Question Answer Relationship (QAR)

The big idea behind Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy is that there are essentially three types of comprehensions (i.e., fact, integrate, inference). If students can identify the question type, they will be more likely to produce an appropriate answer. Students taught QAR outperformed controls by more than 30 percent on standardized comprehension tests.

Step-by-Step

1. Inform students that there are three types of comprehension questions.
2. Create a QAR Chart and student Cue Cards (see storyboard #1).
3. Model how to use the QAR strategy (see storyboards #4-7) by:
   a. Selecting a short passage and developing three QAR comprehension questions.
   b. Placing the passage on a projector and reading it aloud.
   c. Classifying each QAR question as a Green Light, Yellow Light, or Red Light question.
   d. Requiring students to answer each QAR.
   e. Repeating this process with another short passage.
4. Assign students a passage to read either individually or in small groups. Make sure you individually or in small groups. Make sure you have prepared QAR questions for students to identify and answer.
5. Instruct students to use their QAR Cue Cards to classify, then answer each question (see storyboard #8).
**Siti the Orangutan**

Safe in a sanctuary after being rescued from people who kept her illegally as a pet, Siti the orangutan struggled to crack open a coconut. Unable to open it, Siti approached a sanctuary worker and handed it to him. The worker just handed it back because he was trying to let Siti learn how to survive in the forest. Siti picked at the coconut with a stick, then gave it back to him. Again, the worker played dumb and handed it back.

“Siti must have decided the man was stupid,” says psychologist Anne Russo, who was watching. Siti picked up another stick and hacked at the coconut as one would with a long knife. She showed the worker what she wanted him to do—something she’d seen him do many times. “Siti herself had never opened a coconut,” says Russo. “Yet she had learned how it was done, just by watching.”

**Questions**

1. What was the sanctuary worker’s reason for handing the coconut back to Siti?
   - **QARs Classification**: This is a Green Light Question. With a partner underline where in the text you can find the answer.

2. Why did Siti think the sanctuary worker was stupid?
   - **QARs Classification**: Can the answer for this question be found in the text? Do you have to look in more than one place?

3. Why do you think being able to imitate is a sign of intelligence?
   - **QARs Classification**: This is a Red Light Question. In your table groups, tell me why.

**Elephant Intelligence**

A baby elephant stumbled into a dried-up mud hole in Amboseli National Park in Kenya, Africa. Luckily the calf didn’t get hurt, but it was too little to scramble out. The elephant’s mother ran into the hole after her baby. Then she bellowed.

Two relatives heard the commotion and rushed over to help. First, they sized up the situation. It wasn’t a terribly deep hole, but the sides were steep. Then, they climbed into the pit. As the elephants dug out one side of the hole with their tusks and feet, a ramp was formed by the loosened dirt.

The minute they finished, the mother pushed her calf up the incline. The elephants seemed to plan ahead, imagining how a ramp would work to save the baby. Even Einstein would have been impressed.
Here are the questions. Decide at your tables if they are Green, Yellow, or Red Light Questions, and then answer them.

**Questions**

1. Give and defend two reasons why, "even Einstein would have been impressed" by these elephant problem solvers.

2. What did the mother elephant do after her baby fell into the hole?

3. What made these elephants' problem solving behaviors human-like?

**QARs Classification**

- **IF YOU SAID YELLOW LIGHT AND YOUR ANSWER WAS WORKED TOGETHER, DUG HOLE, OR MADE A RAMP, YOU ARE RIGHT.**

- **Look at your QARs Cue Card. Can the answer be found in the text in one place? THIS IS A GREEN LIGHT QUESTION.**

- **THIS IS A RED LIGHT QUESTION. YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT HUMAN PROBLEM SOLVING, AND HOW THE ELEPHANTS ACTED IN HUMAN WAYS.**

On your desk are passages about different intelligent animals. Each passage is followed by 2 to 4 questions. With a partner, read about the animal, then read the questions. Before you answer a question, classify it as Green, Yellow, or Red. After you classify each question, discuss the answer and write it in the space provided.

**QARs Poster**

- **RED LIGHT QUESTIONS**
  
  Stop and think because the answer cannot be found only in the text.

- **YELLOW LIGHT QUESTIONS**
  
  Slow down and search. You need to look in more than one place to put together your answer.

- **GREEN LIGHT QUESTIONS**
  
  Go and find the answer in one part of the text.