Reading and Questioning Connections

Sherman Alexie’s *Absolutely True Diary*

**Level One: Reading On the Line For Recall Questions**

As you read, you should be mentally asking questions that can be answered by explicit information you can physically point out in the passage. You “recall” or “remember” facts and details that answer questions such as *who*, *what*, *where*, and *when*.

Examples from *Absolutely True Diary*

1. **Question:** What would Junior’s mother have done after high school if her family was not poor?

**Answer:** Junior’s mother “would have gone to college” (11).

1. **Question:** What is Junior’s dog’s name?

**Answer:** Junior’s dog’s name is “Oscar” (9).

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| **In the space below, write two additional Level One questions from *Absolutely True Diary.*** |

1. **Question:**

**Answer:**

1. **Question:**

**Answer:**

Level Two: Reading Between the Lines for Interpretive Questions

Proficient readers make interpretations based upon details in the text. As you read, you should be asking questions that can be answered by making inferences and assumptions based upon evidence in the text, such as “What does a detail or image represent, suggest, or personify?”

Generate questions that can be answered by interpreting, classifying, comparing, contrasting, and finding patterns. These questions are “interpretive” questions.

Examples from *Absolutely True Diary*

1. **Question:** Why is it significant that Junior’s mother did not go to college?

**Answer:** Because it demonstrates the incredible disadvantages that face someone living in poverty. College would have allowed her to escape the reservation, accomplish her dreams, and not be poor, and yet she needs money in order to go to college (11-13).

1. **Question:** What is Junior’s attitude towards poverty?

**Answer:** He feels defeated by it because he uses words like “stupid and ugly” and says that “poverty doesn’t give you strength or teach you lessons about perseverance. . . .[it] only teaches you how to be poor” (13). All of this evidence suggests that Junior views his poverty as inescapable and inevitable and he presents an attitude of hopelessness about this inevitability.

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| **In the space below, write two additional Level Two questions from *Absolutely True Diary.*** |

1. **Question:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. **Question:** \_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Answer:**

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**LEVEL THREE: READING BEYOND THE LINES FOR UNIVERSAL MEANING QUESTIONS**

As you read, you should move beyond the text to connect to universal meaning. Ask mental questions like, “How does this text connect with my life, with life in a larger sense for all human beings, with my ideas about morality or values?” These questions are open-ended and go beyond the text. They are intended to provoke a discussion of abstract issues and thematic concerns.

Generate questions that can be answered by connecting literature to your own experiences or to universal meanings. These questions begin with ideas in the text but move from the “what?” of the text to the “so what?” of the text—the abstract issues and thematic concerns. Specific textual references are NOT included.

Examples from *Absolutely True Diary*

1) **Question:** In what ways can we rise above limitations set upon us from birth?

2) **Question:** How might we take a positive lesson away from a negative situation?

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| **In the space below, write two additional Level Three questions suggested by *Absolutely True Diary.*** |

1. **Question:**

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1. **Question:**

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