

SIM instruction with a tropical flair

—Island-hopping teacher helps missionary students & families—

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Celeste Corey
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‘I want each student to be able to reach his or her potential and for the family to enjoy the experience.’

It seems some teachers are willing to travel to the ends of the earth, or at least halfway around the world, to ensure strategic instruction touches the lives of students who need it.

Celeste Corey, a SIM Trainer whose “permanent” stateside home is in Mississippi, has spent the last five years traveling throughout Southeast Asia and Oceania, teaching missionary families about the Strategic Instruction Model.

Celeste is the MK (missionary kid) Consultant for the International Mission Board, an arm of the Southern Baptist Convention. Her job is to provide educational resources and support to missionary families stationed in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and the Pacific Islands.

A need for SIM

Many of the families Celeste works with home school their children, often using small rooms or bamboo huts in their backyards as classrooms.

“Most of these parents are not trained teachers, and they are anxious to give their children a quality education,” Celeste said. “Many live in rural areas where there are no extra resources.”

Celeste, who learned about the Strategic Instruction Model while pursuing her master’s degree at the University of Florida, searches for teaching methods and materials that parents will be able to use successfully.

“I want each student to be able to reach his or her potential and for the family to enjoy the experience,” she said.

SIM has been an important component of Celeste’s goal to provide professional equipment, resources, and consultation to help meet the needs of MK education throughout her region.

When Celeste began working with these families in 1994, she saw that many of the children could benefit from strategy instruction. The vastness of the region she supports coupled with the number of families she serves and the limited amount of time she is able to devote to a single family proved to be an obstacle to her efforts to deliver strategy instruction to individual students.

“I was not able to stay in one place long enough to do the instructing, so I became a trainer,” she said. “This way, I can train mothers, and they can teach their children.”

Celeste’s innovative approach has proven successful for students and their families throughout Southeast Asia and Oceania. Her ability to work closely with parents to develop customized plans for each student leads to unique learning environments.

“One of the neatest aspects of the home school setting is that a child can be in a particular grade and yet work at his or her own ability level,” Celeste said. “In the Philippines, we have an excellent example of that very thing. In 1994, I began working with a young boy who was in second grade but was still trying to learn his letter sounds. In setting up his

reading program, his mother and I determined that not only would we work to help him learn to read, but we wanted to keep up his self-concept as well.”

Consequently, the student was never “held back” a grade, and he continued to progress in reading at his own developmental rate.

“Because there were no other students in his class with which to compare himself, he did not have to feel threatened or dumb,” Celeste said. “In the spring of 1997, he was reading at a level that would enable him to begin learning the *Paraphrasing Strategy*. I trained his mother to teach him the strategy and got him started while visiting with the family. As his comprehension improved, so did his confidence and motivation.”

Celeste’s partnership with the student’s mother paid off with tremendous learning benefits for the student, as his performance on a recent standardized achievement test illustrates.

“He scored on grade level for reading,” Celeste said. “Both his mother and I cried.”

Living a fantasy

For many people, Celeste’s life may sound like a fantasy come true: a home in the tropics, island-hopping in the Pacific, the warmth of the sun and the blue of the ocean year-round. The reality, though, can be a little less than ideal for students and their teachers. The region has two seasons: rainy and dry. It’s hot all year round. Combined with the sometimes minimal living conditions for some of the missionary families, learning and teaching can be difficult. Celeste has learned to cope with these challenges in some unique ways.



Celeste
Corey

“Once, during the hottest time of year in Thailand, I filled a bathtub with three inches of water and lay in it to take a nap. It was the only way to cool off enough to sleep. I have to admit that my suffering is really not that great. Air conditioning is becoming more common, and many of the families have chosen to air-condition their school rooms. This motivates the students to come to class,” she said.

Far more troubling than the hot weather, in many cases, is the hot political climate of the host countries.

“Some of our families live in areas that are quite volatile politically, such as Indonesia and Cambodia,” Celeste said. “At times, this makes traveling for home visits difficult. Last year, I was in Indonesia when riots broke out, and I had to leave the country without completing my visits.”

More recently, Celeste spent three weeks in Indonesia during the trouble in East Timor and just before the Indonesian elections. During her visit, she sensed growing resentment toward Australians and Americans.

“Yet, I was able to make every home visit I had planned and never experienced any direct hostility,” she said.

The nuts and bolts of serving in paradise

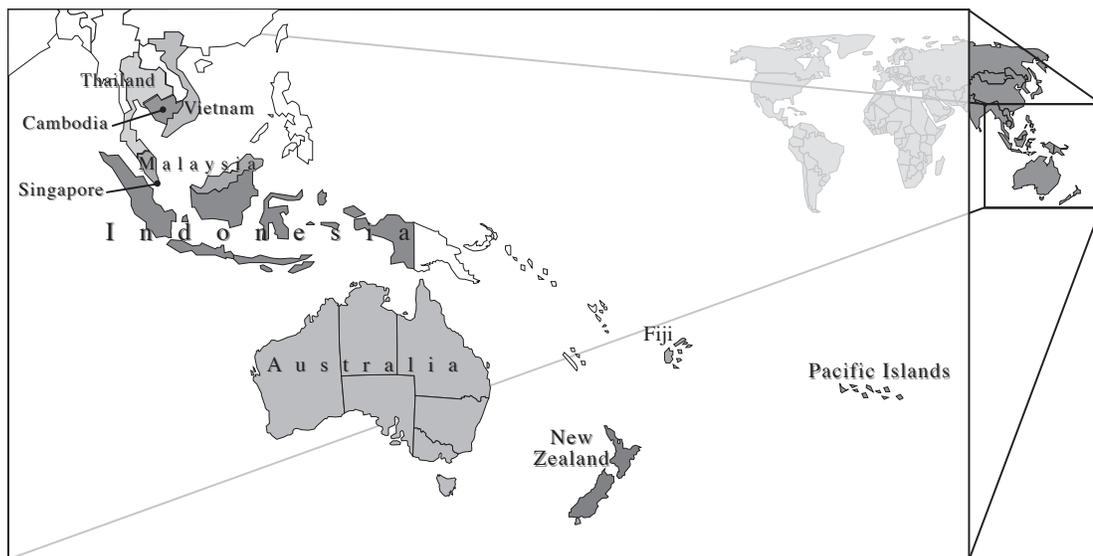
Strategy instruction for the missionary families begins at home schooling conferences organized by Celeste and two educational coordinators within the region. Each home schooling family has the opportunity to attend an annual conference, during which parents attend seminars related to education and parenting. At the same time, students take achievement tests and participate in group activities not available in a home school setting. The largest conference thus far attracted 39 adults and 62 children. In her five years in this role, Celeste has worked with 200 missionary families.

Until recently, Celeste worked almost exclusively with the mothers of the home schooled children. Last year, fathers became involved in her workshops for the first time. She thinks fathers are realizing that even if they never teach a class, they do have a significant role in setting the tone for the home school.

During the home schooling conferences, Celeste presents an overview of the Strategic Instruction Model to the entire group of parents. Strategy instruction then becomes more personal as Celeste follows up with home visits to each family. During the home visits, she is able to identify specific strategies appropriate for each child and then teach the parents how to use the strategy.

During a March 1998 conference, for example, Celeste met with one family concerned about the amount of time a son spent completing his correspondence schoolwork. Celeste suggested ways the parents could help their son get organized and become a strategic learner.

“I followed up this fall with a home



This map shows the territory Celeste covers in her role as MK Consultant in Southeast Asia and Oceania.

visit,” Celeste said. “His grades were good, but he was falling farther behind in his schedule. So, I suggested that he learn the *Assignment Completion Strategy*.”

Celeste was able to remain with the family long enough to work through the Controlled Practice Stage of strategy instruction and to teach the student’s mother how to help him continue with the strategy.

“The student mapped out his courses for the rest of this semester and began putting the daily schedule into practice,” she said. “I am checking with them through e-mail and both student and mom report that he is staying on target. This means that he will be finished with his coursework in time to enter 10th grade next fall when his family returns for a year of stateside assignment.”

Building connections

Working alone, as Celeste does, under harsh conditions in a position that requires extensive traveling for most of the year could take a toll

on anyone. Fortunately for Celeste, she has developed a terrific support network.

“My mission organization provides a very good support system, and I have developed some close relationships with many of the mothers with whom I work,” she said.

In addition, Celeste may have company in her role soon, although consulting with her co-workers may require even more traveling. The International Mission Board is looking for more individuals to fill positions similar to Celeste’s in other regions served by its missionaries.

Changing lives

Despite the challenges, Celeste sees the good in the work she’s doing and the lives she’s changed.

“I love watching the parents gain confidence in teaching their own children and seeing the MKs who are struggling beginning to make progress and improve their self-esteem,” Celeste said.

“There are several families that have been able to stay in the field and complete the task to which the Lord has called them because they were able to get help when they needed it. There are also several students who have gained a lot of confidence and continued to persevere in the face of great difficulties. Some of these students have now graduated and are succeeding in college back in the U.S.”

Not only has Celeste changed the lives of others through her work, but the work has changed her life, as well.

“I certainly would never have dreamed that I could be traveling all around Asia or that I would be considered an ‘expert’ in anything,” Celeste said. “It is actually a little scary, but I’ve come to realize that I don’t have to have all the answers. What I need most is to be a good listener and to allow God to guide me and the parents.”

SIM training in 2000

The following Strategic Instruction Model workshops are planned for the summer of 2000. All workshops will be held at the University of Kansas campus in Lawrence.

Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) Workshop Level I

July 17-19, 2000 (Monday-Wednesday)

\$350

Teachers who have had no training in SIM or perhaps have been trained in only one or two strategies will benefit from this week. The SIM Level I Workshop is designed for teachers of students who are at risk for school failure, including those who have mild disabilities. During the three days of training, teachers will become familiar with the Overview of SIM and be taught to implement the SLANT, Sentence Writing, Word Identification, and Test Taking strategies, and one Content Enhancement Routine. **Registration is due by May 12, 2000.**

Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) Workshop Level II

July 20-22, 2000 (Thursday-Saturday)

\$350

This workshop is for teachers who already have been trained in SIM procedures and have implemented some of the strategies or routines with students considered to be at risk for school failure. At this advanced training session, teachers may select six strategies or routines to learn from the following list: Error Monitoring, Paragraph Writing, Visual Imagery, Self-Questioning, Vocabulary, Memory, Paraphrasing, Test Taking, and Assignment Completion strategies and several Content Enhancement Routines. As part of the registration process, teachers will make their selections and submit these with their completed registration forms and payment for the workshop. **Registration is due by May 12, 2000.**

Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) Workshop Content Enhancement

July 17-21, 2000 (Monday-Friday)

\$395

This workshop is designed to provide an opportunity for teachers to learn new methods to teach large amounts of content to academically diverse classes in “learner-friendly” ways. In this hands-on workshop, participants will plan how to use Content Enhancement, a set of routines developed through research at the Center for Research on Learning, to enhance the ways they present content and improve students’ ability to organize, understand, and remember critical information. During sessions, participants will learn routines from the Content Enhancement series (Concept Mastery, Anchoring, and Comparison; Lesson, Unit, and Course Organizers; Survey; and Quality Assignment) and then invent ways to implement the routines in their own courses. **Registration is due by May 12, 2000.**



Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) Writing Strategies Workshop

July 25-28, 2000 (Tuesday-Friday)

\$395

This workshop is designed to provide to teachers who teach in general education settings the tools necessary to incorporate the SIM writing curriculum into their courses. Participants will receive training in the Sentence Writing, Paragraph Writing, Error Monitoring, and Theme Writing strategies from the SIM Learning Strategies Curriculum as well as the Course and Unit Organizer routines from the SIM Content Enhancement Series. Sessions will be interactive, and participants will have time each day to practice and plan how to incorporate new information into their courses. The sessions are designed to be relevant for instructors at almost all levels (grade 3 to post-secondary), and people teaching English, Learning Strategies, Special Education, or other learning or communication courses will find this workshop practical and stimulating. **Registration is due by May 12, 2000.**

Workshop for Potential SIM Content Enhancement Trainers

July 31-August 4, 2000 (Monday-Friday)

\$510

Participants in this workshop will be selected through an application process. Individuals who have previously been trained in and have successfully implemented a variety of Content Enhancement Routines will be trained to begin the process of becoming Content Enhancement Trainers. Strategies are not taught at the workshop. The focus is on the training process. To become a certified trainer, a set of requirements must be met after the week of training during the year following the workshop. **Applications must be postmarked by April 14, 2000.**

Workshop for Potential SIM Learning Strategy Trainers

July 31-Aug. 4, 2000 (Monday-Friday)

\$510

Participants in this workshop will be selected through an application process. Individuals who have been trained in the strategies and have implemented strategy instruction will be trained to become potential trainers. Teachers need to have implemented at least four strategies; supervisors and coordinators must have implemented at least two strategies with at least one student. Strategies are not taught at the workshop. The focus is on the training process. To become a certified trainer, a set of requirements must be met after the week of training. **Applications are due by April 14, 2000.**

Preservice workshop

In addition to these workshops, the Center plans a workshop for preservice educators in the spring. The Pedagogies for Academic Diversity in Secondary Schools Workshop for Preservice Educators will be May 30-June 2, 2000. For more information about this workshop, e-mail crl@ukans.edu or write to the address below.

Fees and Applications

Training fees cover the cost of materials provided with the training. Participants will be responsible for their own transportation, housing, and meals. For applications or registration forms, write to Workshops, KU-CRL, 3061 Dole, Lawrence, KS 66045 or call (785) 864-4780.

A sweet activity for practicing DISSECT

Karen Koskovich, a SIM Trainer and teacher from Maquoketa, Iowa, developed this activity for use with the *Word Identification Strategy*.

Prefix | Stem | Suffix

During the Describe Stage of DISSECT instruction, I allow students to practice the steps we've talked about for working with an unknown word in the following way:

We use a table knife and a candy bar that has a label similar to the one above taped to it. Each student verbally tells me the steps while using the knife to demonstrate on the candy bar what is done with the word (isolate the prefix, separate the suffix). When the student is finished, he or she listens while the remaining students work with their candy bars.

All students wait to eat their candy bars with the group. The prefix part of the candy bar is eaten as a chunk first. Then the suffix part is eaten as a chunk. Finally, the stem part is eaten in very small bites to simulate the use of the Rules of Twos and Threes.

Word Identification cue card for high school students

SIM teachers at Muskegon (Michigan) High School use this *Word Identification Strategy* cue card with their students. Thanks to **Sue Woodruff** for sharing with *Strategram* readers.

Suffixes that say "shhhhh!!!"

"c" combinations

	-cial	so cial
	-cient	effi cient
	-cious	pre cious
ic+ ial =	-icial	benef icial
ic+ ian =	-ician	phys ician
ic+ ious =	-icious	del icious

"t" combinations

-tial	ini tial
-tient	pa tient
-tion	commo tion
-ation	gener ation
-tious	preten tious

Presentation ideas for *Self-Questioning*

Marg Stewart and Sonya Kunkel, SIM Trainers from Connecticut, presented these ideas for use with the Self-Questioning Strategy during the Northeast Regional SIM Trainers' Conference in October.

Self-Questioning Strategy Action Plan

M.L. Stewart

? WHAT outcomes do I want to accomplish with the strategy? _____

😊 WHO will I teach the strategy to? _____

Y WHY did I choose this strategy for these students? _____

□ WHERE will I schedule the time to implement it? _____

Π WHEN will I begin? _____

+ WHICH materials will I need? _____

H HOW will I structure myself to implement this plan? _____

Additional notes: _____

Self-Questioning Cheer

Who, what, when, where,
which, why, how...,

if you have a question,
"ASK IT" now!

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