

SQ3R: To Improve Reading Comprehension

SQ3R is a reading comprehension method named for its five steps: **survey, question, read, recite, and review**. Follow the steps below to learn how to glean as much information as possible from your reading material.

Survey: Gather the information necessary to focus and formulate goals

Take a few minutes to go thru the material quickly: Read the title, Look over the text. Think about the issues that the text will address.

- Read the introduction and or summary, orient to how each chapter fits the author's purpose and the most important points.
- Notice each boldface heading and subheading – Organize your mind before you begin to read and build a structure for the thoughts and details to come; notice italics, bold face, end of chapter questions.
- This begins the process of developing a framework that helps to organize what you will learn. You need to have a framework in order to recall the information later.

Question: Before you begin to read a section, turn the heading into a question: this can cultivate curiosity and increase comprehension.

- Turn boldface headings into as many questions you think will be answered in that section. Think of a question that interests you: this helps to boost your interest, focus and motivation. Developing interest is key to being motivate to recall what you have read.

Read: Read with a intention and purpose. Actively seek the information of importance. Read quickly rather than at a leisurely pace so that you do not bore yourself into inattention.

- Read with your questions in mind and look for answers, develop new questions you want answered.
- Read section by section stopping at the end to write down notes or additional questions.
- For more difficult reading create an outline of the chapter and leave additional space you can fill in details during the class lecture.

Adapted from: Kornhauser, A. (1993). *How to Study*,(University of Chicago Press;
Pauk, W. (1989). *How to Study in College* (4th Ed.), Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin;
Reynolds, J.A. (1996) *College Success: Study Strategies and Skills*, Boston, MA, Allyn & Bacon.

Recite/ Reflect: Stop and think. What have you read about? How does it connect to other material you are reading or previously learned knowledge? Take a quick note or recite important points aloud, in your own words.

- After each section, stop and recall your questions and see if you can answer them from memory. If not, look back at the text again (as often as necessary), but don't move to the next section until you can recite the answers from the previous

Review: Refine your mental organization and begin building memory: go back over the questions you create for every heading and the notes you took throughout the reading. See if you can still answer the questions. If not, look back and refresh your memory, then continue on.

- Review your notes and text frequently but briefly. Short, frequent review sessions are a quick way to improve your recollection of new information. A quick way to build in review is to take your text to class and review the text and your previous notes in a few minutes as you wait for class to begin.
- Always review readings and notes **before and after** class (15-20 minutes) which will mean adding this time to your weekly schedule.
- Do not wait until exam time to review your textbook, outline and notes. Review material once a week and try to summarize key points.

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