

# SQ3R – Reading strategy

By using SQ3R to actively read your textbook and lecture notes, you can get the maximum retention from your reading time.

## 1. **Survey** – Gather the information:

- Read the title – help your mind prepare to receive the subject at hand.
- Read the introduction and summary – orient yourself to how the chapter fits the author's purposes, and focus on the author's statement of most important points.
- Notice each boldface heading and subheading – organize your mind before you begin to read; it builds a structure for the thoughts/details to come.
- Notice any graphics – charts, maps, diagrams, etc. are there to make a point – don't miss them.
- Notice reading aids – italics, bold face print, chapter objectives, end of chapter questions are all included to help you sort, comprehend and remember.

## 2. **Question** – Help your mind engage and concentrate:

- One section at a time, turn the boldface heading into as many questions you think can be answered in this section.
- The better the questions, the better your comprehension is likely to be.
- You may add further questions as you proceed.
- Whenever your mind is actively searching for answers to questions, it becomes engaged in learning.

## 3. **Read** – Familiarize yourself with the material::

- Read each section (one at a time) with your questions in mind.
- Look for the answers, and notice if you need to make up new questions.
- Read with a highlighter and pencil handy. Highlight the answers to the questions you have created.
- Summarize important information in the columns as you read.



4. **Recite** – Train your mind to absorb information as you read:
  - After each section – stop, recall your questions, and see if you can answer them from memory.
  - If not, look back again, but don't go on to the next section until you can recite your answers.
  - If you are unable to recall the information, sit with it for a few seconds before looking back. Not allowing your brain to wrestle with the information for a couple seconds, cheats yourself from the reciting exercise. Trying to retrieve the information from your memory is an important step in retention.
5. **Review** – Refine your mental organization and begin building memory:
  - Once you've finished the entire chapter using the preceding steps, go back over all the questions from all the headings.
  - See if you can still answer them – if not, look back and refresh your memory.
  - Star the information in your textbook or lecture notes that was difficult to recall. This will help you know what to spend more time on when you come back to study this material for a test or exam.

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