



The Center for Teaching and Learning

At the Michael D. Eisner College of Education

CTL on the Cutting Edge

Strategic Instructional Model - SIM

Research Questions

How can strategic instruction be used in our schools to help students meet important academic standards? Why is process as important as content? What kinds of results can students expect to achieve when taught SIM strategies? What effect has the use of SIM had on teachers? How is SIM instruction most effectively provided? CTL Fellow, Dr. Beth Lasky has been training teachers and university faculty to answer these as well as other important questions.

The Project

For over 30 years, the Center for Research on Learning at the University of Kansas (KU-CTL) has conducted research designed to develop ways to help students meet the demands of life, not just in school but after they leave school as well. SIM is about promoting effective teaching and learning of critical content in schools. SIM strives to help teachers make decisions about what is of greatest importance, what we can teach students to help them to learn, and how to teach them well. The goal of the Strategic Instruction Model is to create independent, successful learners--that is, students who can effectively deal with the demands of the general education curriculum. Too frequently, programs aimed at at-risk learners are only geared to helping students "just get by." SIM is an umbrella term that embraces a model of teacher-focused (Content Enhancement) and student focused interventions (Learning Strategies).

The Content Enhancement Routines are comprised of methods that focus on extracting the most important information students need to learn from their content-area texts. Each routine is highly structured and is comprised of a standard set of instructional procedures. There are Routines for planning and leading learning, explaining text topics and details, teaching concepts, and increasing student performance.

The Learning Strategies Curriculum is designed to provide the skills and strategies students need to enable them to learn content. The strategies all include an eight step instructional sequence which includes pretesting and post testing, describing and modeling the strategy, ensuring that students practice the strategy with a variety of materials, and teaching them to generalize and maintain the use of the strategy over time. These strategies help students to acquire, store, and express competence in various content areas.

The ultimate goal associated with the SIM is to enable academically diverse groups of students to become independent and strategic learners. SIM has been found to be an essential component in helping students meet demanding academic standards.

What's Next?

The CTL sponsored 2009 CAL-SIM Conference was so successful that KU-CRL asked us to do it again this year on September 24 and 25, 2010. In addition Dr. Lasky will be spending her Sabbatical modeling and studying many of the routines at a local high school.

For more information on the 2010 CAL-SIM Conference please see the CTL website or contact beth.lasky@csun.edu