

◆ THEORY AND PRACTICE ◆

QAR *Now*

QUESTION
ANSWER
RELATIONSHIPS

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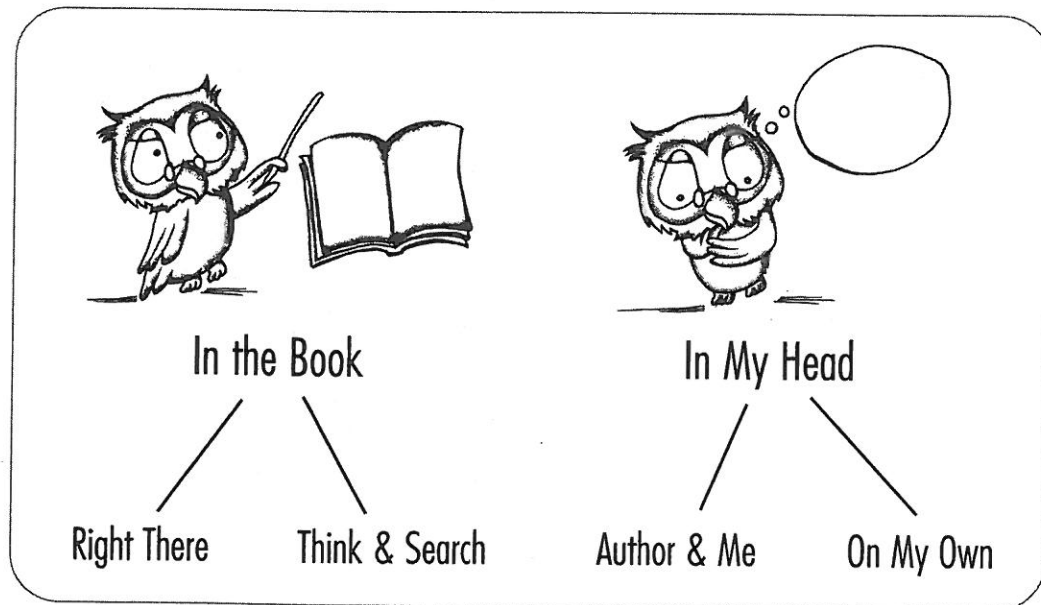
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minutes to extended periods of time), the next level, or *core* QARs—Right There, Think & Search, Author & Me, and On My Own—can be introduced in contrasting pairs. Figure 1.4 displays the four core QARs and the pairs that are introduced together.

Notice that QAR instruction always uses paired comparisons. You can introduce students to the two QARs under each source in any order. The paired comparison expanding In the Book focuses students' attention on the difference between Right There and Think & Search QARs. The paired comparison expanding In My Head focuses attention on the difference between Author & Me and On My Own.

Figure 1.4 *The Core Question Answer Relationships*



In the Book QARs



The two In the Book QARs are contrasted to convey the difference between successfully answering a question by simply going to one place in a text and finding all necessary information (Right There) and looking across a text or set of texts to answer the question (Think & Search), as described in Figure 1.5. As shown in Figure 1.7, the Right There QAR fits the NAEP 2009 Framework category called

Locate and Recall. For both fiction and nonfiction texts, this may include answering questions using information explicitly stated in a text source (e.g., magazine, textbook, Web page, chart, or graph) to define a term, providing facts or supporting details. For fiction, it may include identifying information about characters or a setting or determining a sequence of events found in one place in the text. For informational texts, it may include identifying explicitly stated information about topic sentences, determining an author's purpose, explaining a causal relationship, or locating specific information in charts and graphs. Initially, as the definition displayed in Figure 1.5 suggests, for Right There QARs everything needed to answer the question is right there in a single sentence. It's a helpful definition to use initially because it sets up the contrast with Think & Search and leads to analytical thinking.

Think & Search QARs ask readers to put information together from a single text or from a set of texts, looking across sentences, paragraphs, pages, or texts for all the information needed to answer the

Figure 1.5 *In the Book QARs*

In the Book

	
<p>Right There</p> <p>The answer is in one place in the text. Words from the question and words that answer the question are often "right there" in the same sentence.</p>	<p>Think & Search</p> <p>The answer is in the text. Readers need to "think and search," or put together different parts of the text, to find the answer. The answer can be within a paragraph, across paragraphs, or even across chapters and books.</p>

question fully. This fits within the NAEP 2009 Framework category of questions that require students to integrate information, including using multiple text sources to explain the relationships between problems and solutions or causes and effects, providing information about a sequence of events across chapters in a literary text or across chapter sections in an informational text, and comparing or connecting information within and across texts. (See Figure 1.6.)

Figure 1.6 *NAEP Reading Targets and QAR*

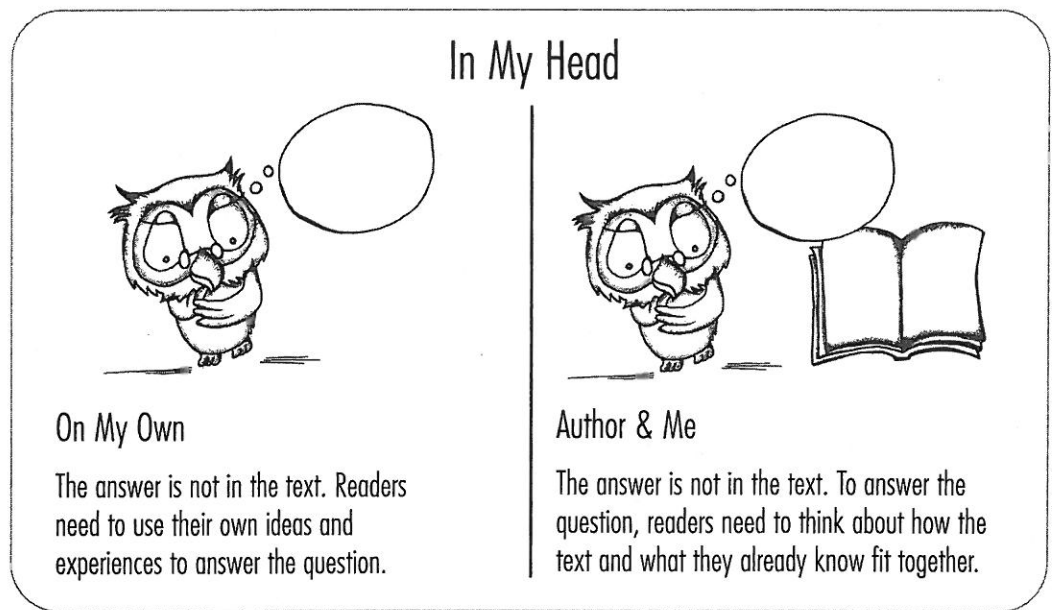
NAEP Framework Categories	Core QARs
<p>Locate/Recall Identify textually explicit information such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions • Facts • Supporting details <p>Make simple inferences</p>	<p>Right There Think & Search</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across small amounts of text, up to several paragraphs
<p>Integrate/Interpret Make complex inferences to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe problem and solution, cause and effect • Compare or connect ideas, problems, or situations within or across texts • Determine unstated assumptions in an argument • Analyze how an author uses literary devices and text features 	<p>Think & Search</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across large amounts of text, including two different texts
<p>Critique/Evaluate Consider text critically to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judge author's craft and technique • Evaluate the author's perspective or point of view within or across texts • Take different perspectives in relation to a text 	<p>Think & Search</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually an examination of the text as a whole • May involve two different texts <p>Author & Me</p>

As students become increasingly sophisticated about the range of strategies for locating and identifying relevant information for answering Think & Search questions, we have found that they begin to critique the initial definitions used to distinguish between Think & Search and Right There QARs. Students have made observations such as “This is a Think & Search because I found the information in these two sentences, but they are right next to each other so all I had to do was skim to find the answers. It doesn’t seem like it took very much thinking! It seems like this is more like a Right There.” You can be proud when your students begin to analyze QARs in this way. An effective way to respond is to turn the observation back to the students, perhaps saying something like “I think Sam has a good point—this does feel like a very simple Think & Search compared to all the others that you are getting so good at answering, using so much text information. Should we just say that if the information is pretty easy to find, all in one place, that it’s a Right There? But if you have to look across at least one paragraph and put information together in some way, it’s a Think & Search?” When students raise these questions, it indicates that they are becoming reflective about questioning practices, that they have begun to demystify how questions can be created, and that they are learning how comprehension strategies can be used to answer different types of questions effectively. The goal of QAR instruction is to develop students’ reflective analysis about questioning, not their ability to simply identify the QAR.

In My Head QARs

The next step in Question Answer Relationships instruction is to introduce the two core In My Head QARs. With both Author & Me and On My Own QARs, as illustrated in Figure 1.7, readers use information from their background knowledge. Neither an Author & Me nor an On My Own question can be answered with only information from the text. You must make clear to students that in order to answer an Author & Me question, readers must have read and understood the text. To answer an On My Own question, readers can rely solely on their background knowledge.

Figure 1.7 *In My Head QARs*



On My Own questions can be used prior to reading a text, to help students access or develop the appropriate background knowledge. When Kathy Highfield's students were about to read Phyllis Reynolds Naylor's novel *Shiloh* (Atheneum, 1991), she asked On My Own questions such as these: "Have you ever had a pet that you cared for? Tell us about it." "Think about people you know who treat their pets especially well. Can you describe their treatment to us?" "Think about people you know or have heard of who may not treat their pets so well. Can you describe the problems these pets have faced?" It wasn't necessary to have read the novel to participate in this discussion.

In contrast, in response to the question "What do you think Marty should have done with Shiloh?" Kathy's students would need to have read the text—to know who Shiloh was, to know why Marty needed to do something with Shiloh, to understand that Marty was going against his parents' wishes. Further, to form a successful answer, they would have to make some complex inferences about the problem Marty faced: His father was worried about his ability to feed another living being, given the family's poverty; Marty's parents were concerned about issues of theft and ownership, since Shiloh had an owner.

Students had to read and understand the text to be able to evaluate Marty's situation. However, no matter how much information from the text they integrate or evaluate, no matter how many times they reread for important information to build their argument, ultimately the source of the answer must come from their background knowledge. Author & Me QARs are defined by this relationship between the text and past experience.

By introducing students to each of the four core categories within the context of two primary information sources—their heads and the text—you can help students avoid confusing the core QARs. If students do not fully understand the two sources, they may confuse Think & Search and Author & Me. They will notice that for both QARs, they have to think about information and use the text. But if they can identify the source, they should be able to identify the appropriate QAR. If the information for the answer comes from their heads, it's an Author & Me QAR. If everything they need can be found in the text(s), then regardless of the question's difficulty, it is a Think & Search QAR.

Sometimes students disagree on the QAR, perhaps arguing strongly that they used their heads, not the book, since they already knew about the topic. Keep in mind that the goal of the QAR framework is for students to be reflective about information sources and about strategies they can use to obtain information. The goal is not simply labeling questions. Since the knowledge held by individuals varies, the emphasis should always be placed on the students' ability to justify their choice of QAR, rather than simply making the same QAR choice as the teacher.

Learning QARs in Context

QAR was designed to be taught and learned in the context of working through a wide range of texts (see, for example, Ezell, Hunsicker, Quinque, & Randolph, 1996). Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis (2000) suggest taking shorter text segments from well-written and interesting material in trade books, magazines, and textbooks and “lifting” them to teach specific instructional strategies. We have used

Figure 4.3 *Reading/Science Comparison Chart*

READING METHODS	SCIENCE METHODS
On My Own	
1. <i>Activating Prior Knowledge</i> —Building upon a topic or issues by determining what you already know and what you want to know.	1. <i>Making Observations</i> —Building upon an idea, topic, or issue by observing and determining what you want to know and how it might be changed.
On My Own	
2. <i>Setting a Purpose</i> —Turning what you know about a story into a question by asking yourself, “Why am I going to read this story?”	2. <i>Stating the Question</i> —Turning what you have observed into a question.
Author & Me	
3. <i>Predicting</i> —Stating what you expect to find out in the story.	3. <i>Stating a Hypothesis</i> —Stating what you expect to find out in your experiment.
Think & Search	
4. <i>Reading the Story</i> — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skimming to locate main ideas; sequencing the events of the story in chronological order. • Making judgments about the story. • Understanding cause and effect relationships in the story. 	4. <i>Reviewing Literature; Designing an Experiment</i> — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skimming the literature to locate the main idea; sequencing the steps of the experiment in chronological order. • Making a judgment about the experimental process. • Understanding the cause or effect of what is being tested.
Right There, Think & Search	
5. <i>Taking Notes</i> —Keeping careful records of the story to be able to recall and tell others.	5. <i>Keeping Data</i> —Keeping careful records of the experimental data so that it can be repeated and others can see exactly what you did.
Think & Search	
6. <i>Reading Graphic Aids</i> —Comparing and contrasting the story, events, characters, and settings in a story (or stories).	6. <i>Organizing and Analyzing Data</i> —Comparing and contrasting the experimental data.
Author & Me	
7. <i>Drawing Conclusions</i> —Using information from the story to draw conclusions.	7. <i>Stating a Conclusion</i> —Using facts and data from the experiment to draw conclusions.
Think & Search	
8. <i>Writing a Summary</i> —Recalling the important events in the story.	8. <i>Writing an Abstract</i> —Recalling the important events of your experiment.