

Question- Answer Relationships (QAR)

Purpose:

To help students understand the different strategies they need to use when they are answering questions about a reading selection.

Four types of comprehension questions:

- right there - the answers to these questions are textually explicit, the answer is right there in the text. (literal)
- think and search - requires students to search for ideas in the text that are related to one another and put these ideas together to answer the question. (inferential)
- author and you - the answer is not in the text, the students need to think about what they know and put it together with what the author says to get the answer. (evaluation?)
- on your own - the answer comes from the student with not much help from the author, the text gets the student thinking but the student must use what they already know to answer the question. (application?)

These steps take place over several class sessions.

1. Explain the concept of QARs to the students, possibly using a chart to show the four types and the two broad categories of information sources: in the text and in your head.
2. Have students read several short passages. Follow each reading with one question from each of the four QAR categories. Discuss the differences between the different types of questions and answers.
3. Give students short passages along with questions, answers and identified QARs. Discuss why a question and answer pair is one QAR and not another. Then give students passages with questions and answers and have them identify the QARs. Finally, give students passages with questions and have them decide which QAR strategy to use to find the answers.
4. Give students a longer passage with up to six questions (at least one from each category). Students can work in groups to decide the QAR category and answer for each question.
5. As an extension students can write their own questions for reading passages using the QAR strategies.

Adapted from Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum by Richard T. and Joanne L. Vacca