

THE SQ3R METHOD

SQ3R

SQ3R is a Reading/Study formula designed to help process and increase retention of written information. It consists of the following five steps.

S = SURVEY

Scan the piece of writing to establish its purpose and get the main ideas. Look for:

- Titles and Headings – Indicate the main topics and concepts being developed.
- Pictures, questions, bold or italicized print – emphasize important information
- Introduction and conclusion – May give the topics being covered as well as the purpose. First and last sentences in paragraphs
- Footnotes

Q = QUESTION

Write questions to give purpose and improve concentration. This aids comprehension. Turn main headings and pictures into questions.

Jot down questions that you may have as you survey the material.

R = READ

Search for answers to your questions.

Make notes and highlight main ideas that support the concept.

R = RECITE

Reciting helps to put the information into your long-term memory.

Put what you have learned into your own words.

*See Below

R = REVIEW

It is important to review the material to understand and remember it.

Did you answer all of the questions and understand the information?

Reviewing each time you study will eliminate the need to “cram” for a test.

**There is another version of this method called the SQ4R. In this method the additional R can mean several things that you can do to add more power to your study method. Below are various methods of the 4th R for you to consider adding to the SQ3R method.*

R = RELATE

- It is easier to remember ideas that are personally meaningful.
- When you study a chapter, try to link new facts, terms, and concepts with information you already know.

Or

R = wRite

- Make "maps" for yourself.
- Reduce the information
- Reread or skim to locate and prove your points.
- Write down the key terms and ideas in outline form or using the Cornell Note Taking System.
- Always read/question/recite before marking or taking down notes.
- Check yourself against the text. Correct and add to your answer.

Or

R = RECORD

Marking the textbook increases understanding of the material for the present and for future reference. The process of selecting and marking requires you to find the main ideas. Later, when you review the text for exam purposes, you will find that the textbook markings and highlights enable you to grasp the essential points without having to read entire paragraphs and chapters again.

Write down the central points for the chapter or section in the notebook. Do each assignment before class. This will prepare you to participate in class discussions which will, in turn, help you remember the material you have read and to put it into perspective.

Underline and make marginal notes

Underlining key words and sentences will make those items stand out in the mind.

Marginal notes give you the opportunity to question a statement or position taken by the author as well as making you select the key words or items you want to remember from the paragraph.

Summaries enable you to write a brief summation of a section in other words.

Develop your own system of reading. Use whatever facilitates your retention of the material and works best for you. You might use the following: a double underline for main ideas and a single underline for supporting points; a bracket to enclose several consecutive lines that are important, rather than underlining all of them; or a box or circle around key terms.

Read before you mark. Read a few paragraphs or sections and then go back over the material and underline those topics and/or words that you feel are important.

Be selective. Underline only those points that are clearly essential. You will then have a visible outline of the major points on a page.

Use other words. Marginal notations and summaries should be in other language so you can readily recall the original material as you review. Using the text in this manner enables you to extract all that the book has to offer you in a learning situation, now and in the future. You will be able to use the texts for review in later software in the same field or in an allied field, thus reducing the need to re-read the material. You will reap the most benefit from reviewing the notes in the text, rather than being distracted by notes you may find written by some other person in a used text.

Coordinate class notes and textbook notes

Read the textbook material on time and prior to the corresponding class or lecture if at all possible. You can then follow the instructor's thought more easily, separate important points from lesser details, and have class notes become more meaningful to you.

Develop your own note-taking technique for each class. Many students use only one side of the paper for class notes, leaving a 2- or 3-inch margin on the left side of the page for writing key words and labeling.

Combine the text notes and class notes. Do this by writing class notes on the right hand page of the notebook and transferring text notes to the appropriate left hand facing page. You can then easily review all the information gained from class and text reading.

Or

R = Reflect

What does this material mean to you? How can you apply it to your life? Think of living examples, events, someone you know, a celebrity, a pet, some kind of memory – if you can associate the material with something you already know well, you've greatly increased your chances of understanding and remembering it.

Or

R = Respond

As you read, try to find the answers to the questions you asked. Remember, as you read, you might ask more questions. Be sure to write your answers in the margins.