A TCQC Short Answer Response contains the following elements:

1. **Topic Sentence**: the answer you are giving to the question or the claim you are making. Write a general statement that sums up your answer. Sometimes it is a good idea to do this step last; you may need to look first at your **supporting details**, or evidence (see #3), before you generalize them.

2. **Context (of a Quotation or Paraphrase)**: a sentence or more that introduces the quotation or paraphrase that serves as the evidence defending your answer. Help the reader understand where this quotation or paraphrase occurs in the reading by mentioning the page number and the situation. A sample introduction, or context: “On page 17 Dr. Mullis claims that…”

3. **Quotation or Paraphrase**: the evidence defending your answer. It can be an actual quotation from the text, including the page number where you found that quotation; or it could be a paraphrase, which is your rewording and reordering of the details and ideas from a quotation, and the location where you found the information that is the basis for the paraphrase. In order to avoid plagiarism, be sure to choose synonyms instead of recopying the author’s words and be sure to reorder the structure of the sentence.

4. **Commentary**: the elaboration on the quotation or paraphrase to illustrate how it proves the answer you are giving. You should not only reference the topic sentence but single out words from the quotation or paraphrase that help explain your answer. Remember you are answering a question and making an argument, so be sure your explanation of the evidence matches your point.