What you will need for R.A.C.E.S.

- A question that requires students to analyze a text
- Sentence stems for a proper response
- Lined paper
- A deck of playing cards (Optional)

Overview of R.A.C.E.S.

This is a wonderful activity to help students structure their writing, but writing can still be a challenge. I was recently inspired by an excellent webinar by Jody Nolf which you can check out below where she provides excellent suggestions for how to set up this activity to succeed along with some great activity ideas.

Check out Jody Nolf’s webinar for lots of great tips and activities. [Jody Nolf’s Webinar ->](kid-inspired.com)
The R.A.C.E.S. stands for:

- R = Restate - Students need to restate the question in their answer.
- A = Answer - Students need to answer the question, but not by simply copying something from the text. I was reminded by Jody Nolf that this answer needs to come from the student. The student will cite text evidence next.
- C = Cite - Students cite evidence from the text for the answer provided above. They can quote an author directly here or describe a specific event that happened in the text.
- E = Explain/Expound - Students now explain how the evidence they provided from the text supports the answer they wrote above.
- S = Summarize - Students now put it all together, summarizing their conclusions in their own words.

How to organize R.A.C.E.S.

Step 1. Question and Example Response

This activity works well when you students are required to respond to a text by answering a question that requires some thought to answer. It shouldn’t be possible just to simply lift the answer from the text.

Examples:

- What do you think is the author’s opinion on...
- Compare and contrast two characters in a story.
- Do you agree with...

Scaffolds: You will also likely want to prepare some an example response as well as a sentence stem framework students can use until they get the hang of creating responses themselves.

Note: You can let students give it a go and then provide your scaffolds as needed to those students who are struggling.
Step 2. Students Respond either individually or in small groups.

There are a number of ways you can set this up:

- Students discuss with a partner then respond individually
- Students get in small groups to discuss and write a response together
- Different groups tackle different parts of the response.

Jody Nolf’s Engaging Activity Idea

Jody Nolf has some great ideas about this in her webinar. She uses playing cards.

A playing card correlates to a particular part of the R.A.C.E.S. response. For instance, Ace = Restate the Question, King = Answer the Question, Queen = Cite Text Evidence, etc. After putting students in small groups, you have a couple of options:

- Option 1: You can give each group one card and that groups works together to complete that part of the R.A.C.E.S response. i.e. Group 1 gets the Queen so they provide text evidence. Students come together at the end to put the entire response together as a class.
- Option 2: You can give each person in a group a card so that each person in a group is responsible for one part of the R.A.C.E.S. response. i.e. Tan gets a King so he is responsible for the Answer part of the response.

If you haven’t already, watch her webinar on this. She does a much better job explaining it and provides some wonderful examples.

For more ESL teaching activity ideas & strategies, visit: kid-inspired.com