

# Introduction to QAR



## Objectives

- Understand that questions and answers have a variety of sources
- Identify the four QAR categories

## Materials

- Overhead Transparencies 1–2 (Copies of overheads for each student, optional)
- *Student Activity Book*, pages 2–5
- Chart paper or blank overhead transparencies

## SET THE PURPOSE

Ask students to think about questions. Have them think about the types of questions they have been asked today and the types of questions they have asked others. Ask them to consider not just the classroom but also their home, the bus, the playground, and other places they may have been. Have each student share one or two questions with the group. Record the questions on chart paper or a blank overhead transparency.

Ask students to look at the list of questions. Have them consider the answers to the questions. Select several questions and ask students whether they know the answers.



**Key Point:** Choose some questions that ask for information that only one or a few students know. This will help show that answers come from different sources.

As you call on students, ask them to tell you how they knew the answers. Continue this until several questions have been answered and their sources shared. Ask students what they noticed about the different sources the answers came from. Help them see that there were a variety of sources and that not everyone had the same information; therefore, all students could not answer all questions.

Tell students that the same is true of school-based questions. If all students had access to the same information, answering questions on homework, tests, and from the teacher would be easier. Explain that today they will become more aware of the different sources of answers to school-based questions.

### MODEL

Ask students to listen carefully as you read the following text from *The Wishing Sky* by Joan Hiatt Harlow.

*It was the night of the Wishing Sky, and Madison was spending the night with her grandma, Noanie.*

*"Our star cookies smell so good!" Madison said as Noanie pulled the tray of cookies from the oven.*

*"How pretty they are!" said Noanie. "You did a great job cutting out all those stars." She handed one to Madison.*

*"Mmm," Madison said. It was crunchy and sweet. "Can I have another?"*

*"Later. They're for our star picnic up on Big Hill."*

*"A star picnic? When?"*

*Noanie smiled as she put the cookies in a bag. "Right now. Tonight is the night of the Wishing Sky. We don't want to miss it."*

*Now? Madison pulled back the curtain and looked out the window. It was dark! A picnic on Big Hill so late at night?*

*Noanie put on her jacket. "Whenever a star shoots across the sky, children can make a wish. Tonight there is a shower of shooting stars, so the sky will be full of wishes. We can see it best from Big Hill."*

*"I've never seen a shooting star," said Madison.*

*Noanie gave her a hug. "Then tonight will be extra special."*

*Noanie handed Madison the bag of cookies. "You can carry these," she said.*

*They walked down the road to a brook. The water gurgled as they crossed the little bridge.*

*Then they began to climb Big Hill. The woods were black. An owl hooted, and bats fluttered overhead. Madison took Noanie's hand. "I'm not scared of the dark," she whispered.*

After reading, ask these questions:

Why were Madison and her grandmother making cookies? *(They were making cookies for a star picnic on Big Hill.)*

How did you know this answer?  
*(It was in the story, or "In the Book.")*

What are some things you have done with your grandmother? *(Answers will vary.)*

How did you know the answer to this question?  
*(I knew it already, or it was "In My Head.")*

Tell students that they have just uncovered two of the most common places to look for answers to questions. Tell them they are going to explore strategies called QAR, or Question Answer Relationships. Create a two-column chart titled "QAR Categories" on a sheet of chart paper or an overhead transparency. Title the columns "In the Book" and "In My Head."



**Key Point:** If students have been introduced to QAR previously, this section of the lesson may progress quickly. If this is an initial introduction, more questions may be necessary to help students understand the difference between the two QAR types.

When students are comfortable with the two QAR types, ask these questions:

What did Noanie tell Madison she would see in the sky? *(Shooting stars)*

What does Noanie mean when she says, "Tonight is the night of the Wishing Sky"? *(Shooting stars will be visible, and when a child sees a shooting star, she can make a wish.)*

Did these two questions have In the Book or In My Head answers? *(In the Book)*

Ask students to compare the questions.

How were the two questions the same?  
*(They were both In the Book questions.)*

How were the two questions different? *(Students may suggest that one answer can be found in one sentence and that the other answer is found in different places.)*

Explain to students that the first answer was "Right There" in the text. For the second answer, they had to search the text and think about the information they found, or "Think and Search." Introduce these two terms to students and write them on the "QAR Categories" chart under "In the Book."

Continue modeling with these questions:

Have you ever seen a shooting star?

Why does Madison whisper, "I'm not scared of the dark"?

What was the source of the answers to these questions? *(In My Head)*

Help students see that both questions have In My Head answers. Point out that everyone may have had a different answer to the first question. Explain that this type of answer is called "On My Own."

Invite students to think carefully about the second question. Point out that the text doesn't say specifically why Madison says "I'm not scared of the dark," but it contains some clues. Students can use these clues along with their own knowledge to answer the question. Explain that this type of answer is called "Author and Me," because it requires information from the text as well as the students' knowledge to answer the question. Add these two QAR categories to the chart under "In My Head."

QAR Categories	
In the Book	In My Head
Right There	On My Own
Think and Search	Author and Me

## COACH



Tell students that you would like them to practice identifying the QAR categories that you have just modeled. Ask them to open their *Student Activity Book* to pages 2 and 3, where they will find more of the story about Madison and Noanie and questions about this section of text. Ask students to read the text and then work in pairs to answer each question and decide on the QAR.



While students complete the activity, draw a large plus sign (+) on chart paper or a blank overhead transparency to create a QAR quadrant chart. Label each quadrant with one of the four QAR categories: Right There, Think and Search, On My Own, Author and Me. Bring the class back together to discuss the answers and the QAR categories they have discovered. Discuss any differences they find and help them decide on the source that makes the most sense. You may want to use Overhead Transparency 1, which has the text from page 2 of the *Student Activity Book*, as you locate the answers.

Write each question, answer, and QAR in the corresponding quadrant on the new chart.

## BUILD INDEPENDENCE



To help students become independent in identifying the four QAR types, ask them to work individually on pages 4 and 5 in the *Student Activity Book*. Page 4 continues the story about Madison and Noanie; page 5 is a QAR quadrant chart. They are to write their own questions, at least two in each quadrant, after reading the remainder of the story. (See *Assessment*.)



**Extra Support:** If you have English Language Learners who are unable to read the text independently, you may want to pair them up with more able readers or work with a small group of students yourself. This will allow these students to receive support while being successful in the whole-class activity.

## REFLECT



When students have completed their questions, invite them to a closing class discussion. Ask several students to share one of the questions they wrote. Allow another student to answer the question. The class

can identify the QAR, and the question writer can determine whether the class was correct. Overhead Transparency 2 provides the text students read for this activity and may be helpful at this point.

Ask students to think about what they have learned today. Have them turn to a partner and share. After a few minutes of sharing, ask several students to summarize today's learning. Help them remember that

- Questions and answers have a variety of sources.
- There are four QAR categories.
- Learning about questions and their answers will help them become better at understanding and answering school-based questions.



**Assessment:** You might want to walk among the students to read the questions they are writing.

This can tell you how the class as a whole is doing and whether some students need extra help or attention.

You may want to evaluate page 5 of the *Student Activity Book* for more information and/or to assign an evaluation to each student.



Directions: Read more from *The Wishing Sky* by Joan Hiatt Harlow.

### The Wishing Sky

Soon they left the woods behind and came out into an open place, high on Big Hill. Madison saw sky all around her.

"Let's sit on that boulder," said Noanie.

Madison climbed onto the huge rock. "This looks like a boat. We can pretend we are sailing through the sky," she said, lying back and looking up. Glittering stars peeked out from the darkness and winked at her.

"Now we must wait for the Wishing Sky," said Noanie.

The wind whistled around Big Hill.

I am the captain of this ship, Madison thought. I will sail through the sky and find a shooting star.

Red lights flashed overhead. "What's that?" asked Madison.

"Just an airplane," said Noanie.

Madison wiggled on the hard rock. "May I have a cookie?"

"You can have one when you see a shooting star," Noanie said.

Madison looked up at the stars and waited. "Noanie, if I make a wish, will it come true?"

"Your wish comes true if that star lands on Earth," Noanie replied.

"How will I know?"

Noanie laughed. "When the wish comes true, of course."

Flash! A star streaked across the sky leaving a silver trail.

"Hurray!" Madison shouted. "I saw one! The Wishing Sky is here!"

She closed her eyes and made a wish.

"Hurray! Now you get a star." Noanie gave her a cookie.

As she ate her cookie, Madison gazed at the sky. It was like a sparkling sea. Madison pretended her ship was floating through the night to faraway worlds.

2 Concept Lesson 1

Student Activity Book, page 2

Directions: Read each question in column 1. Decide on the answer and write it below. Discuss the QAR with your partner and write it in column 2.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### QAR

1. Do you believe shooting stars make wishes come true? Explain.  
Answers will vary.

2. What were the red lights that flashed in the night sky?  
An airplane

3. What does Big Hill look like?  
It's woody with a big open place and a huge boulder near the top.

4. What do you think Madison was thinking as she ate her cookie?  
She was pretending to be in another place and time.

5. How will Madison know whether her shooting star lands on Earth?  
If her wish comes true

1. On My Own

2. Right There

3. Think and Search

4. Author and Me

5. Right There

Concept Lesson 1 3

Student Activity Book, page 3

Directions: Read more from *The Wishing Sky*.

### The Wishing Sky

Whirr! "There's another one!" said Madison, pointing. "Where do shooting stars come from, Noanie?"

"Shooting stars aren't really stars at all. They are meteors—pieces of stone and dust that get in our way as we sail through space," Noanie said.

"They don't look like plain old rocks," said Madison. "They glitter like fireworks."

"That's because they burn up as they fall toward Earth. The sparkles we see are burning stones as they stream through the air."

Madison steered her make-believe ship through rocky places in the sky. Another meteor flashed. "I made a special wish on that one."

"Here's a star you can eat," Noanie said, handing her a cookie. Noanie ate one, too.

"These stars are yummy," said Madison.

Noanie reached into her pocket. "Give me your hand."

Madison held out her hand, and Noanie dropped something cool into her palm. Noanie turned on the flashlight so Madison could see. "This is a meteorite—a shooting star that fell to Earth," she said. "But don't try to eat it!"

In Madison's hand was a small black rock. It felt smooth, but it had holes and marks on it. She turned the stone over and over. "Where did this come from?"

"I found it when I was a little girl," said Noanie. "This kind is called an iron. I would like you to have it to remember our night on Big Hill."

"Thank you, Noanie," Madison put the stone deep in her pocket. "Now I have my own piece of the Wishing Sky."

As Madison and Noanie munched on star cookies, Madison's ship sailed through the starry sea, and the Wishing Sky sparkled all around them.

4 Concept Lesson 1

Student Activity Book, page 4

Directions: Think of some questions that could be answered from reading the text on page 4. Write at least two questions in each quadrant. Write the answer to each question in parentheses after the question.

In the Book—Right There  
Questions and answers will vary.

Possible questions may include:

What kind of stone did Noanie give

Madison? (An iron); What is a

meteorite? (A shooting star that

falls to Earth)

In My Head—On My Own  
Questions and answers will vary.

Possible questions may include:

Have you ever seen a shooting star?

What would you wish for if you saw

a shooting star?

In the Book—Think and Search  
Questions and answers will vary.

Possible questions may include:

Why do meteors look like they're

sparkling? (Because they burn up

as they fall toward Earth.)

In My Head—Author and Me  
Questions and answers will vary.

Possible questions may include:

Why do you think people call meteors

shooting stars? (Because they look

like stars that are shooting across

the sky.)

Concept Lesson 1 5

Student Activity Book, page 5