**simple content enhancers**

(Modified from *SIM® Stratenotes*: *What’s Simple about Enhancers?*)

Notice the title is not capitalized. That was done on purpose to distinguish this description of simple content enhancers from SIM® Content Enhancement. Simple enhancers are techniques that teachers often use to make their content come alive for students every day. Examples of these simple enhancers are listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Examples of Simple Enhancers

Stories 3D objects

Pictures Cartoon

Music Analogies

Notes on board Maps

Experiential activity Games

Role playing Rhymes

Charts Raps

Songs Mnemonic devices

Vocal stress Demonstrations

Movie Models

Tie-in to prior knowledge Body language

Examples Hand movement

Some excellent teachers invent and spontaneously use these enhancers, but, often, the way they use the devices does not enhance students’ understanding and memory of the content. KU-CRL has identified some principles that should 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 to use when developing enhancers include the following:

1. Identify the most important content in a lesson.
2. The enhancer needs to make an abstract concept or idea concrete, tie the new information into already known information, or make the new information memorable.
3. Students should be active participants.
4. Point out the relationship between the enhancer and the concept.

When presenting enhancers, teachers should use the Cue-Do-Review instructional sequence to enhance student learning.

Cue: The teacher names the enhancer and the content to be learned. The teacher needs to give a rationale for learning the information.

Do: The teacher presents the enhancer, being certain to tie the enhancer to the content to be learned. KUCRL research has shown that if the content to be learned is not explicitly tied to the enhancer that many students do not make the connection themselves.

Review: 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 enhancer and the content. In other words, after the enhancer is originally presented, it needs to be part of the ongoing dialogue between students and teacher if enhanced learning is to be ensured.