

Question the Author--Reading Strategy of the Week

Questioning the author is a strategy that engages students actively with a text. Rather than reading and taking information from a text, the QtA strategy encourages students to ask questions of the author and the text. Through forming their questions, students learn more about the text. Students learn to ask questions such as: What is the author's message? Does the author explain this clearly? How does this connect to what the author said earlier?

Why Use Question the Author?

- *It engages students in the reading and helps to solidify their understanding of a text.
- *It teaches students to form questions and critique the author's writing.

How to Use Question the Author

Beck et al. (1997) identify specific steps you should follow during a question the author lesson. This strategy is best suited for nonfiction texts.

1. Select a passage that is both interesting and can spur a good conversation.
2. Decide appropriate stopping points where you think your students need to obtain a greater understanding.
3. Create queries or questions for each stopping point.
 - What is the author trying to say?
 - Why do you think the author used the following phrase?
 - Does this make sense to you?
4. Display a short passage to your students along with one or two queries you have designed ahead of time.
5. Model for your students how to think through the queries.
6. Ask students to read and work through the queries you have prepared for their readings.

Classroom ideas provided by fcrr.org (see pdf) about question the author in this article from the Florida Center for Reading Research.

Differentiated instruction

For second language learners, students of varying reading skill, and younger learners:

Have students of varying abilities work together to determine answers to questions.

When students ask questions that go unanswered, try to restate them and encourage students to work to determine the answer.

Have students write or type responses to queries or create some of their own.

Engage students in a class discussion about responses to questions.

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