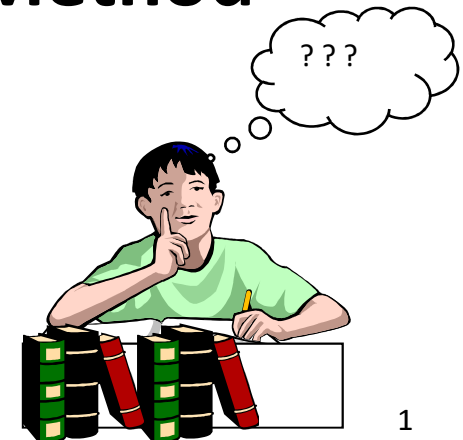# Teaching and testing reading skills

with the help of
Question-Answer-Relationship Method

Sanja Wagner, Innsbruck 2011

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Content

- What is „reading"?
- National standards linked to CEFR
- How to make the reading process visible?
- Vygotsky's space and cognitive apprenticeship model
- Question-Answer Relationships
- Six-step model lesson planning guide
- Hands on: independent application

Passage reading

Is a very complex constructive process:

➢ Activate your prior knowledge

➢ Recognize difficulties

Activate inferences, patterns

Mental models

➢ Choose a strategy according to the difficulty

➢ Self-monitoring / comprehension check
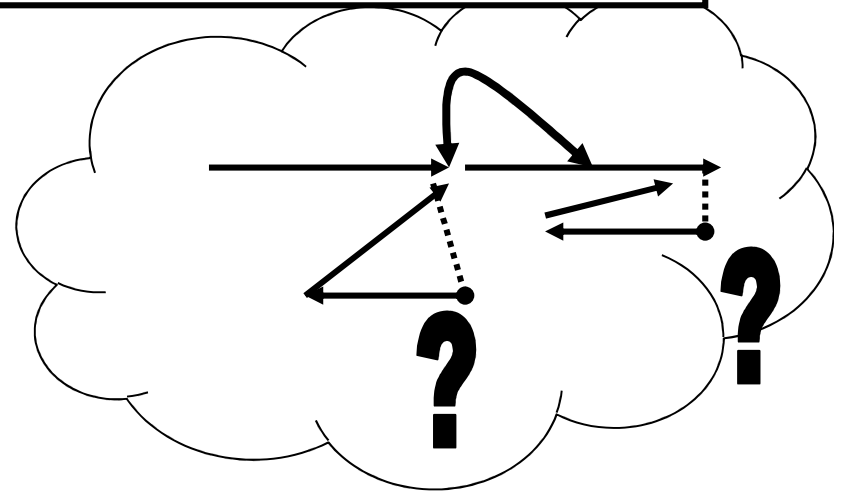
Before reading

Put together

The knowledge of the world

**Activate what you already know**

Purpose of reading

Text formats

D.Tadlock 2004

- It is proposed that efficient passage reading requires the **expeditious location of relevant information** wherever that information is stored in the brain, thus requiring **instantaneous, implicit, and imperceptible "switching" among various strategies and brain systems.**

- The reader who continues to use **decoding and/or individual word identification** as the primary vehicle for passage reading struggles because his **brain is locked into a linear, self-limiting, and inefficient strategy**.

Read aloud– a simplified model

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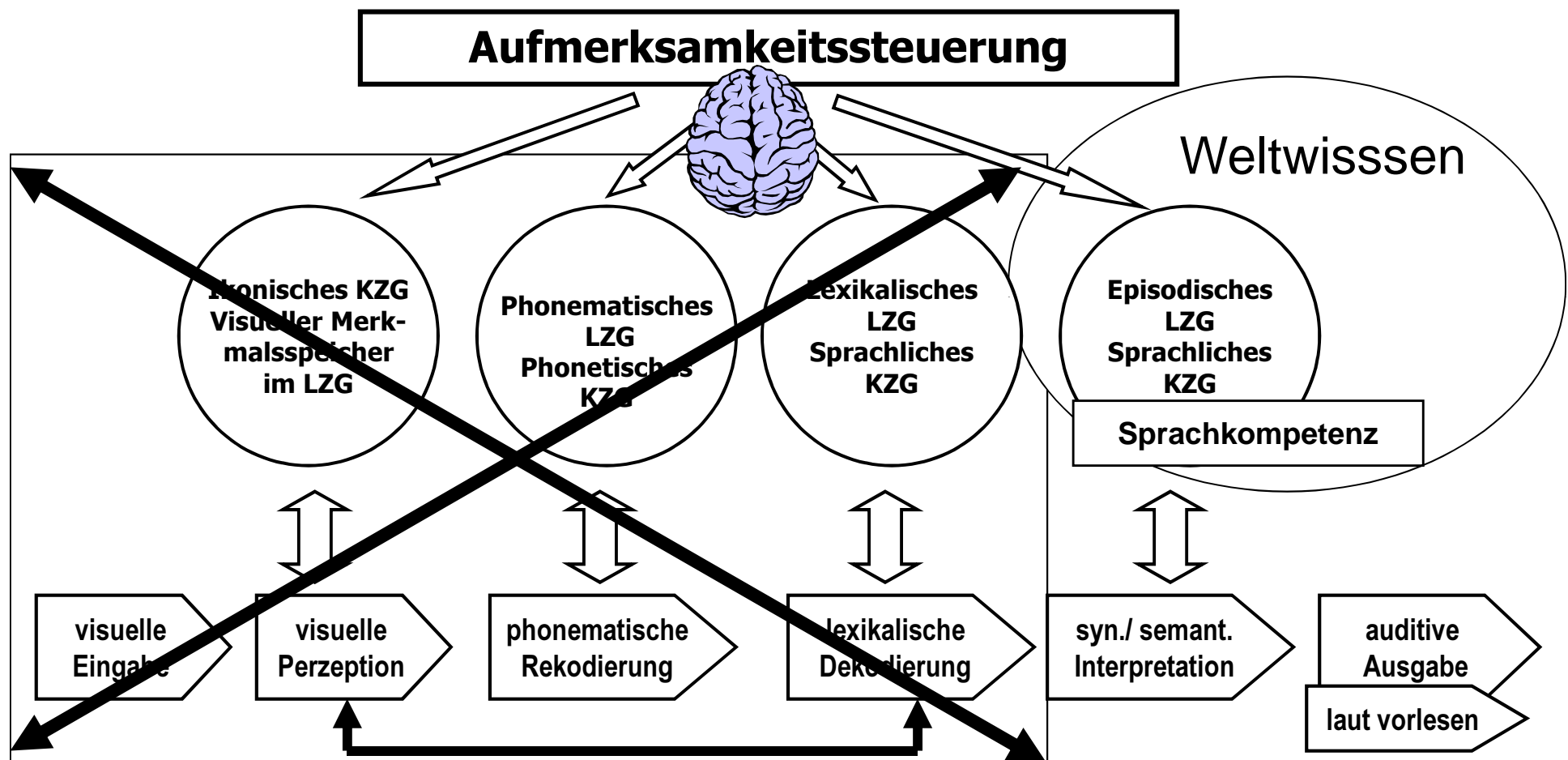
Phonological skills

In simple language,

sound comes before sight.

One of the biggest mistakes made by untrained teachers of reading is to show children the letters of the alphabet prematurely.

….by measuring the phonological skill differences between good and poor readers we have been able to isolate phonological skills as an essential component of learning to read

Using & controlling reading strategies

Goal:

- If we want our pupils to use strategies while reading we must explicitly show them first, what strategies there are an how to use them – in all subjects
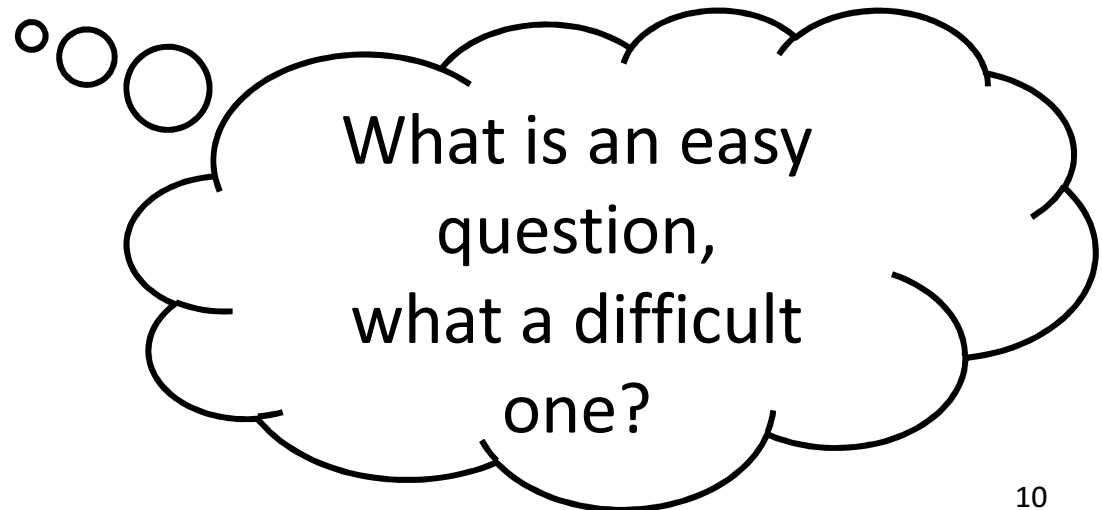
©Souvignier

Make the unvisible visible
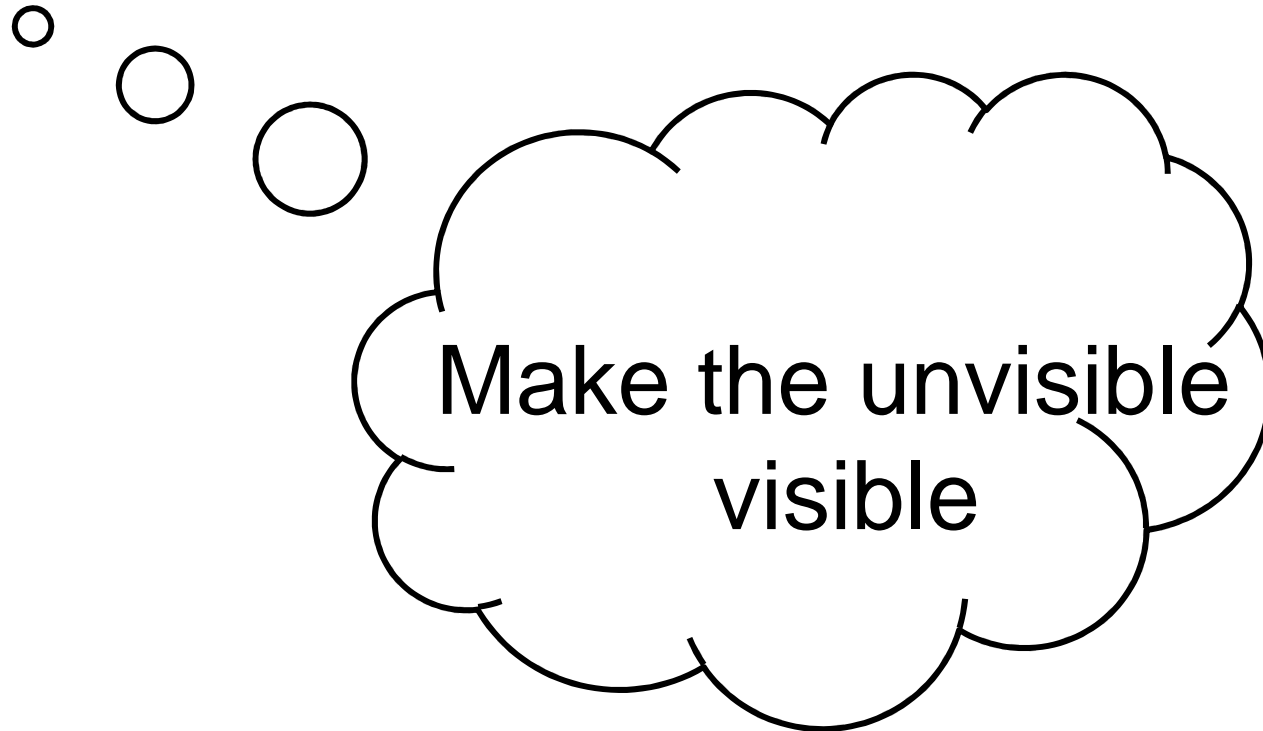
PISA result

- **prior knowledge**
- **metacognitive skills in choosing appropriate learning and reading strategies**

are reliable predictors for good reading skills

Question-Answer Relationships

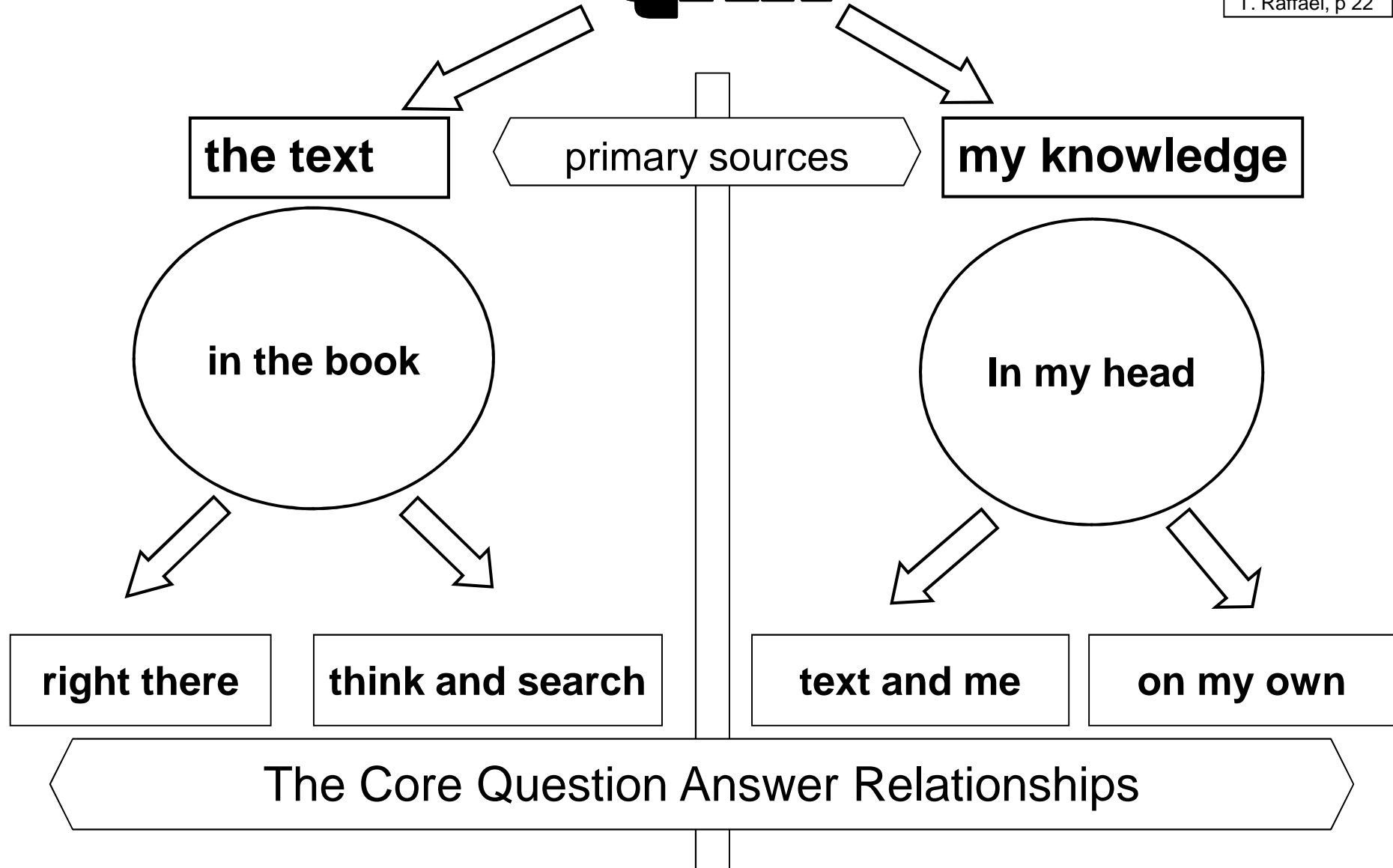- or QAR, is a reading comprehension strategy developed to "clarify how students approach the tasks of reading texts and answering questions" (Raphael 1986).

- It encourages students to be **active, strategic readers of texts.**

- QAR outlines where information can be found
  - ⇨ Right There,
  - ⇨ Think and Search,
  - ⇨ Author and Me,
  - ⇨ On My Own.

What is an easy question, what a difficult one?

QAR

the text

primary sources

my knowledge

in the book

In my head

right there

think and search

text and me

on my own

The Core Question Answer Relationships

Right There

- The answer is in one sentence of the text; the question and answer usually have the same wording. Answers usually are one-word or short-phrase responses. There is usually only one right answer to **Right There** questions.

Who is....?
Where is...?
What is...?
When is...?
How many...?
When did...?

Think and search

- The answer is found in several parts of the text. The question and answer have different wordings.

For what reason...?
How did...?
Why was...?
What caused...?

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Author and me

- Students must use their prior knowledge to answer these types of questions.

- The answer to the question comes from both clues in the text and students' prior knowledge. Students must synthesize the text to fully understand the question.

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Would you...?
Which character...?
Did you agree with...?
What did you think of...?
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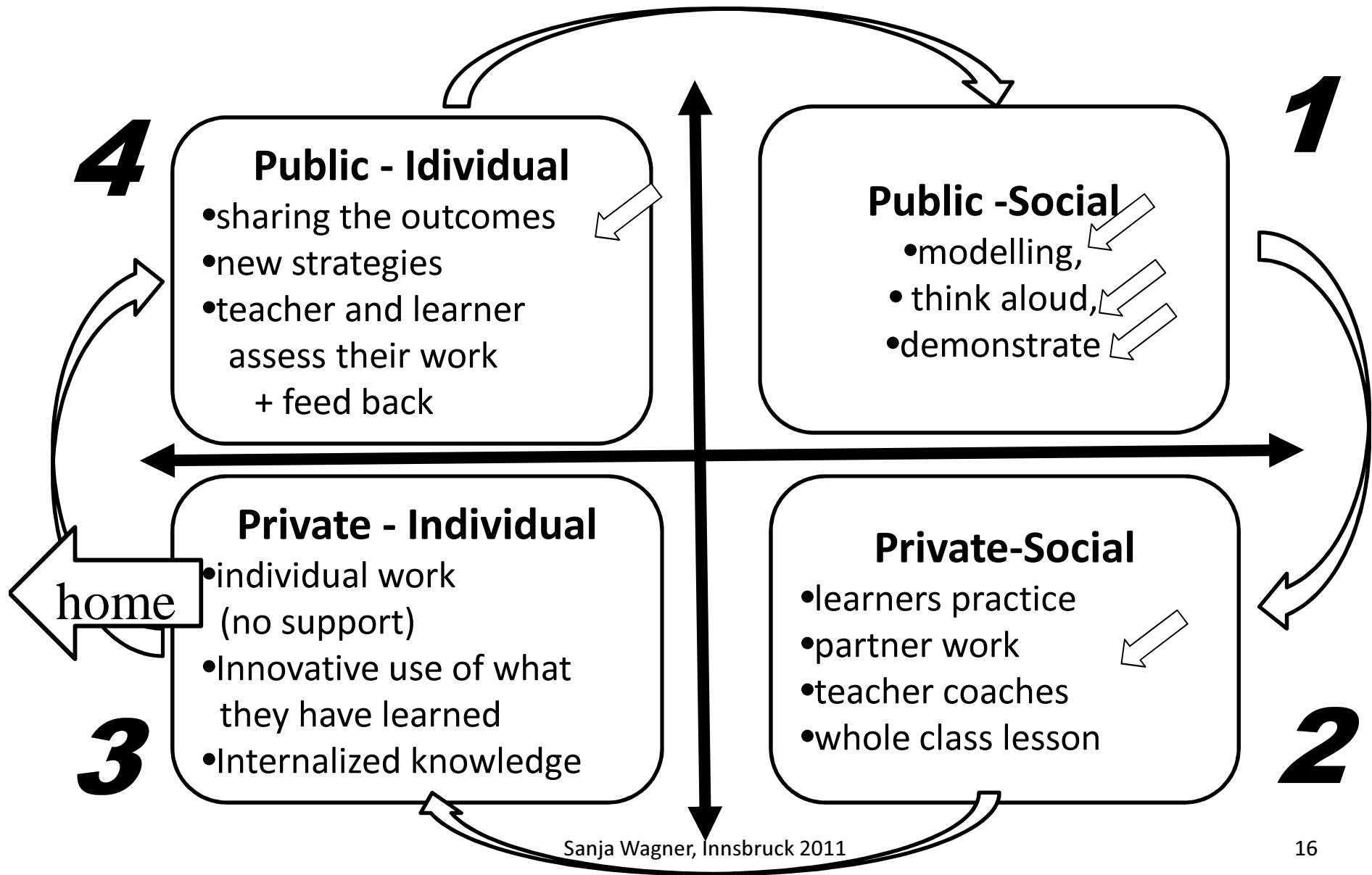
On My Own

The answer comes entirely from students' prior knowledge. These questions require **inferential and evaluative thinking**. Answers <u>do not require information from the text</u> but do require that students make some type of judgment about or relate to the topic of the text.

Do you know...?
Have you ever...?
Would you ever...?

Vygostsky's space

4

Public - Idividual
- sharing the outcomes
- new strategies
- teacher and learner
  assess their work
  + feed back

Public -Social
- modelling,
- think aloud,
- demonstrate

1

home

Private - Individual
- individual work
  (no support)
- Innovative use of what
  they have learned
- Internalized knowledge

3

Private-Social
- learners practice
- partner work
- teacher coaches
- whole class lesson

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„The cognitive apprenticeship" Model

T.Raphael p.37

High teacher control

SIX-STEP INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

responsibility: teacher

Explicit instruction

Modeling

Guided practise

Coaching / Scaffolding

Independent application

Self-assessment & goal setting

responsibility: pupils

high student activity
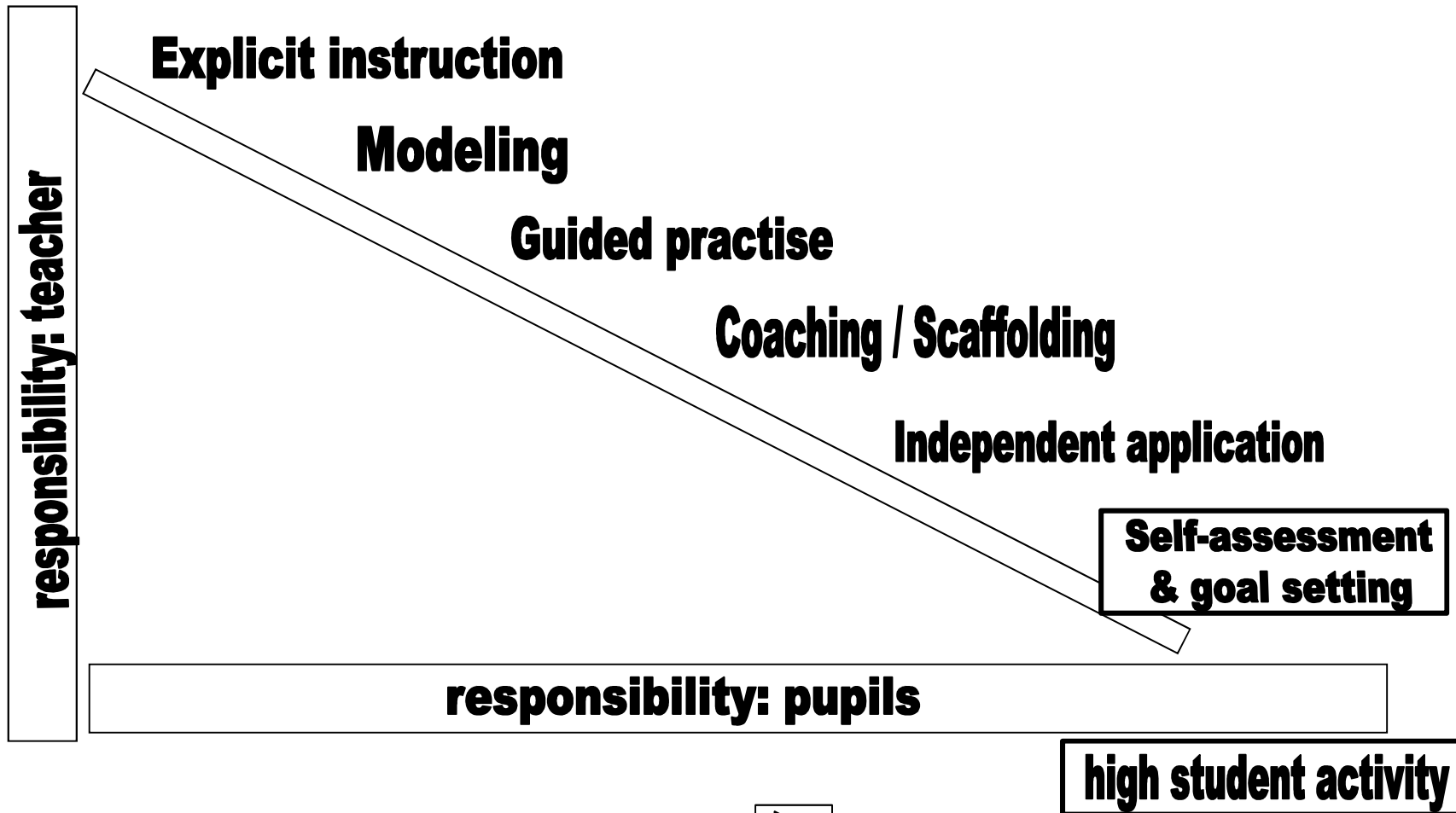
B1.1	Ich	Andere	Meine Ziele
Ich kann beim Lesen von einfachen Texten wichtige Informationen entnehmen,			
z. B. in Kinoprogrammen			
auf Speisekarten			
auf Homepages			
in Broschüren			
……			
Wenn ich einfache Zeitschriftenartikel mit Bildern lese, kann ich die wichtigsten Informationen verstehen.			
Ich kann unbekannte Wörter eines Textes aus dem Zusammenhang verstehen, wenn ich weiß, worum es geht.			
Ich kann Einzelheiten von einfachen Zeitschriftenartikeln oder Sachtexten verstehen, wenn ich ein Wörterbuch verwende.			
Ich kann private Briefe, Karten und E-Mails verstehen, in denen Gefühle, Wünsche und Erlebnisse beschrieben werden.			
Ich kann vereinfachte Originaltexte (Erzählungen, Theaterstücke, Reiseberichte, …) im Großen und Ganzen verstehen.			
Ich kann einfache Liedtexte im Großen und Ganzen verstehen.			
Ich kann Formulare so gut verstehen, dass ich sie ausfüllen kann, z.B. ein Bestellformular für Bücher oder CDs im Internet.			

Right there

Think and search

Think and search

Text and me
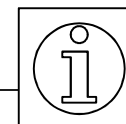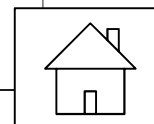
The benefits of the method:

- How does QAR strategy contribute to foster comprehension?

- How does it influence us teachers?

- What impact does it have on creating own questions as test-items?

- How does it influence our diagnostic assessment?

Thank you for your attention!

One caution:

„Teachers should be aware of the difference between **showing** student what to do and **telling** them what to do.
Modeling and coaching
encourage higher levels of thinking
while
telling and recitation reinforce lower levels of thinking. (T.-Raphael)

Literature:

- Raphael, Taffy: *QAR Now. Question Answer Relationships (Theory and practice)*. New York: Scholastic 2006.

- Wagner, Sanja: Getting Experience- Lesekompetenz mit QAR. In Praxis Englisch 4/2009. Westermann 2009
  - Material for classroom practise:
    Notting Hill Gate, Workbook 4A, 4B, 5A,5B, Diesterweg 2010

- *http://www.teachervision.fen.com/skill-builder/reading-comprehension/48699.html*

- *http://forpd.ucf.edu/strategies/stratqar.html*