

# BEFORE- AND DURING-READING COMPREHENSION **SAMPLE LESSON**

## Generating Level 1 ("Right There") Questions

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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The following question types are adapted with permission from Raphael, T. E., Highfield, K., & Au, K. H. (2006). *QAR now*. New York: Scholastic.

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The portion of this lesson on learning to ask and answer different types of questions is an adaptation of the Question-Answer-Relationship strategy (UTCRLA, 2003d; Blachowicz & Ogle, 2001; NRP, 2000; Raphael, 1986).

### **OBJECTIVE**

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Students will increase literal comprehension of text by generating "right there" questions.

### **MATERIALS**

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- Text passage or chapter.
- Overhead projector, chalkboard, or chart paper.
- Learning logs (see Appendix).
- Red question cards (see Appendix).
- Transparency of Figure 22.

## PREPARATION

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1. Read through the passage or chapter and select the important proper nouns. If there are no proper nouns in the passage, select other nouns that are absolutely essential for understanding the passage (critical concept nouns, or “big-idea words”). Depending upon the subject area you teach, the number of appropriate words to select may range from zero to five.

Proper nouns and critical concept nouns are essential to understanding the meaning of the selected text. These words may not occur again in the same text but may be studied in another context such as in a lesson for another content area. A general guideline is to identify 1–2 “who,” 1–2 “where,” and 1–2 “what” proper nouns.

For example, in an excerpt from a social studies text, possible important proper nouns are: *eastern hemisphere*, *Bering Strait*, *North Atlantic*, *Leanderthal Lady*, and *Beringia*.

Similarly, critical concept nouns, or “big-idea words,” represent concepts that are essential for understanding the text. This is *not* the same as preteaching all of the vocabulary words for the selection.

Sample “big-idea words” from a health selection might include: *bacteria*, *pathogen*, *streptococcus*, and *cholera*.

Most important proper nouns or critical concept nouns selected for this lesson should be *unfamiliar* to many students, but some of these words may be familiar to some students. Review these words to ensure students can read them and know what they are.

**Note:** Previewing occurs only *once* for a passage or reading. If students will be reading the same passage over the course of 2 or more days, you should do the following:

- On Day 1, introduce the important proper nouns or “big-idea words,” have students write them in learning logs, and read through the list. Introduce the big idea and then preview the text.
  - On subsequent days of reading the same passage, have students review the list of important proper nouns (e.g., chorally read, read with partners), and tell them the big idea of the passage. It is not necessary to do the entire prediction activity again.
2. Identify the “big idea” of the passage. Ask yourself, “What do you think is the most important idea that you want all students to understand and remember from this reading?”
  3. Identify several Level 1 questions. Level 1 questions are literal comprehension questions. They can be answered using information taken directly from the text, so they are “right there” in the text. Example Level 1 “right there” questions for a social studies passage are:
    - How long ago did the Mound Builders move to the Caddoan Mounds?
    - Who were the Caddo people descendants of?
    - What kind of work did the Caddo do?
    - What did the Caddo trade?
    - In what shape did the Caddo make their houses?
    - What materials did the Caddo use to make their houses?

## DAILY REVIEW

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1. Preteach important proper nouns or critical concept nouns.

Introduce 3–5 new important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and provide brief definitions. Review reasons for preteaching important proper nouns or “big-idea words”.

Have students copy important proper nouns/concept nouns and definitions in their learning logs.

Read chorally the list of important proper nouns/concept nouns.

2. Preview the passage.

Present the big idea of the passage.

Remind students how to preview a passage. Students should look for key concepts by reading the title, bold print, and subheadings. They should look at the pictures or other information that stands out. Students should then connect the key concepts to the big idea and to what they already know and say how they made the connection. Assist students in making connections and correct misinformation.

Go through the preview as a whole-class activity. Call on students to say the key concepts and to make connections. Validate all students’ ideas, while making sure that information is accurate. List only accurate connections and information on the chart paper or chalkboard.

## STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

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Tell students that today they will learn how to ask themselves questions that can be answered using ideas found “right there” in the text.

### **Teacher:**

Teachers ask questions to see whether students understand what they read. There are several types of questions that you can ask, and understanding the different types will make it easier to find the answers. Some questions require you to find facts about what you read, while others require you to draw conclusions or make inferences. There are two reasons why it is important to create and answer questions when you read. First, creating and answering questions helps you understand what you read, and second, it helps you remember important information about what you read.

## MODEL AND TEACH

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Model how to ask and answer “right there” questions.

### **Teacher:**

Questions usually start with *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, or *how*. When teachers create questions, they try to use lots of different question stems to make sure students understand different kinds of information.

1. Introduce the Level 1, “right there” question type.

**Teacher:**

Today we are going to learn about the first type of question. We call this a “right there” question because the information needed to answer it can be found in one place, word-for-word in the text. “Right there” questions can usually be answered in one word or one sentence. Answering “right there” questions is usually easy and requires little thinking or effort. If you look on your question cards, you will see the different question types: “right there,” “putting it together,” and “making connections”. Today we will just be practicing the “right there” questions.

FIGURE 21. “RIGHT THERE” (RED) QUESTION CARD.

**Level 1—Right There**

- ❑ Questions can be answered in one word or one sentence
- ❑ Answers can be found word-for-word in the text
  - > Who? > Where?
  - > What? > Why?
  - > When? > How?

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2. Use a short passage from your text to model how to create a “right there” question. Give students the passage or have it on the overhead projector. Preteach any difficult vocabulary words.

After reading the passage out loud to students, model creating “right there” questions. For example:

**Teacher:**

Let’s see, I need to make up a question that I can find in one place in the passage. The first sentence says, “More than 1,200 years ago, Mound Builders migrated, or moved, south into the Piney Woods region to the site of the Caddoan Mounds.” There is a lot of information in that sentence. One fact is that the Mound Builders moved to the Caddoan Mounds more than 1,200 years ago. I think I can turn that fact into a question. 1,200 years ago is a “when,” so I’ll start with that. When did the Mound Builders move to the Caddoan Mounds? Let me check the answer. More than 1,200 years ago. OK. That looks like a “right there” question because I can easily find the answer in one place, word-for-word, in my reading. The Mound Builders moved to the Caddoan Mounds more than 1,200 years ago. Now I’ll make up some more “right there” questions, and you see whether you can find the answers in your reading...

3. If students have difficulty writing “right there” questions, it may be helpful to have them first recognize “right there” questions. You might provide them with several questions and model with a “think aloud,” deciding whether each is a “right there” question.

## GUIDED PRACTICE

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**Grouping:** Whole class or small group

Practice creating and answering “right there” questions with your class. Remind students to look at their question cards to remember what a “right there” question is. It might be helpful to stick with a short section or paragraph during initial modeling and guided practice.

Provide more guided practice in whole-class or small-group formats. Some students may need additional guided practice over several days to master the process of generating “right there” questions.

## INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

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**Grouping:** Partners

Using a different brief selection, preteach important proper nouns or critical concept nouns and provide students with the overall “big idea” of the passage in no more than 1–2 sentences. Then have students work in partners to quickly preview the chapter.

Next, have students work in partners to generate “right there” questions about the selection. Have students write their questions in their learning logs. They should also record their answers to the questions, along with evidence supporting each answer. Circulate and provide feedback and scaffolding as needed.

Ask pairs to share their “right there” questions and to tell where in the text the answer to each question can be found.

## GENERALIZATION

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Ask students for examples of situations in which asking themselves “right there” questions might help them understand and remember what they read. Emphasize the fact that they can preview text and ask themselves “right there” questions in all of their classes.

## MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

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Each time students read an unfamiliar passage, have them use the previewing routine and generate Level 1 questions in pairs or small groups. Circulate through the room to monitor students’ responses. Ask questions that require students to tell the reasons for their predictions and to show where they found the answers to the Level 1 questions they generated.

## PERIODIC/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

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Use the previewing and question generation routine each time students read unfamiliar text. Once students become skilled at making valid predictions and generating Level 1 questions, turn the process over to them, but continue to preteach important proper nouns or “big-idea words” and to remind students to preview and generate questions. Occasionally, return to previewing and question generation in partners so that you can monitor the process.

FIGURE 22. LEVEL 1 “RIGHT THERE” QUESTIONS PLANNING SHEET.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLANNING SHEET</b> <b>LEVEL 1 QUESTIONS</b></p> <p><b>1. Preteach Proper Nouns or Critical Concept Nouns</b> Introduce, read, and define. Students write brief definition in learning log.</p> <p>Who:</p> <p>Where:</p> <p>What:</p> <p><b>2. Preview Text</b> Introduce the big idea of the text selection.</p> <p>What is the most important idea that you want all students to understand and remember from this reading?</p> <p>Important key concepts, subheadings, bolded print, etc.</p> <p>Connections to prior learning:</p> <p><b>3. Model Level 1 Questions</b></p> <p>Questions to use as examples:</p>
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