

QAR explained

QAR stands for **Question–Answer Relationship**.

QAR is a reading and thinking tool that, used over time, aims to help students:

- be efficient in the way they try to answer questions and
- be able to talk clearly about how they know what they know.

Teaching QAR to students begins with a core concept. The core concept is that answers to all reading questions come from either:

- the book (called *In the book* answers) or
- what the students know (called *In my head* answers)

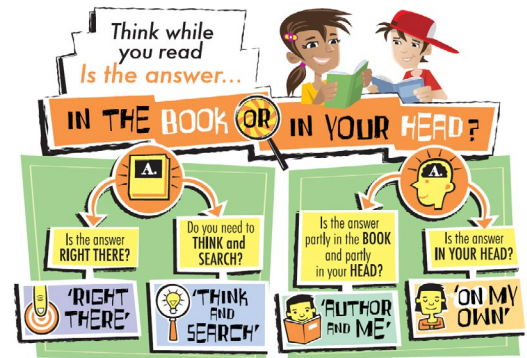
Each of these categories can be divided into two types of questions.

In the book questions can either be:

1. right there in one sentence in the book, or
2. might require a think and search through the book because the answer lies across sentences or pages.

In my head questions can either be:

1. author and me because the answer is partly in the book and partly in your head and you have to think about what the author meant, or
2. on my own because the answer is in your head and you do not need the book at all to answer the question.



A note for when it is difficult:

If you and your student are having a talk about a particular question, and

- you are struggling to work out what type it is
- you think it might belong in two categories
- you keep changing your mind, and offering reasons for why different things are possible
- you're starting to get a bit frustrated by the whole thing, then ... stop! But well done!

You are actually having a very high level conversation and you are doing exactly the type of work that the QAR framework is meant to generate. Being right about which label to apply, is not the aim. The aim is to help students be able to think and talk about what they understand when they read. Don't forget – contact your teacher for support at any time.

Here are some examples.

| In the book | | In my head | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>right there</p> <p>How many eggs did the snake take from the nest?</p> <p>What words did Dad use to describe the day?</p> <p>Who smiled at Jenny when she went into the store?</p> <p>The answer to this type of question can be found right there in a sentence in the book. Often words from the question are actually there in the sentence that contains the answer. So you look for those words in the writing, and somewhere nearby is the answer.</p> | <p>think and search</p> <p>What is the main idea of the second paragraph?</p> <p>What actions in the story suggest that Jessie is a kind person?</p> <p>What did Roger have to do before he could build his home?</p> <p>The answer to this type of question can be found in the book but the student has to do more than locate a single piece of information.</p> <p>The student might have to look in several places and get several different pieces of information, or they might have to read a short section and come up with a main idea.</p> <p>A <i>main idea</i> type of question is harder than a <i>look for different pieces of information</i> but the answer is still there in the book.</p> | <p>author and me</p> <p>How successful is the author at persuading you to her point of view?</p> <p>What qualities of character does Thanh demonstrate when the big storm hits the boat?</p> <p>What do you think will happen next in this story?</p> <p>What do you think the author was trying to say about families when they wrote this story?</p> <p>The answer to this type of question is not directly in the book, but the reader has to use the book and connect it with their own background knowledge in order to arrive at an answer.</p> <p>This type of question is often about making a judgment or putting yourself in someone else's shoes or might involve a comparison with other stories read previously.</p> <p>The word <i>inferential comprehension</i> is a common technical term that belongs in this category.</p> <p>Inferring is the activity performed by a reader when they make judgments or predictions which aren't stated clearly in what has just been read.</p> | <p>on my own</p> <p>Why did you choose this book to read?</p> <p>What do I already know about this topic?</p> <p>Why did Eva and Theo throw back the small fish? (Note: the text just says they did this and doesn't explain why.)</p> <p>The answer to this type of question lies in the reader's own ideas and experiences.</p> <p>Answers to this type of question are highly personal and vary greatly from student to student.</p> |