. A flag will indicate that a conference contains a message you have not yet read.

To read messages, double-click on the folder you want to open. For example, if you have unread mail, double-click on the "Mailbox" folder. Your mail will be displayed on your screen. To read a message, double-click on the message.

If you have any problems using StrateNet, contact Julie Tollefson, jtollefson@ukans.edu, or Andy Barker, abarker@ukans.edu.

If you do not have access to the Internet, please let us know so we can consider alternative methods for you to access StrateNet. Contact Julie at the Center, (785) 864-4780.

Two views of the StrateNet desktop

▼ **Using a Web browser** (such as Netscape or Internet Explorer)
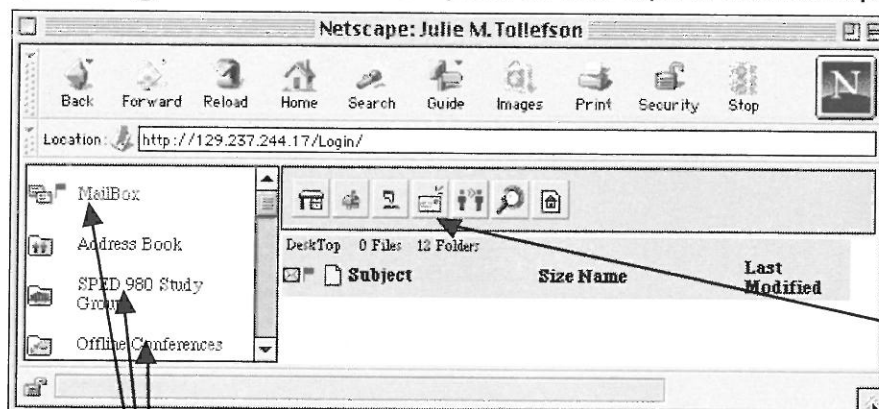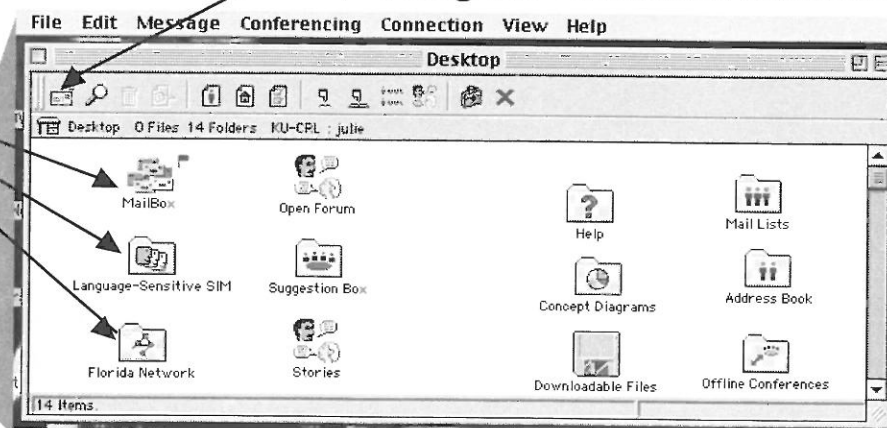

Web Tip
To create a new message when you have accessed StrateNet through the Web, click on the letter icon. A new message form will appear.

Letter icon

Conferences

FirstClass Tip
To create a new message when you are using the FirstClass software, click on the letter icon or select "New Message" from the Message pull-down menu.

▼ **Using the FirstClass software**

Figure 1

Hockey Playoffs

Stephen burst off the ice with a huge smile on his face, though. He had given it everything he had. He played hard and fought the good fight. His hard work had paid off in a hat trick that night. (Translation for non-hockey enthusiasts: A hat trick is when one player scores three goals in a single game.) Stephen had scored all three of his team's goals in that first playoff game of his life. He came out of that losing game feeling like a winner!

I think that learning to read and write is similar. Our kids are not always going to be the ones to be on the honor roll, to win the essay contests, or to win the championships. However, we have to help our students see how their efforts will bring them success. They need to recognize and honor their successes in relation to themselves—not everyone around them. It is our job as teachers to help our students tie or see the relationship between what they do (such as practicing, skill building, visualizing, working hard, goal setting, and pressing on when the going gets rough) with what they are able to accomplish. It isn't luck or fate that determines our destiny—it is the effort and commitment we make to becoming better. We, as teachers, can be like Stephen's coach that night. We can point out progress and help kids grow by recognizing and appreciating their effort.