

# QAR – Question-Answer Relationships

QAR (Raphael, 1982: 1986) is a strategy that is “designed to demystify the questioning process, providing teachers and students with a common vocabulary to discuss different types of questions and sources of information for answering these questions...”

## Text-based QAR's:

- **Right There** questions ask students to respond at the literal level; the words used to formulate and answer the question can be found “right there” in the same sentence of the text. These types of questions begin with words or statements such as *who is, where is, list, what is, when is, how many, what kind of*. These questions usually elicit a one-word or short phrase response and require one right answer.
- **Think and Search** questions require students to think about how the information or ideas in the text relate to one another, and to search through the entire passage they read to find information that applies. These types of questions may begin with words or statements such as *summarize, what caused, contrast, retell how did explain, compare*.

## Knowledge-based QAR's:

- **Author and You** questions require students to answer with information not in the text; however, students must have read the text material to understand what the question is asking. These types of questions may be, *The topic of the passage was cloning. In what instances, if ever, do you think cloning should be used?*
- **On My Own** questions can be answered with information from the students' background knowledge and do not require reading the text. Students who become skilled at this strategy recognize the relationship between the questions teachers ask and the answers they expect; therefore, they know where to find information needed for a correct response.

## How to use QAR:

1. Introduce the strategy by giving a written and verbal description of each question.
2. Assign short passages to be read. As students finish reading each passage, ask them one question from each QAR category. Point out the differences between each question and the kind of answer it requires.
3. After students demonstrate that they understand the differences among the four QAR levels, assign several more short passages to be read. Again, ask one question for each category, have students provide answers, and identify each question's QAR type. Discuss why the questions represent one QAR but not another.
4. Next, repeat reading, questioning and answering procedure. This time however, have students identify each question as a particular QAR and explain their answer. Repeat in small groups.
5. Begin to assign longer passages. Give students several questions, not necessarily one per QAR level. Have them individually determine the QAR and write their answers. Continue assigning longer passages and various QAR's for students to identify and answer.
6. Eventually, when reading is assigned in class, students should generate various QAR's on their own that they present to the rest of the class for identification and answers.