

The Arkansas Adolescent Literacy Intervention

Using What We Know About Change to Change Schools



Dr. Don Deshler

The literature on educational reform and innovation is filled with ideas and policies that often fail to get implemented or that are successful in one school or district but not another. Michael Fullan argues that one of the reasons many of our efforts at improving education fall short is that we lack a knowledge of and appreciation for the critical processes leading to educational change. In Fullan's words, "The presence of change

knowledge does not guarantee success, but its absence ensures failure!" (Fullan, 2004). Among the factors that he feels are essential for leaders to understand are the following:

Pressure and support – All large-scale reform requires the combination and integration of 'pressure and support.' There is significant inertia that must be overcome. New initiatives require the judicious use of pressure (i.e., setting ambitious targets, transparent evaluation and monitoring, and orienting all to the bigger vision) and support (i.e., developing new competencies, access to new ideas, and more time for learning and collaboration).

The 'implementation dip' – Since change involves grappling with new beliefs, understandings, skills, competencies, and behaviors, it is inevitable that not everything will go smoothly – especially during the early stages of implementation.

There will be resistance and setbacks. Having knowledge of the 'implementation dip' brings out in the open the fact that most important change efforts involve difficult phases. By being aware of these dips, strategies can be implemented to deal with them openly and to shorten their duration.

Differentiate between 'technical problems' and 'adaptive challenges' – Technical problems are ones that can be solved with current knowledge (e.g., learning how to effectively use a particular teaching routine). Technical problems can be very challenging and people will usually encounter the implementation dip in the process of overcoming them, but they are solvable with what we know. Adaptive challenges, however, are much more complex and the solutions often 'go beyond what we know.' Examples of adaptive challenges are when people are asked to change their primary role as an educator, engage in a different collaborative arrangement, reach consensus on the overriding goals of a new initiative, or make a decision to abandon work on a previously embraced goal. Successfully addressing these kinds of challenges can make the difference between the success and failure of a new initiative (Heifetz & Linsky, 2003).

Persistence to overcome inevitable challenges – Engaging others in the process of change requires persistence in order to overcome the inevitable challenges – to keep going despite setbacks – but it also involves adaptation and problem solving through being flexible enough to incorporate new ideas into the work. In short, both flexibility and focus are needed. The change process is a long-term undertaking. Those who are resilient in the face of adversity and bumps in the road are those who will make the kinds of progress that will make real and enduring differences for students in the classroom.

*Dr. Don Deshler, Director
University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning*

From The Director's Chair: Beacons of Hope...

I am captivated by the following quote from an unknown source: When the world says, "Give up," hope whispers, "Try it one more time." I can only imagine how often struggling learners hear the message, "Give up!"

There are many sources of such worldly messages, including poor grades, peer comparisons, labored efforts, teacher demands, parental pressure, and so forth. I dreaded report card day. There were several of us who usually carpooled. Rodney, Chris, and my brother, Randy, eagerly awaited the trip home from school. It was a matter of seconds before report cards were ripped from their envelopes. Bragging rights! Well, it was not something I could anticipate. According to Charles Stanley, "Hope is a desire for something, accompanied by the anticipation of receiving it." You see, I didn't anticipate having the grades necessary to warrant bragging rights. I kept to myself finding any and every excuse to delay the inevitable.


It was not long ago when I met an 11th grader and his mom and dad. I spoke with his parents leaving the young man outside my office. The parents exclaimed, "Our son stole our credit card while we slept and made a \$500 purchase from an infomercial!" I must confess to my first thought, "What kind of pornography had the young man purchased?" The parents continued with a very different explanation. "Our son purchased a kit designed to treat his self-prescribed depression and anxiety." It was not long before I began visiting with the young man without mom and dad. I inquired more about his decision to make such a purchase. His eyes rarely met with mine. His shoulders appeared slumped as if despair carried an additional 20 pounds.

The young man shared story after story that reinforced the worldly message, "Give up." He said, "Dr. Cooper, I can't stand school. I can't stand reading in front of classmates. I can't stand the thought of going to the 12th grade. It is embarrassing and I want to quit school." He wanted to quit school due to those worldly messages, "You don't and won't measure up!" Yet, this young man considered oppositional and defiant at school and at home heard a whisper of hope, "Try it one more time." The whisper was expressed in the form of the purchase. While his teachers and parents could only see his "outward" expressions of opposition, his early morning purchase communicated "inward" desires of achievement. He wanted to try one more time. Why else would he take such a risk and make such a purchase? Why else would he want to eliminate his self-prescribed symptoms of depression and anxiety?

There are tens of thousands of struggling learners whose behaviors betray the message of hope. They have lost a positive forecast for the future. They can not look forward to a better tomorrow. When the world says, "Give up," they fail to hear hope whisper back. It is at this very time when we must intercede and become Beacons of Hope. We must stand in the gap for struggling learners and help them set goals, reach for the stars, identify ideals, and dream; all characteristics of hope for struggling learners.

The good news about the young man in the 11th grade who wanted to quit school was that he still heard that whisper, "Johnny, try one more time!" As Director of UCA's Mashburn Center for Learning, I encourage all Arkansas educators to insist on discovering vital teacher behaviors that help learners hear messages of hope.

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"...to give you the vision that the ultimate goal of true education is to plant the seed of self worth in the heart of each student."

- Dr. J.D. Mashburn



Beacons of Hope...

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We must be more than content specialists. We must be Beacons of Hope. It will be at this time when learners not only manifest the desire to learn, but also the expectation to reach what is desired.

Of course, there is no yardstick to hold legislators, policy makers, administrators, and teachers accountable for promoting hope. There is no test to determine our effectiveness for teaching hope like we teach reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. However, we best find a way to become such Beacons of Hope. Tailhand de Chardin once stated, "The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason for hope." If such is true, then we must assume such a role and responsibility or leave to others such a noble undertaking. It should be our moral obligation to make such a choice.

*Dr. Mark J. Cooper, Director
Mashburn Center for Learning
Professor ECSE*

The 2009 Mashburn Center for Learning Administrators' Summit

The staff of the University of Central Arkansas Mashburn Center for Learning was delighted and energized about approximately 48 public school administrators and teachers, University of Central Arkansas Faculty, Arkansas Department of Education representatives, and Strategic Instruction Model Professional Developers attending the center's Administrators' Summit on December 15 at the Little Rock Embassy Suites. According to Dr. Mark Cooper, Director of the Mashburn Center for Learning, "The summit was created to educate, motivate, and inspire those present to go forth and assist in closing the achievement gap that teachers and students encounter daily."

At the beginning of the summit, Dr. Mark Cooper encouraged all participants to prepare our struggling learners to work smarter at working harder. According to Dr. Cooper, "More rigorous course work is not going to make our students work harder. They must have the correct tools and emotional support to be able to attack and conquer critical content and achieve success." The Strategic Instruction Model, SIM, was discussed as one way to address this issue of working smarter at working harder. Next, Deborah Coffman, the Director of Professional Development for the Arkansas Department of Education, discussed how the Strategic Instruction Model supports and embeds with the state's current initiatives. She stated, "The Strategic Instruction model is not an add-on. It is what the business of education should include." She explained that all students should have an opportunity to interact with core instruction, and SIM Content Enhancement Routines assist in making this possible. After Coffman's presentation, teaching teams from five school districts shared their implementation stories of SIM Content Enhancement Routines and Learning Strategies and how the routines and strategies were being used to assist teachers in planning and facilitating learning for all students. The teaching teams representing the school districts provided excellent examples of Content Enhancement Routines and Learning strategies being used by teachers and students in authentic situations. Dr. Patty Kohler-Evans, Teacher Development Coordinator of the Mashburn Center for Learning, stated that the stories were a very powerful and inspiring segment of the summit. A new school administrator stated that he felt more knowledgeable about the Strategic Instruction Model and the implementation possibilities within his school due to the presentations.

The summit came to an inspirational and encouraging conclusion when each institution represented at the summit accepted from Dr. Cooper a candle-lit lighthouse and a charge to go forth and be a "Beacon of Hope" for all learners. Dr. Cooper expressed that each of the schools were leading the charge of educating and assisting today's youth in becoming successful individuals.

*Renee Calhoon, SIM Professional Developer
Coordinator of Administrator Development - Mashburn Center for Learning*

SMART Leadership: Principles of a Professional Developer

"The more we change the more we remain the same." This phrase has haunted public education for decades. What is it about the change process that inhibits progress? Why are we consistently falling short of generating significant change? Is it because we lack the knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions to influence people? Is it because we bring a simple solution to a complex and resistant problem? Is it because there are too many confounding variables to impact learners, such as peer pressure, a lack of family support, or too few research validated interventions? Could it be the lack of cooperation among a variety of stakeholders?

The University of Central Arkansas' Mashburn Center for Learning has participated in the change process for many years. At the present time, the Mashburn Center conducts professional development activities to help teachers close the achievement gap between adolescents prone to fail and those prone to excel. The center employs the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) developed by the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning. SIM is an integrated model of research-validated practices designed to address many of the needs of diverse learners, primarily focused on adolescents. The majority of SIM tools can be placed into two categories: Learning Strategies and Content Enhancement Routines. Thirty years of research support the finding that SIM works. However, SIM can not work without successful implementation and successful implementation requires effective professional development.

The Arkansas Department of Education is correct to suggest that we must develop a SMART Leadership Professional Development Model designed to influence change more successfully. We must also understand that a combination of strategies aimed at influencing specific vital behaviors is necessary. In other words, there is no quick fix for creating a culture of quality.

One particular strategy designed to close the implementation gap involves the development of in-state, in-district, and in-school professional developers certified to train educators in SIM. It is one of the vital behaviors within the Arkansas Adolescent Literacy/Learning Intervention supported by the Arkansas Department of Education. A common adage heard among school district officials is that

you can't find the experts in your own backyard. Educators rely on specialists outside the state to influence change within the state. Of course, out-of-state dependence is necessary if there are no in-state experts. It is a costly professional development model. One of the primary goals of the Arkansas Adolescent Literacy/Learning Intervention is to provide professional development for teachers who choose to pursue certification as Professional Developers in the application of SIM methodologies.

At the present time, there are four educators in Arkansas certified to provide professional development in the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM). There are also 10 apprentices who aspire to become certified SIM Professional Developers in 2009. It is our hope that 10 to 20 more Arkansas educators will become certified in the SIM methodologies in 2010. The purpose for growing our own certified professional developers is two fold. First, we are trying to build capacity within schools to support SIM methodologies necessary to help close the achievement gap between learners who fail and those who excel. Second, we are trying to sustain such capacity. The two goals can be reached when we increase the numbers of qualified in-state, in-district and in-school professional developers who are available to help influence change and help sustain such change. This explains why we are providing professional development for the Arkansas Adolescent Literacy/Learning Intervention participants in Cabot, Monticello, Jonesboro, Pulaski County Special School District, and the Little Rock School District. Once certified, they will become an irresistible incentive for school districts to utilize qualified professional developers in their own backyard.

We encourage all SIM teachers to read the encouraging words from the apprentices. When time permits, visit with them about you becoming an apprentice. Also, talk with your coaches/facilitators. You have demonstrated mastery in using the SIM methodologies. It is our hope that you participate in the PPD this summer in June. This is a very effective way for districts to have "in-school" professional development.

*Dr. Mark J. Cooper, Director - Mashburn Center
Dr. Patty Kohler-Evans, Coordinator of Teacher Development - Mashburn Center*



A Teacher's Toolbox

My wife and I like to watch HGTV. Over the years, we have watched what the designers have done on a show and then attempted to do it in our own home. There has been more than one time that I have gotten into one of those jobs and wished that I had the designer in my home to help me along. As a teacher I have had similar experiences. I have attended professional development for a particular teaching tool and decided that I would do a little "remodeling" in my own classroom afterward. As I struggled with that new tool, I wished that I had access to the professional developer to help me along. If I struggled enough, I put the tool away and there it would sit with all of the others in my "teacher toolbox" that came before.

About three years ago, I found out that there was going to be professional development at my school on a Saturday morning over something called SIM. I have to admit, I attended because I could get PD hours and also because they were paying us a small stipend. Little did I know that I was going to be equipped with a tool, the FRAME, which would become one of the most valued tools in my "teacher toolbox."

Over the past three years, I have been able to continue my SIM training, adding valuable tools that are helping me become a better teacher and helping my students become better learners. It has been a win-win situation all the way around.

Last year, when I was asked to become a SIM Professional Developer Apprentice, I jumped at the chance. You see, over these three years, I have never been handed a manual and told "good luck" and sent on my way. That is not the model of SIM implementation. Instead, just like I used to wish for the HGTV designers, I have had "mentors" to help me, to answer questions, and to encourage me. Those mentors have always been available for a phone call, an email, and/or even a visit. That sort of approach leads to real "remodeling" of teaching and learning, not just throwing a fresh coat of paint and fabric over some old worn out walls and furniture. Because of my own experience, I now have the desire and the resources to be that same mentor "designer" that others have been to me with SIM. It is a privilege to be a SIM Professional Developer Apprentice and I cannot wait to be a part of helping other teachers "remodel" their classrooms.

*Kevin Floyd, SIM Apprentice
Cabot Junior High South*

Resolutions

The New Year always brings about a plethora of resolutions. TV ads boast gadgets and gizmos designed to help with every flippant pledge that we conceive. As I idly sit and watch the ads entice me to buy, my mind keeps hopping to my professional development as a SIM Content Enhancement Professional Developer Apprentice. My experiences could easily translate into an infomercial boasting the successes of SIM in my classroom and school. Imagine the voice of Billy Mays exclaiming "Want to get rid of those frustrated students and unsightly test scores? Do you want to have all your fellow teachers jealous of your organized instruction and student achievement? Then all you have to do is call a SIM Professional Developer and order your professional development on the perfect Content Enhancement Routine personally designed to fit all your classroom needs..." The infomercial role is exactly what the Potential Professional Developer Institute (PPDI) is designed to be. Being able to share your professional development with other teachers in your school and district is one of the greatest gifts you can give your students, and one of the best resolutions you can set for your own professional growth. The week long institute in the summer creates an environment where you learn to use and teach others to use all CERs. It also prepares you to design and implement a professional development plan for your faculty or district and then provides the support to help you implement that plan throughout the school year. The professionals from both the University of Kansas and from the University of Central Arkansas are there to help you complete the requirements of your apprenticeship every step of the way. Their leadership and guidance make the process painless and valuable. As you set resolutions for yourself this year, consider your goals in regards to SIM and where you want to go. Arkansas is ready to grow more SIM Professional Developers, and setting a goal for yourself to attend the SIM Professional Developers' Institute is the perfect resolution to start the 2009 school year.

*Miriam Berryhill, SIM Apprentice
Cabot Middle School North*

Growing Success by Growing SIM Certified Professional Developers

I've always been fascinated by the process of teaching and learning especially when it comes to helping struggling learners including those with disabilities experience academic and social success. My first encounter with SIM was as a junior high special education teacher searching for ways to help my students improve their literacy skills. Journal article after journal article reported the amazing results achieved by teachers and researchers using SIM. Unfortunately, opportunities to study SIM were very limited, so I attempted to replicate the instructional strategies based on descriptions I found in the journal articles. Although my students benefited from my attempts, I knew my lack of opportunity to participate in professional development left too many gaps and the SIM methodology suffered in the process.

Now years later in my role as a SIM Professional Developer Apprentice, I have had the unique opportunity to study SIM Learning Strategies and teach the strategies to students. The experience has been an exciting one. Not only have I become familiar with the SIM Learning Strategies instructional procedures which makes learning new strategies easier, but I have also learned to give the explicit feedback necessary for students to master skills that defeated them in the past.

Since I'm not assigned to a particular school, I've depended upon my fellow SIM colleagues to assist me in locating potential students. As a result, I've been able to work with both middle and high school students from a wide range of socio-economic classes with varying degrees of background knowledge. Thanks to step-by-step SIM instructional procedures and the assistance I've received from my SIM coach and colleagues, I've been able to see all of my students make progress. I now know from experience that reading about the SIM Learning Strategies or even going to a one day workshop on the strategies would never have taken me and my students this far. It is my hope that others who experience similar successes with SIM Learning Strategies will also consider taking on the role of SIM Professional Developer. By doing so, we can provide greater access to the SIM Learning Strategies and reach those Arkansas educators who are seeking better ways to educate their struggling adolescent learners.

*Rose Merry Kirkpatrick, SIM Apprentice
Education Consultant, ADE*

It Takes a Team!

Currently 12 classroom teachers, one speech-language pathologist, and one literacy coach are being trained to implement or are implementing SIM Learning Strategies and Content Enhancement Routines in the classroom. Bridgette Inboden, speech-language pathologist, Ashley Gray and Debbie Medlock, both resource teachers, are implementing the Sentence Writing Strategy with their students in co-teaching settings. The students have successfully completed simple sentences and are working on compound sentences.

Melinda Cobb, regular educator, and Erin Mangrum, resource teacher, are implementing Framing Routines in their co-teaching science class. Debbie Medlock, resource teacher, is implementing Recall Enhancement Routines and Unit Organizers in her study skills class. The Learning Strategies and Content Enhancement Routines have helped the students be more successful in the classroom.

*Bridgette Inboden, Speech-Language Pathologist
Annie Camp Junior High School*

Success Breeds Success

It is a rare occasion that a teacher can find a method of planning and instructing students, while reaching all levels of learning in the classroom. That is exactly what the Strategic Instruction Model has provided for me, and more importantly my students, over the years. I have taught grades two through twelve over the past seven years and have implemented with fidelity a variety of routines in all of my classes. Each year has provided new challenges, but armed with the Content Enhancement Routines of SIM, I have confidently risen to those challenges. My students have the tools to learn and retain the information that I desire them to remember in upcoming years. I have witnessed first hand the power and impact these routines have given to many of my students.

*Tasha Rowe, SIM Apprentice
Cabot Middle School North*

Dr. Mashburn's Greatest Hope

Work at UCA in Mashburn Hall, also known as the College of Education. On the way to my office, I pass a portrait and bronze plaque dedicated to the building's namesake, Dr. J. D. Mashburn. The plaque displays his hopeful message to educators: "...to give you the vision that the ultimate goal of true education is to plant the seed of self worth in the heart of each student." There is no mention of improving benchmark scores or expanding the curriculum. Just self worth.

I don't know many educators who would argue against the importance of self worth for all students. But is it, or should it be, the *ultimate goal* of education? Now there's a topic for debate. I happen to agree with Dr. Mashburn. But that's the easy part. The hard part is figuring out what self worth is, how it impacts learning, and what we can do to increase its presence in the teaching and learning of struggling students.

Solid instruction in reading, math, science, and other areas will always remain a core goal of schooling, as it should. However, if students do not experience an adequate sense of self worth and capability along the way, it becomes more and more difficult for them to muster up the desire and energy to learn. Skill limitations make this uphill battle even steeper. There are no easy answers, but students have consistently taught me that self worth goes a long way in sustaining their hope, perseverance, and desire to learn.

In the next few months, I will be working closely with Dr. Cooper to develop and implement strategies in two areas: (1) obtaining feedback from struggling learners to improve our understanding of their school experience, and (2) enhancing teacher-student relationships. Both areas are linked to students' success at school and elsewhere, and both are anchored in Dr. Mashburn's emphasis on self worth. I am honored to join you in pursuing Dr. Mashburn's greatest hope for struggling learners in Arkansas.

*Dr. John Murphy, Professor of Psychology
University of Central Arkansas*

Students who normally misbehave in classes, were not only engaged, but volunteered some of the best answers. The Content Enhancement Routines do not replace the content, they simply provide an outstanding method of organizing and presenting the material. In short, SIM works. My level of devotion to the routines led me to pursue the role of a SIM Professional Developer Apprentice through UCA. It is my goal to help spread the power behind the program and help future generations of teachers to have what they need to meet the challenges that lie before them in the classroom.

Summer 2009 Brings Next Iteration of Potential Professional Developers to the Project

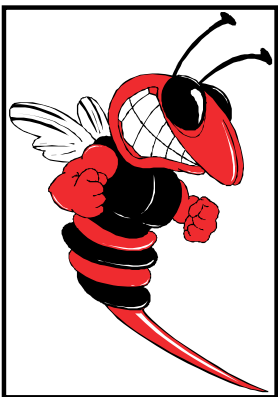
During the month of June, UCA will host its second Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) Potential Professional Developer Institute (PPDI) for those outstanding teachers and leaders who have a desire to become part of the Arkansas cadre of certified SIM Professional Developers. After the success of the first institute, the Arkansas Adolescent Literacy Intervention Leadership Team is looking forward with great hopes and anticipation for this next round of talent. The group that joins the institute this summer will have an additional year of experience in using the Learning Strategies and Content Enhancement Routines under their belts. With that as a backdrop, the faculty for the institute is hopeful that this next group will add strength to the fabric already being woven by those who were part of the process in the summer of 2008.

Over the course of this past school year, the apprentices who were part of the initial group have had the opportunity to implement their summer learning as professional developers in various sites and schools around the state. With their professional development, the project continues to sow the seeds of the Strategic Instruction Model. Their work alongside their identified mentors has been the realization of a project dream, that of "growing our own" professional developers. Once this core group of apprentices completes their certification requirements, they will be certified to lead professional development related to SIM. The support of the AR Leadership Cadre, and state and local mentors continues to be an integral part of the support for the apprentices.

Those interested in learning more about this exciting summer possibility may contact Patty Kohler-Evans or Renee Calhoun at UCA for more information (*see page 6 for contact information*).

*Debbie Cooke, SIM Professional Developer
University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning*

The Emergence of Professional Learning Communities



Maumelle Middle School is excited to report the beginning of professional learning communities in the building that incorporate the critical friends model in conjunction with implementation of SIM. With the enthusiastic support and professional development provided by UCA, we have combined many research based foundations to help teachers and students. This combination allows the teachers to have a true team wide approach for using the Content Enhancement Routines. It also allows us to be more involved in observing different colleagues' ways of using the devices as well as different classroom management methods and student interaction. This gives us the chance to receive informal critiques and constructive criticism on these different items from others who are sharing the same experiences. It has been our experience that with the team approach students will become more accepting and willing to use the tools, seeing them utilized in all of their classes. Success can be achieved through the rituals and routines. This will act as a springboard to go grade wide and, eventually, school wide.

*Bobby Cole, Principal
Maumelle Middle School
bcole@pcssd.org*

Vision for the Future

Put away the Glass Plus because we have a clear vision of where we are going, where we have been, and what vocabulary we need to use to get there because of the Unit Organizer. Cabot Middle School North has become more aligned and focused regarding curriculum throughout all content areas due to our SIM Professional Development. The SIM intervention has allowed us to join forces with our partner middle school and to align our curriculum using the Unit Organizer. This tool has provided a template for our teachers that not only challenges what we teach and when we teach, but also confronts the level of questioning that occurs within a content area. We are looking forward to learning more Content Enhancement Routines that will benefit our teachers and students.

*Tanya Spillane, Principal
Cabot Middle School North*



Monticello Middle School SIM Implementation Plan

Monticello Middle School is in year three of a four year SIM implementation plan. Currently, we have one Learning Strategies (LS) intervention group per grade level (6th, 7th, and 8th). We are also providing professional development training for three additional teachers in LS and beginning next school year, will have two LS intervention groups per grade level. As for Content Enhancement Routines (CER), we are expanding to the school-wide approach. Support provided by UCA's Mashburn Institute and the Arkansas Department of Education will enable all MMS teachers to be professionally developed in five (5) CER (see below). In addition, MMS is working to sustain and grow the SIM intervention internally. Karen Robinson will soon become a certified SIM Professional Developer in LS and Brenda Pennington will eventually become a certified SIM CER Professional Developer.

The LS and CER that we are implementing align with other high-yield learning strategies and other best practices. Each track supports struggling readers in different ways. The CER supports all students in a whole class setting. This makes Tier I interventions stronger for all students. The LS supports those students who need extra help in particular areas of weakness so they will be able to be successful in the regular classroom.

Monticello Middle School SIM Implementation Matrices

Learning Strategies Implementation Matrix:

	Test Taking	Paraphrasing	Word ID	SLANT	Sentence Writing	LINCing	First Letter Mnemonics
K.Robinson	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tumlison	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
O'Briant		X					
K. Young							X
Knight							X
Jackson	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wright					X		
School-wide				X			

Content Enhancement Routines Implementation Matrix:

	LINCS Vocabulary	Question Exploration	Unit Organizer	Course Organizer	The Frame	Concept Comparison	Clarifying Routine	Concept Mastery	Quality Assignment
K.Robinson					X				
McMurry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Cockrell	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Pennington		X		X	X	X		X	X
Farmer		X		X	X	X		X	
Dailey		X		X	X	X		X	
R. Lay					X				
Newman					X				
M. Morgan					X				
Griffin					X				
Hudgens					X				
Touchstone					X				
School-wide		1-4-10	8-11-09	8-10-09		X			1-4-10

*Jay Hughes, Principal
Monticello Middle School*

CER Spreading Like Fire

Content Enhancement Routines are spreading like wildfire throughout Little Rock Hall High. We started with a representative from each content area. Then our principal, Rhonda Hall, asked that each department adopt an instructional strategy to improve comprehension and test scores among our students. All of the social studies teachers have now received professional development on the FRAME. We are receiving rave reviews. Teachers are using it to introduce new concepts as well as review.

*Ruthie Walls, Teacher
Hall High School*

SIM: A Difference Maker in Our School

Currently, fifteen 5th and 6th grade teachers on our campus have been professionally developed in both the Content Enhancement Routines and Learning Strategies. During the three years of SIM implementation, these teachers regularly use the Learning Strategies they have been taught with their students. Students learn the Learning Strategies quickly, applying these strategies in other classes, and showing improvement in their retention of information. Although SIM teachers at our school have other tools and strategies they can use, SIM is the strategy they continually use over others.

*Amy Hoover, Teacher
Cabot Middle School South*



Keys to Successful Learning Strategy Implementation

Learning how to implement new instructional tools is not always an easy task. There is the unfamiliarity of the materials, the change in delivery method, the unique and different features of the tools. To top it off, there is a learning curve for teachers to experience before they are able to completely embrace new tools and make them their own. The lesson learned is that change takes time, patience, and persistence. Over the past two and half years, teachers who have been involved with the Arkansas Adolescent Literacy Intervention have been undergoing these changes. Throughout this time, four key areas have emerged to make a difference on instructional implementation and student outcomes. The keys to successful implementation include:

1. **Instructional Pacing:** the ability to move the lesson along while maintaining student active participation.
2. **Student Engagement:** the ability to bring to life activities that are typically passive in nature into activities that involve, engage student thinking, creativity, and communication.
3. **Explicit Instruction:** the ability to specifically describe, model, and guide student practice of a new skill or strategy.
4. **Practice with immediate corrective feedback:** the ability to provide practice that is in alignment with the strategy taught along with multiple opportunities to practice such as: guided, partner and individual practice. Immediate and corrective feedback during the multiple types of practice is critical in having students practice things correctly. The teachers become coaches who are up and moving around the room checking how students are doing and providing feedback whether simple positive comments, or re-teaching.

The goal for successful learning strategy instruction is to help teachers monitor their implementation and student progress. These four keys to success areas have been critical in reaching fidelity of implementation with an outcome of improved student performance. Visit a learning strategies classroom in your building to see them in action.

*Dr. Irma Brasseur, SIM Professional Developer
University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning
Linda Watt, SIM Professional Developer*

IHEs with HEART

In 2006, when the Arkansas Adolescent Literacy Intervention was launched, the designers considered the role of Arkansas' institutes of higher education (IHEs) and their ability to hasten the scaling up of the intervention. As a result, the Dean's Symposium has focused on the SIM Content Enhancement (CE) series for the past two years as a tool for engaging college/university faculty who are involved in teacher preparation. Fulfilling the requirements of this institute (called Teaching Content to All) enables participants to implement a variety of the CE empirically validated teaching routines developed by researchers at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning (KUCRL). The content of the institute emphasizes inclusive course planning and the implementation of a variety of explicit teaching routines designed to ensure content-area mastery of critical ideas and concepts by all university teacher candidates. The candidates also use the content of the institute as teacher candidates in their clinical sites. Participants explore several routines in depth so that CE Routines can be infused into existing courses or for new courses with state, district and NCATE standards in mind.

Past institute participants have become engaged in intervention schools in their communities, closing the circle to support their recent graduates, teacher candidates, and mentor teachers.

The 2009 institute begins January 20-23, continues April 6 and 7, 2009 at UCA. Nine IHEs in Arkansas have participated in this work. Some universities have taken advantage of the opportunity to return for a refresher each year or to add new members by taking advantage of the state's generous offer in subsequent years. Funding for the institute is provided through the Deans' Symposium grant from the Arkansas Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council. This year's instructional team will include Gail Cheever (Dallas, TX), Patty Kohler-Evans (UCA), and Patty Graner (KUCRL). Contact Patty Graner (pgraner@ku.edu) for information regarding similar institutes offered at the University of Kansas. Contact Martha Kay Asti (Martha.Asti@arkansas.gov) for Dean's Symposium information.

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