
SQ3R Reading Method

Use this method to increase your comprehension of textbooks, articles, research studies, and manuals. The acronym SQ3R reminds you of the elements of this reading method – Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review – that will help you become a more effective reader.

Survey (also called skimming and scanning)

Survey the title: Think about what you may already know about that topic.

Survey the introduction: It gives you an idea about how the chapter is organized, and what you will be learning.

Survey anything in bold: Subtitles are labels. Other bolded items may be definitions that you will need to know.

Survey the pictures, charts and graphs: Glance at these to pick out things that seem interesting or informative.

Survey the summary at the end: This will review and give you the key points in the chapter.

Survey the questions at the end of the chapter: These will help focus your attention on the main points.

Survey your course syllabus/course presentation and see what topics the Instructor is focusing on.

Question

Write "Who, What, Where, When, and Why" questions for each subtitle or definition (you can do this as you progress through the reading).

Read

Read to answer the first question (this answer will become your notes). Look for keywords.

Recite

Recite the answer to your question out loud. Do this as if you are explaining to a study partner.

Write this down in your own words – these are your notes.

Repeat for each question that you created.

Review

Stand back and look at the chapter as a whole.

How do the ideas and facts you learned from each subsection fit together?

Review your notes to be sure they make sense to you.

Practise!

Open your textbook to the chapter you are reading and complete the steps below.

SURVEY: After surveying the chapter, what do you think it will be about?

QUESTION: Turn the 1st subtitle into a question.

READ: The section to answer the question.

RECITE: Answer the question in your words. (Repeat for the rest of the chapter)

REVIEW: After reading the chapter, what new things did you learn?

Adapted from: Robinson, Francis Pleasant (1978). Effective Study (6th ed.). New York: Harper & Row. [ISBN 978-0-06-045521-7](https://www.amazon.com/Effective-Study-Francis-Pleasant-1978)