Riverside Community College
Directed Learning Activity: Reading
QAR: Question, Answer, Response

QAR is a reading strategy in which students categorize comprehension questions according to where they get the information they need to answer each question. Students indicate whether the information they use to answer the questions about the text are explicit information (information that is directly stated in the text), textually implicit information (information that is implied by the writer in the text), or information entirely from a student's own prior knowledge or schema (information that has been acquired previously by the reader through experience).

QAR serves five primary purposes:
1. It assists the student in monitoring his own comprehension of the text.
2. It provides the student with a purpose for reading the text.
3. It allows a student to assess his comprehension of the text.
4. It encourages elaborative and critical thinking.
5. It helps refute the common misconception held by many students that the text tells all.

QAR Process:

1. The instructor selects a section of a text for the student to read.

2. The instructor (or students) writes questions based on the text that fits into one of the three categories.

   - **Right There** (text explicit) - the information you find is explicitly stated in the text. This process is reminiscent of when you did worksheets in high school history classes except in reverse. You remember on the worksheet, a question was asked and you just copied the information directly from the text. This time you are to identify a significant detail consisting of a major idea/concept, significant event, influential person, or academic vocabulary term and create a question that can be answered from the details expressly stated in the text.

     Examples of Right There questions:

     What is the Body Mass Index (BMI)?
     What did Thomas Paine say was “the essence of a Republic?”
     During World War I, what side of the war did India take?

   - **Think and Search** (text implicit) – the information that students will need to answer the question is implied in the text, but students will have to combine ideas, to go
to multiple places in the text, or to connect to prior knowledge to form specific inferences.

Examples of Think and Search questions:

What are the effects of Body Mass Index (BMI) on one's health?
How are Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence* reflected in the ideas put forth by philosophers such as John Locke that liberty was a natural right?
Why would the citizens of India side with the Great Britain during World War I, when they were tired of being a colony of the British Empire?

- **In My Head** (prior knowledge, schema, and experience) – the information that students will need to answer the question is *entirely in the reader’s mind* created from the reader's prior knowledge, schema, and experience.

Examples of In My Head questions:

In the next month, what are you going to do lower your Body Mass Index (BMI)?
Do you feel that liberty is a “natural right?”
How do you think it would feel to live in a country that was a colony like India?

3. The instructor and the class goes over the questions before the reading of the text – this gives the students (you) a purpose for reading. Too often, students focus on finishing the assignment as opposed to understanding that the real purpose for reading is to get meaning.

4. The students (you) then answer the questions completely. Then indicate which category they needed to answer each.

- **RT** = Right There (text explicit)
- **TS** = Think and Search (text implicit)
- **IMH** = In My Head (prior knowledge, schema, and experience)

5. Once the students (you) have answered all the questions and indicated which category each question belongs, the students convene in groups to discuss. Because with this Directed Learning Activity, instruction is individualized, you will discuss your responses and decision with the instructor. Keep in mind that sometimes the category for a response is not clear cut. Some may argue that the information they needed to answer the question falls into the “Think and Search” category. Others, who have more personal and academic experience with a particular topic, may argue for the “In My Head” category for the same question. It is not important that there be a single correct category for every question. What is most important is that the student can support his choice of category. More is learned from the discussion than from which category is ultimately decided.
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QAR: Question, Answer, Response: Part II

1. Go to the Reading Lab and locate *The American Ways: An Introduction to American Culture*

2. Read the following questions before you open the text:

   1. What year did immigration laws in the United States begin to change to assist in family reunifications.
   2. What effects does the geography of a country have on immigration?
   3. What is cultural pluralism?
   4. How has the foreign-born population of the United States changed from 1900 to 1990?
   5. How do you feel about legal immigration in the United States?
   6. Who was Alexis DeTocqueville and what did he do?
   7. What were DeTocqueville’s observations and conclusions about the American character?
   8. How would you describe the average person in the United States and what he or she believes?
   9. What has changed significantly about immigration in the United States since 1900?


4. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions completely. As you are answering the questions, classify them by:

   RT = Right There (text explicit)
   TS = Think and Search (text implicit)
   IMH = In My Head (prior knowledge, schema, and experience)

5. Once you have answered the nine questions completely and classified them into proper categories, meet with the instructor to discuss. Keep in mind that sometimes a category is not clear cut. You must, in your discussions with the instructor be able to justify your answers and your choice of category. More is learned from the discussion than which category is ultimately decided.