

RwCURAJ Introduction Lessons
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Beyond Textbooks URL:

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Background Information:

RwCURAJ stands for:

Read the passage and question.

Circle key words in the question (and answer choices). (Say the question in your own words - optional.)

Underline important information in the passage or problem.

Reread the question and passage to reach true understanding.

Answer the question.

Justify your answer.

First lesson:

1. Hand out RwCURAJ 1/2 sheets and go over what RwCURAJ stands for while students take notes in their RINs (Reading Interactive Notebooks).
2. Students put away their cheat sheets and notes.
3. I give them an index card and they write the acronym along one edge of the index card in capital letters.
4. They go around the room and find people who can write in what one of the letters stands for and then that person initials next to the information they wrote. (For example: I am walking around with my index card and go up to Michael. Michael writes next to the A: Answer the question. He initials it; and I move on to the next person.)
5. After all of the letters are filled in on the index cards, we come back together as a whole group and go over the answers. The students correct any answers that are wrong.
6. Ticket out: Students write which step of RwCURAJ they think is most important and why.

Second lesson:

1. Have students discuss with their groups what the first R and C stand for in RwCURAJ.
2. When everyone has shared chorally what their groups chose, have students write on their white boards which item both of these steps deal with: question, answer or justification. Everyone should have written down "question". If someone doesn't have "question" written down, spend a few moments explaining that both steps have to do with reading the question and circling the key words in the question.
3. Inform students that we will be practicing the first two steps together today.
4. Hand out the RC practice page. (See attached practice pages: one for science and one for SS.)
5. Have students work in groups to decide what words to circle in each question.
6. Have groups compare their answers as they share them with the whole class. (Discuss, as a whole group, any discrepancies and use your own judgement based on what you want to require them to circle.)
7. Ticket out: Students write their biggest take-away from this activity. (What did they learn from this? What is most important to remember about this activity?)

NOTE: I do not have a separate lesson for teaching the U & the second R of RwCURAJ because we do both of these on the last lesson. Underlining key information in the passage and then rereading the question, answer choices and underlined information to make sure that they all align are pieces of the RwCURAJ model that only improve with repeated practice using content-based materials.

Third lesson:

1. Have students write on white boards what RWCURAJ stands for. Go over answers within groups.
2. Have groups discuss why using RWCURAJ is important and come up with one overall reason. Have groups take turns sharing their answers with the class.
3. Inform students that we will ALWAYS be using RWCURAJ in our classes: LA AND SS! They will always be required to justify their answers with specific pieces of textual evidence.
4. Cut the questions and corresponding answers into strips with 1 question/answer set per strip.
5. Give out envelopes with 4 to 6 (depending on group size) question/answer sets. (Some give very good specific evidence from a passage, some are okay and some are very generic or vague. See the following pages for the question/answer sets and my evaluation of each.)
6. Have groups work together to identify which pieces of evidence are “A” work, which are “B or C” work and which are unacceptable. (I always tell my students that anything below a B is unacceptable and an A is above and beyond, so you decide what cutoffs in the categories work for you.)
7. Have groups compare their answers as they share them with the whole class. (Discussions over designations can occur. I let these play out as I listen and jump in as needed.)
8. Ticket out: Students write two things they think a justification needs to have in order to earn an “A”.

Fourth lesson:

Students practice RWCURAJ using a passage of info and questions that you provide. This can be done with ANY content you are currently teaching.

1. Ask students to write on their white boards what is important to remember when writing a justification. Share answers using Stand and Share.
2. Hand out the RWCURAJ cheat sheets and a passage with questions. (This year, I am going to use a very long passage—my expectations packet—and have students answer questions that review the most important pieces of the packet using their RINs or a separate sheet of paper.) The questions will be 3 multiple choice and 2 short answer questions. Be sure students know that they must justify their answers for ALL 5 questions—not just the short answer questions.
3. Students work independently. (If finished early, they can work on homework or read a book silently.)
4. Students compare answers in their groups.
5. Grade answers together. Make sure to point out that an “A” grade answer has the answer, the evidence and the connection which explains how the evidence supports the answer. Collect papers and record grades in grade book.
6. Ticket out: How did writing the justifications help you?

R w/CURAJ Practice

Directions: In the space below, use the R w/CURAJ reading strategy to help you determine the key words from the question. Then, rewrite the question in your own words. DO NOT try to answer the questions.

- Which of the following is not part of Earth's biosphere?
 - the area 20 miles above the Earth
 - the Mississippi River
 - the core in the center of the Earth
 - both A and B
- From the passage, what can you infer about the temperature as you travel higher in the atmosphere?
 - the temperature decreases as you travel upwards
 - the temperature increases as you travel upwards
 - the temperature fluctuates as you travel upwards
 - the temperature stays the same
- What does the term *distinguished* mean as it is used in the passage?
 - annoying
 - different
 - challenging
 - illustrious
- How many Neptune days does it take the cloud named Scooter to go around Neptune?
 - 24 hours
 - It changes every day.
 - 2 days
 - 1 Neptune day
- Read this quote from the text: "*He used a costly aftershave on his face, and he kept his hands soft with a cream that contained turtle oil.*" What can you infer about the main character?
 - He had a skin condition.
 - He thought turtles were absurd animals.
 - He was wealthy and bought only the finest products.
 - He preferred to import hygiene products.
- Which of the following simple machines resembles a lever in looks or in the way it works?
 - pulley
 - wedge
 - inclined plane
 - both B and C
- Why does each person who views a rainbow see a different rainbow? How does the rainbow change depending on which viewpoint you are seeing it from?
- Why don't meteors burn up when they first enter the Earth's atmosphere? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
- From the passage, what can you infer about the angle of the sun at the equator? What effect does this have on temperatures across the globe?
- In Chapter 7 of the novel Holes, the author introduces us to two characters named Myra and Elya. These characters do not directly interact with the main character of the story. Who are these characters; and why does the author choose to include them in the story?

Lesson 2 SS Practice Page:

Name: _____

Date: _____

RwCURAJ: Read the question. Circle the key words in the question. Do NOT answer the questions.

1. What are the five themes of geography?
2. What line of latitude is closest to Barcelona? How can you tell?
3. Why did early people work together?
4. How do people in our society cooperate today?
5. Leaders may have different ideas from other members of their civilization about how resources should be shared. Why might this be so?
6. How did the use of aqueducts affect settlements in early Roman civilizations?
 - a. Farmers were able to keep their crops watered
 - b. Fresh water attracted settlers from other civilizations.
 - c. People who lived in dry areas had access to fresh water.
 - d. Every family was able to have a private bath in their home.
7. A ship is at 20° south latitude and 80° east longitude. Which **best** describes the location of the ship?
 - a. in the middle of the Indian Ocean
 - b. off the west coast of Africa
 - c. off the west coast of South America
 - d. in the middle of the Arctic Ocean
8. Many early civilizations were called *riverine* cultures because they developed near rivers. How did the rivers contribute to the survival of these civilizations?
 - a. They were a power source for mechanical devices such as waterwheels.
 - b. They provided a route for transporting goods to other civilizations.
 - c. They provided a fresh water supply and rich soil for growing food.
 - d. They formed protective barriers around civilizations.
9. Which two geographical features **most likely** provided fertile land that gave rise to multiple city-states in the Mesopotamia region?
 - a. Euphrates River and Tigris River
 - b. Persian Gulf and Arabian Desert
 - c. Mediterranean Sea and Red Sea
 - d. Zagros Mountains and Caspian Sea
10. Which activity made it easier for rulers to control large areas of land in ancient China?
 - a. the use of paper money
 - b. the spread of Buddhism
 - c. the creation of a feudal system
 - d. the invention of the wheelbarrow

Lesson 3 Questions and Answers:

1. What is a stanza?

- A. A dance party
- B. A poetic paragraph
- C. One line of a poem
- D. All of the above

Answer:

The answer is B because Mrs. Hill told us in class what a stanza is.

2. Has Barney's character changed during the course of the story? If so, how?

Answer:

In paragraph 4 on page 2, Barney states that he has always disliked Samantha. Then, on page 3 in paragraph 3, Barney tells his best friend Stanley that Samantha is really pretty and nice. These two pieces of evidence show that Barney has changed during the story because the first statement Barney makes about Samantha shows that he doesn't like her while the second statement when he talks to his best friend Stanley shows that he now thinks she is pretty and nice.

3. Why is Ash important to the story? How does Ash feel about his important role?

Answer:

Ash is important to the story because only he can save the world. I think Ash doesn't want the responsibility of what he has to do and he's scared. In paragraph 5 on the first page, Brock says, "Ash, only you can save the world from the evil Team Rocket." Then on page 7 in paragraph 2 it states: "Ash ran into the woods with tears in his eyes feeling like the weight of the world was on his shoulders." The first piece of evidence clearly shows Ash's importance to the story by stating that he is the only one who can save the entire world. Also, I think that Ash is having a hard time and feeling stressed about the intense pressure that is on him right now. In the first piece of evidence, it says, "only you" which shows that Ash is the only one who can save everyone from destruction. That's a lot of responsibility on just one person. It could also mean that if he fails, everyone will die which is really scary! In the second piece of evidence, it says he ran into the woods crying and he had "the weight of the world" "on his shoulders". That is a figurative expression that means Ash feels pressured because the world is way heavy and if it is on your shoulders it will cause you to feel a lot of pressure. You wouldn't be able to lift it or hold it up, so you would be crushed. I felt like Ash once when my mom and dad said they were going to get a divorce and I would have to be the man of the house now which was terrifying. So, Ash feels a lot of responsibility to save the world and it is scaring him because everyone is counting on him. I feel sorry for him.

4. Is mayonnaise an instrument?

A. No

B. Yes

Answer:

The answer is A because it says so in the second paragraph of the first page and I saw it there, so I know it's true.

5. How does Martin know that Charlene is a spy?

Answer:

When I read the passage, it was very clear to me that the correct answer is: Yes, Charlene is a spy. I have watched a lot of movies about spies so I know the kinds of things they do and say to other people. They are sneaky and smart and have a lot of gadgets. I also know that they can be tricky and don't like to share information because they have to keep a lot of secrets. These secrets are usually very important to the government of whatever country the spy is working for or spying on. Once the spy gets the secrets from another country, it is their job to report what they found to their spy agency. On the show, "Agents of Shield", they always run into trouble as they are trying to complete their mission. That's because spies are in a dangerous business. If they are caught by the police of the country they are spying on, they could be tortured or killed. I would not want to be a spy because I would be too afraid that I might get caught. I think Charlene will get caught because she isn't a very good spy, but I hope she doesn't get caught because I really like her. One time, I knew a girl like Charlene who was very sweet, but I found out she lied to me about one of our other friends. She was jealous of the other friend and wanted me to stop hanging out with her. It worked for a while because I believed her, but then I talked to the other friend and found out it wasn't true. I felt stupid and mad. I stopped hanging out with her and kept hanging out with the other girl. That's why I think Charlene is going to get caught.

6. Which one of the following is a simile?

A. Milk is the protector of bones.

B. Nature's first green is gold.

C. Her voice was as sticky as honey.

D. I like caramel almost as much as chocolate.

Answer:

The answer is C because the definition of a simile is a comparison between two unlike things using like or as. A & B are comparing two things, but they don't use the words like or as at all, so they are probably metaphors. D has the words like and as in it and is comparing two things that are similar, but it is comparing them on a scale of how much each are liked by someone--not comparing them to each other. C is the only sentence that is comparing two things ("her voice" and "honey") by the same quality of being "sticky".

Answer Key (with explanations):

1. Stanza:

This justification includes the answer to the question and a reason for choosing the answer, but it is an “F” justification because it doesn’t use evidence from the text at all and is very vague.

2. Barney:

This justification is not complete because the first of the two questions is never answered. I would rate this justification a “C” because it doesn’t answer the first question at all and doesn’t clearly explain how the pieces of evidence used back up the answer about how Barney’s character has changed. The explanations simply restate what the evidence was.

3. Ash:

This justification is an “A”. Not only are both questions answered, the author also has all 3 parts of a great answer (the answer, the evidence, and the connection explaining how the evidence proves the answer) AND goes above and beyond to relate to the reader’s own answer-related experience.

4. Mayonnaise:

While this justification states the correct answer and where the reader found the evidence, the justification doesn’t say what the evidence is and the connection piece is not a true explanation. I would award this answer a “D”.

5. Charlene:

While this justification is long and involved and relates the question to the author’s own experience, the answer doesn’t address the question at all. The author goes off on a tangent that uses absolutely NO textual evidence. This justification is an “F”.

6. Simile:

This justification is an “A”. The justification includes the right answer, then uses line by line evidence and explanations (the connection) based on the reader’s own understanding of a simile, metaphor and comparison. This justification definitely shows that the reader understands the material.