I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the reason for conducting this research. It deals with background of the problem, formulation of the problems, objectives of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Problem

English, as a foreign language in Indonesia, is taught as a compulsory subject which is learned from junior high school to university level. The students were taught the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. When one learns a language, he/she learns to communicate with other people. Learning how to communicate is not only through listening and speaking but also through reading and writing. Reading is seen as a way of communication through printed material or text. It may contain information about science, technology, knowledge, etc. Because of that, one of the language skills that should be mastered by the students after following a set of teaching learning process is reading.

Reading plays an important role in learning process, through which learners can get information such as science, technology, culture and many others knowledge. Moreover, Christian and Mary (1976) mention that reading is the most important skill of all for most students of English through the world. By reading, the
students were able to access much information. Reading is a very important skill to increase knowledge, and it is also a way of thinking. It is because to transfer new modern science, technology, and information can be done through reading. Reading will also give more contribution if it is done with a good comprehension. It means that comprehending the reading text is really needed in a reading process. Dallman (1982:23) also says that reading is more than knowing what each letter of alphabet stands for, reading involves more than word recognition; that comprehension is an essential of reading; that without comprehension no reading takes place. In other words, comprehension is stressed in reading.

Although reading text has been taught since elementary school, there were still many students who were confused of what they have read, even when they were in Senior High School. The students’ ability in comprehending the text is still unsatisfactory. Based on researcher’s experience during the field practice (PPL) at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung in 2011, it was found that the students still have difficulties to comprehend the text. This might be caused by many factors; (1) students do not have much motivation to read the text, (2) there were too many unknown words on the text that leads them to spend much time in opening dictionary which make them lazy to read, and (3) the teacher used uninteresting method/strategy in teaching reading.

A new strategy should be applied so that the students’ activeness will arise, the strategy should also be applied in order to help the readers comprehend the text. The researcher in this research focuses on the teaching-learning process in reading. So, a new strategy which is able to make the students active during the
teaching-learning process in reading and also can help them comprehending the text is need to be applied.

The researcher chooses QAR strategy as an alternative way for teaching reading comprehension. There were many reasons why this strategy is chosen; (1) Question Answer Relationship strategy can empower students to think about the text they were reading, (2) it inspires them to think creatively, (3) it can make the students work cooperatively while challenging them to use literal and higher-level thinking skills, (4) Question Answer Relationship strategy allows students to participate actively in teaching and learning process, and (5) when the students participate directly and actively, they would tend to focus to do the teaching learning process.

Raphael (1986) says that QAR is a reading comprehension strategy developed to clarify how students approach the tasks of reading texts and answering questions. It encourages students to be active, strategic readers of texts. Raphael created QAR strategy as a way to help students realize that the answers they seek were related to the type of question that is asked. It encourages them to be strategic about their search for answers based on an awareness of what different types of questions look for.

Based on the statements stated before, the researcher was interested to find out whether or not QAR is an appropriate strategy for teaching reading comprehension.
1.2 **Formulation of Problem**

Based on the background above, the study addressed the following research problems:

1. How can the implementation of QAR strategy improve students’ reading comprehension?
2. What is the students’ response toward the implementation of QAR strategy during teaching learning process?
3. What problems do the students mostly have in reading aspects?

1.3 **Objectives of the Research**

The objectives of this research were:

1. To find out the implementation of QAR strategy improves students’ reading comprehension.
2. To find out the students’ response toward the implementation of QAR strategy.
3. To identify the students’ problem in reading aspects.

1.4 **Uses of the Research**

1. Theoretically, to enrich the relevant study related to the improvement of students’ comprehension in reading and also be reference for future research.
2. Practically, to give information about that the implementation of Question Answer Relationship can be used to improve students’ comprehension in reading, to give consideration for English teacher to apply this strategy in
his/her classroom activities, and to enable students to be more independent learners.

1.5 Scope of the Research

The research was focused on students’ reading comprehension skill. This research was conducted to the first year students of SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung 2011/2012. The population of this research was the first year student of SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. The subject of the study was class X.7, and it focused on the implementation of QAR to improve students’ comprehension in reading. This classroom action research was conducted in three cycles. The teaching material of this research was narrative text.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Reading Comprehension

It refers to a matter ‘of making sense’, of relating written language to what we know already and to what we want to know. It means that an understanding of idea of a text.

QAR

It is the strategy that focuses on students and teachers developing a common language for discussing questions and their relationship to the text. QAR teaches students to use the question answer relationship to improve reading comprehension.