

READING COURSE TEXTBOOKS

USE YOUR READING TIME MORE EFFICIENTLY!

APPLY AN *ACTIVE READING* APPROACH: **THE SQ3R METHOD**

Designed to help you read faster and retain more!

In this method, you follow five steps, **Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review**.

Survey

Before reading, survey the material. Get the best overall picture of what you're going to study before you study it in any detail. It's like looking at a road map before going on a trip. If you don't know the territory, studying a map is the best way to begin.

How? Glance through the topic headings and try to get an overview of the reading. Skim the sections and read the final summary paragraph to get an idea of where the chapter is going. Only spend a few minutes surveying the reading to get background knowledge. This will ease you into the reading assignment. Check for introductory and summary paragraphs, references, etc. Resist reading at this point, but make a mental note if you can identify 3 to 6 major ideas in the chapter.

Question

This step requires conscious effort. It is worth it as it leads to Active Reading, a useful technique to retain written material

How? Look at the first heading in your reading assignment. Turn it into a question. Continue generating questions based on headings, images, in the section to be read. Asking questions focuses your concentration on what you need to learn or get out of your reading. Ask yourself what the chapter is about: "What are the questions that the chapter is trying to answer?" "What questions do I have that the chapter might help answer?" "What questions might the course leader ask?"

Repeat this process with each subsection of the chapter, as well, turning each heading into a question. (As a variation of this technique, you can write questions down; this is called SQW3R).

Read

This is active reading and requires concentration. A good study environment is critical. (See Study Methods" at www.einstein.yu.edu/OASC. Reading **is not** running your eyes over a textbook. When you read, read actively. How? Read one section at a time looking for the answer to the questions proposed by the heading. Read to answer questions you have asked yourself or questions the instructor or author has asked. Actively search for the answers to your questions. If you finish the section and haven't answered the questions, reread it. Read reflectively. Consider what the author is trying to say, and think about how you can use that information.

Always be alert to bold or italicized print. The authors intend that this material receive special emphasis. Also, when you read, be sure to read everything, including tables, graphs and illustrations. Often times tables, graphs and illustrations can convey an idea more powerfully than written text

Recite

When you recite, you stop reading periodically to recall what you have read. Say to yourself out loud or write down a key phrase that sums up the major point of the section and answers the question. It is important to use your own words. Do not just copy a phrase from the book. Try to recall main headings, important ideas of concepts presented in bold or italicized type, and what graphs charts or illustrations indicate. Try to develop an overall concept of what you have read in your own words and thoughts. Try to connect things you have just read to things you already know. When you do this periodically, the chances are you will remember much more and be able to recall material for course exams and objective tests. Research shows that we remember our own (*active*) connections better than ones given to us (*passive*), indeed that our own hierarchies are generally better than the best prefab hierarchies.

Once you've read an initial section, look away and try to recite the answer to your question. Remember to use your own words and examples. If you can do this, it means that you understand the material. If you can't, glance over the section again. Once you have the answers to your questions, write them down.

Review

A review is a survey of what you have covered. It is a review of what you are supposed to accomplish. A review is not what you are going to do. Rereading is an important part of the review process. Reread with the idea that you are measuring what you have gained from the process. During review, it's a good time to go over notes you have taken to help clarify points you may have missed

After reading the entire assignment, test your memory by asking yourself the questions that you've identified. Review your notes for an overview of the chapter. Consider how it fits with what you know from the course, experience, and other classes. What is the material's significance? What are the implications or applications of this material? What questions are you left with? After repeating steps 2–4 for each section you have a list of key phrases that provides a sort of outline for the chapter. Test yourself by covering up the key phrases and seeing if you can recall them. Do this right after you finish reading the chapter. If you can't recall one of your major points, that's a section you need to reread.

The Review part is usually meant to be an ongoing process. Flash cards, notes or other material made during one of the above 5 steps, can be used to review for a few minutes every day for several days.

What good is the Question step?

Questions you find or formulate give immediate things to look for as you begin reading. It encourages you to watch for details to answer the questions; thus making the reading 'active'. It helps you concentrate and focus by giving you something to hunt for when you study.

There are a limited number of good questions that can be asked on a subject. Many of the questions that you come up with may also appear on exams.

Asking yourself intelligent, hard questions before you read the text or take notes will force you to concentrate to find the answers in your studies.

You are welcome to visit our webpage at www.einstein.yu.edu/OASC for more information regarding STUDY METHODS. Please contact the Office of Academic Support and Counseling at 718-430-3154; oasc@einstein.yu.edu for additional questions. The office is located in the Mazer Building, room 432.

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APPLY AN *ACTIVE READING* APPROACH: **THE PQSRT METHOD**

Designed to help you read faster and retain more!

In this method you follow five steps, **Preview, Question, Read, State, Test**. The middle three steps apply to every section within a chapter whilst the first and last steps apply to the chapter itself.

Preview

First of all, preview the entire chapter - skim through it all so you know what you're going to be covering. One way to do this is read the chapter introduction, look at the headings, read the section introductions and check out the figures. Then read the summary at the end of the chapter. The summary usually tells you what you have learned in that chapter). Look at the topic you have to learn by glancing over the major headings or the points in the syllabus.

Question

As you read through each section, start by asking yourself "What am I supposed to learn in this section?" This helps to get your brain in to sync with the topic being discussed. Formulate questions to answer once the topic has been thoroughly studied.

Read

At last, you can actually read the section. Do it carefully, think about the meaning and relate this to other things you know about this and similar topics. Do some underlining or highlighting of key words. Don't overdo it! If you want to take notes, read the whole section first, and then summarize it later. Read through reference material related to the topic, and choose which information best relates to the questions.

State (also called "Summary")

Once you have finished reading, think back about what were the main ideas you learnt. Try and recite some of this information aloud (unless you are in the library). This is a flexible step that allows you to bring other ways they use to summarize information into the process. Check back against the text, and note the things you missed out. Ensure that you didn't miss them out because you haven't learnt them. Only then go on to the next section and Question again.

Test

Now you have finished the chapter (or a major section if the chapter contains large dissimilar sections). Test yourself and review all the material. If you made notes, read through these. Think about the relevance of what you learned and how it all fits together. Reread any chapter summaries. Even though you have only just read the chapter, now is the best time to test yourself. Answer questions created in the Question section as fully as possible. Keep in mind that it is easy to lose sight of the point of learning. Avoid adding questions that you didn't formulate in the Question step. You may find that many textbooks are compiled in a way, which makes this method easy to apply, using an introductory passage, and questions at the end. The method can also be modified to suit any particular form of learning in most subjects. This method allows more accurate timing of work rather than you having to decide how much time to attribute to a topic.

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