



TroubleShooting Tips

<i>What to do when...</i>	<i>Try this</i>
You don't have time to work with individual students on specific needs.	Introduce the tools to the whole class; teachers report all students benefit from <i>StrategyTool</i> use—from honors students, average students, to those with learning difficulties.
You don't have computers for each student.	Introduce the tools using the SmartBoard and student participation; provide students with printed copies of the tools to take notes and/or complete the tool. Arrange time in computer labs for using <i>StrategyTools</i> ; work with tech support to make the tools easily accessible on all student computers in the building.
You are having problems motivating teachers and students to use tools consistently.	Try to organize schoolwide or district-wide training that offers continuing education credits to show other faculty how easy these tools are to use and how consistent usage across content areas helps students improve and generalize a wide range of skills.
You are unable to get all teachers on board for schoolwide use.	Talk to faculty in your department and encourage tool use across your content area; students learn to use the tools more quickly and efficiently and are better able to generalize use in other skill areas.
You notice that you are unable to make changes to the format of a tool and you feel the format is too restrictive (e.g., adding lines to Venn Diagram).	The formats of <i>StrategyTools</i> cannot be expanded, but you can always use two forms if you need more entries.

<i>What to do when...</i>	<i>Try this</i>
<p>You are having difficulty getting the students motivated.</p>	<p>Assign the students to groups to complete a tool for organizing information before and after instruction so that they can work together and see a difference.</p> <p>Allow students to use completed tools when taking a test—this encourages them not only to participate but also to do it thoughtfully and completely.</p>
<p>You are having difficulty selecting the right tool for the right task because there are so many and finding the time to go through them all is challenging.</p>	<p>Select a couple of tools that you can use across a variety of topics (e.g., the Notetaking Tool or Vocabulary Card) and make those a part of your instructional routine in class when you introduce or practice a new topic. This way both you and the students are familiar with the selected tools and the routine; minimal instructional time is needed. As you become successful using a couple of tools, challenge yourself to select one new tool a week to try.</p>
<p>Competing priorities—“we’ve been inundated with all these new strategies because we are on school improvement. We have too many new initiatives”.</p>	<p>Consider using students to mentor each other; suggest school aides in the classroom or computer labs learn the tools and facilitate usage.</p>
<p>You have trouble finding the tool records created by students as they make tools.</p>	<p>Centralize tool use on the server, specific classroom or computer lab computers, or provide memory devices for students to collect their own usage records.</p>