

Using Question-Answer Relationships (QAR) to Teach Close and Critical Reading Skills

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English in a Future-ready Singapore

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ELIS



Outline

- Context
- Initial Inquiry
- EL Syllabus 2010
- Literature Review
- Action Research
- Moving Forward
- References
- Q & A

Context: Initial Observation

- Low and Middle Progress P4 Students faced difficulty answering reading comprehension questions.

Context: Review of Materials

- Reviewed customised school-based instructional materials to develop Primary 4 students' reading comprehension skills
 - **Graphic Organisers**
 - Making predictions
 - Identification of main points within narrative texts

Context: Reviewing P4 Students' Work

Princess Elizabeth Primary School
English Language
Reading Comprehension
Class 4A

Name: _____ Date: 6 August 2014

Story Map

What happened in the beginning of the story?
Dad, Dengy and Lilly were on a ^{no. day} trip. Their dad suggested Lilly to try snorkelling.

What happened in the middle of the story?
They were chatting to the people with the boat when I noticed something weird. The sea, which had been on its way in, now seemed to be going out. The boat was heavy and I checked to see how for they had to drag it.

What happened at the end of the story?
Lilly was found on the sea. ~~where she was at sea~~

Princess Elizabeth Primary School
Reading Comprehension Storyboarding
Class 4A

Name: _____ Date: 12 August 2014

1

contextual cues: Breakfast Time,

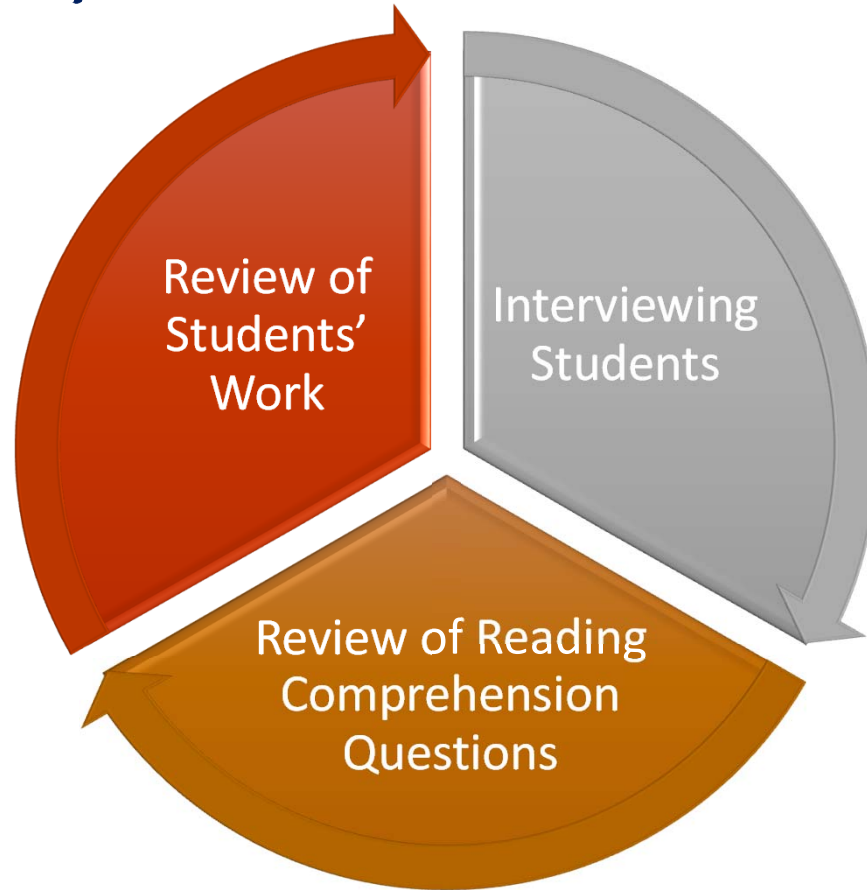
2 The next morning...

contextual cues: Snorkelling, locals

contextual cues: The lagoon is draining

contextual cues: Tsunami, running away to safety.

Initial Inquiry: Identification of Students' Needs



Initial Inquiry: Results

Were able to make predictions about the text

Found it challenging to identify the main ideas / gist

Simply scanned through the text and lifted sentences from the passage

Frustrated trying to answer the questions

Could not answer the literal and inferential questions correctly

EL Syllabus 2010

Learning Outcome 2

- Process and comprehend age-/year level-appropriate texts at literal and inferential levels (MOE, 2010, pp. 38-39)

Skills, Strategies, Attitudes and Behaviour (SSAB)

- Making predictions and inferences using prior knowledge, visual and contextual clues
- Skimming for the gist / main idea
- Scanning for details
- Drawing conclusions from the gist / main idea and key details, prior knowledge, and contextual clues

Literature Review

Highlighted the need to teach:

- close (and critical) reading skills
- cognitive processes – thinking
- metacognitive processes – thinking about thinking process

(Chien, 2013, Raphael & Au, 2006, Raphael & Wonnacott 1985, Tompkins, 2006)

Literature Review

- Use prior knowledge and contextual clues to identify the main idea and key details, and scan the text to locate the answers
- Monitor and locate the answers to questions directly related to the type of question asked as they
 - make predictions
 - skim for gist
 - scan for details
 - use key words and contextual clues

(Chien, 2013, Raphael & Au, 2006, Raphael & Wonnacott 1985, Tompkins, 2006)

Literature Review: Question-Answer Relationships

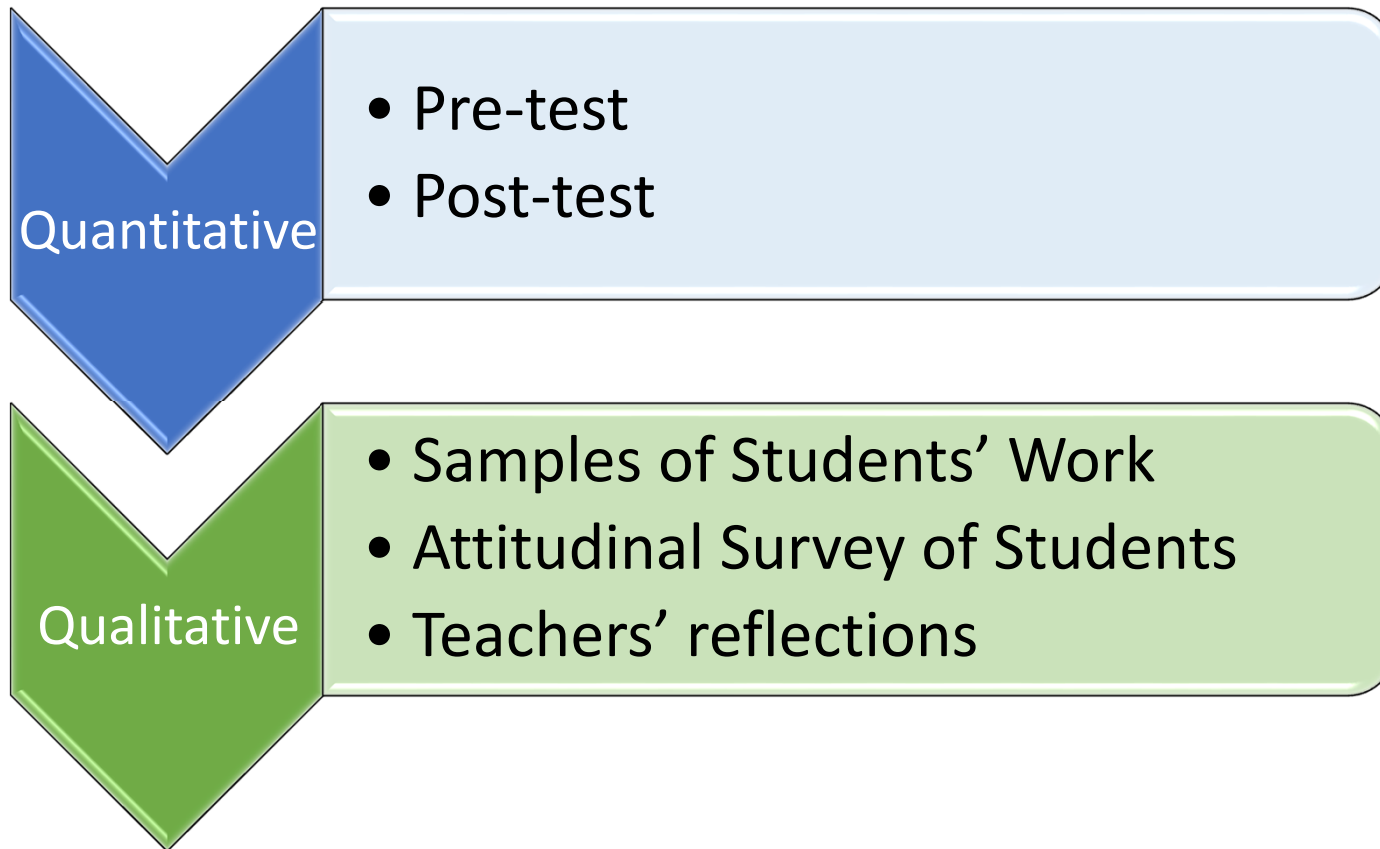
In the Book	In My Head
<p data-bbox="506 516 840 578"><u>Right There</u></p> <p data-bbox="304 602 1020 850">The answer is easily found in the text. The exact words for the questions and answers are located in the same sentence.</p>	<p data-bbox="1199 516 1650 578"><u>Author and You</u></p> <p data-bbox="1060 602 1787 850">The answer is not in the text. The reader combines previous knowledge with text information to create a response.</p>
<p data-bbox="422 883 921 945"><u>Think and Search</u></p> <p data-bbox="304 969 976 1218">The answer is in the text, but requires gathering information from different places in the selection.</p>	<p data-bbox="1251 883 1598 945"><u>On My Own</u></p> <p data-bbox="1060 969 1692 1153">The answer is not in the text. The reader uses previous experience to respond.</p>

Question-Answer Relationships from the Reading Educator website

Action Research: Research Question

Does identifying Right There (RT) and Think and Search (TS) questions from QAR enable middle and low progress Primary 5 students show improvement in answering reading comprehension questions?

Action Research: Method




Action Research: Intervention

- Displayed QAR charts in the classrooms
- Modelled the use of QAR to students
- Instructing explicitly to identify the different types of QAR questions
- Designed a lesson plan for conducting lessons that used QAR
- Taught QAR from term 1 to term 3, 2015

Action Research: Observations

Section J
Read passages 1 and 2 carefully and answer questions 51 to 57. (10 marks)

Passage 1



It was rush hour. Many people had just finished their workday and stepped out of their workplaces to go home. The bus stops and taxi stands were getting crowded and so were the MRT stations.

John had just boarded the crowded train. He looked forward to having dinner with his family at home. It was his birthday and his wife was preparing his favourite dishes. His two children had also given him his surprise birthday gift that morning.

Suddenly, as the train was halfway through the journey home, the lights started to flicker and went dark. Then, it came to a halt. Everyone looked around and wondered what had happened.

Then, the train driver made an announcement that there had been a power failure. Using the emergency power in the train, the driver managed to reach the nearest station to let the passengers out safely.

As John got out of the train, he wondered how he could get home. His house was still a few kilometres away. John quickly telephoned and informed his wife about what happened. Then, the station control centre made an announcement. There would be free shuttle buses provided for the stranded passengers.

Picture from newnation.sg

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Based on Passage 1, answer questions 51 to 53.

51. What would John be doing when he got home? (1 mark)

John looked forward to having dinner with his family at home. He would be having dinner with family.

52. Name two items that John received for his birthday. Put a tick ✓ in the box beside your chosen answers. (2 marks)

a surprise birthday gift ✓

a birthday cake

his favourite dishes ✓

2

53. How would John get home after the train breakdown? (2 marks)

John will ride @ free shuttle buses. He would get home by taking a free shuttle bus.

4/5

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Action Research: Observations

- Systematic approach to the inquiry process
- Improvement of 88% in the number of low and middle progress students answering reading comprehension questions correctly

Action Research: Observation

- Students with special needs still did not make any improvement as they faced challenges in reading and understanding the texts

Action Research: Students' Reflections

How does QAR help you in answering reading comprehension questions?

- QAR makes me focus on the words that I highlighted
- It helps me to find the answer without difficulty
- QAR is useful for comprehension. I enjoy using QAR than the method I used before
- It helps me to answer questions more confidently

Action Research: Students' Reflections

Will you consider using QAR next year? Why?

- Yes, it is easier to answer the questions with QAR.
- Yes, I will. I can answer questions accurately without difficulty.
- Yes, it helps me to get more marks and it is easier to search for the answers. It tells me if the answer is located in the same sentence.
- Yes. It will help me to pass my English reading comprehension.

Action Research: Teachers' Reflections

“Students are aware that there are different types of questions. This awareness enables them to be more careful and aware in sourcing for the relevant answers in the passage. Students are observed to be more confident in answering reading comprehension question though they might not get the full score for the questions.” - Mrs Marselyn Jonatan

“With the weaker students in my class, the use of QAR helped them in locating answers that were Right There (RT) as well as Think and Search (TS).” - Ms Lynette Ho Su-Shien

Action Research: Challenges in Implementation

PRINCESS ELIZABETH PRIMARY SCHOOL
 ENGLISH LANGUAGE
 READING COMPREHENSION
 QUESTION-ANSWER RELATIONSHIPS (QAR)

Register No: ()

Name: _____

Class: 5 ()

Date: _____

In the Book	In the Book	In My Head	In My Head
Right There (RT)	Think and Search (TS)	Author and You (AY)	On My Own
The answer is easily found in the text. The exact words for the questions and answers are located in the same sentence.	The answer is in the text, but requires gathering information from different places in the selection.	The answer is not in the text. The reader combines previous knowledge with text information to create a response.	The answer is not in the text. The reader uses previous experience to respond.
Question:	Question:	Question:	Question:
Answer:	Answer:	Answer:	Answer:
How did you find the answer? What did you do to find the answer?	How did you find the answer? What did you do to find the answer?	How did you find the answer? What did you do to find the answer?	How did you find the answer? What did you do to find the answer?
Question:	Question:	Question:	Question:
Answer:	Answer:	Answer:	Answer:
How did you find the answer? What did you do to find the answer?	How did you find the answer? What did you do to find the answer?	How did you find the answer? What did you do to find the answer?	How did you find the answer? What did you do to find the answer?

Moving Forward

- Adopted a whole-school approach from 2016
- Conducted a workshop for all EL teachers in the school in 2016 to familiarise them with the strategy
- Monitored the use of QAR through classroom observations & book checks
- Shared the use of QAR with P5 and P6 students' parents
- Carrying out action research in the teaching of cloze comprehension

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Q & A

Thank you