**Information on the Q or Q:**

**Q or Q’s: (Question or Quotation) To analyze text for meaning; to actively listen to other points of view; to critically discuss ideas and understandings; to practice the process of rewriting for clarity.**

Almost every day we share our understanding of a quote or an answer to a question and they have been encouraged to share these with you and “pick your brain”. This process is designed to achieve several objectives. Quotes are short pieces of text that are designed to make people think. In considering the meaning of the quote, it is often necessary to examine closely the word choice, literary devices, tone, and context in order to determine the author’s meaning. Your scholar is then asked to record what they believe the meaning of the quote to be. They bring their interpretation to class and we discuss and share a variety of perspectives. Each student is encouraged to be fully present and open to alternative points of view and understandings. They are expected to ask questions, consider alternative interpretations and are ultimately required to rewrite a polished interpretation of that quote. In doing so, they not only develop the habit of holding an open mind to different perspectives, but they develop the habit of rewriting and polishing their own thoughts and understandings.

Here are the steps to the Q or Q:

1. Have students record the Q or Q.
2. For homework they are to interpret what they think the author meant by his or her words. They are encouraged to consider the words, research the context and / or author, etc.
3. If they are stuck, they should ask others what they think. I encourage my students to bring the Q or Q to the dinner table and have the family consider the quote. They are not permitted to write “I don’t know” or “I don’t get it.”
4. The next day in class students are asked to discuss their interpretation and share the metacognitive process they went through to arrive at that interpretation.
5. As students listen to other interpretations and rationales for their interpretations they are to take notes on ideas and thoughts that are new to them or provide a different perspective.
6. I then give them 2-3 minutes to rewrite their interpretation. Even if they are holding onto their interpretation, they need to rewrite it using better word choice and aiming for clarity.

I ask them to use this format so that I can easily scan and review their work when I collect it for review:

**Thursday, August 28, 2014**

**Q or Q:** “*If you think you can, you can. If you think you can’t, you’re right.” ~Mary Kay Ash*

**My interpretation**: *I think Mary Kay Ash is trying to tell people that you have to believe in yourself.*

**Notes:**

* *Sometimes what you think can stop you from doing things.*
* *Some people use “I can’t” as an excuse not to even try.*
* *Mary Kay Ash is the woman who founded Mary Kay cosmetics.*

**Rewrite:** *Mary Kay Ash is not only saying that believing in yourself can help you to reach your dreams, but that NOT believing in yourself can actually prevent you from reaching those dreams by stopping you from even trying. Some people use “I can’t” as an excuse for not achieving something when, in reality, they are actually using it as a reason not to try.*

While I think other teachers assess the Q or Q differently, every 4 – 5 weeks I ask my students to take a reflective stance and assess their performance on the Q or Q’s. They consider the standards involved and determine their performance on them. They are given the opportunity to add any comments they deem important in the evaluation process. Finally, I ask my students to copy their best Q or Q during that time period and share why they felt it was their best. There are two main objectives for requiring students to assess their own Q or Q’s: 1) to have students develop a critical eye, and 2) to develop an appreciation for their own ability to accurately assign a value to their work.