

The Writing Center @ KUMC

Dykes Library G011 • writing@kumc.edu • kumc.edu/writing

THE SQ3R METHOD

The key idea behind reading is that your textbooks have something you want. They have knowledge and valuable information. An effective strategy for successfully reading and retaining the materials you have read is the **SQ3R Method**.

S = SURVEY

Before you begin to read, look over the entire assignment. Look for concepts, facts, or ideas that are familiar to you.

- Read the title of the chapter or the article. Turn it into a question that you expect to be answered.
- Read the headings and subheadings and turn these into questions.
- Read the introduction and summary to get an overview of the main ideas.
- Read the captions under the visual aids.
- Read any study questions at the end of the chapter or article and use them as goals in your reading.

Q = QUESTION

Question yourself about the main points to be covered in the assignment. Why was the assignment given? How does this relate to a lecture? Turn the headings and subheadings into Who, What, When, Where, Why and How questions to be answered as you read.

- As you reach each of the above parts, ask yourself what is meant by the title, headings, subheadings, and captions. Make good questions about each. Write these down on index cards or create a study guide.
- Ask yourself what you already know about the subject.
- Ask yourself what your instructor said about the assignment in the class or what was given out on a handout.
- Ask yourself what you want answered from reading the assignment.
- Ask yourself what you would have to do with the information.

R = READ

At last! You have previewed the assignment, organized it in your mind, and formulated questions. Now you are ready to begin reading. Be conscious of where you are and what you are doing. When you notice your attention wandering, bring it back to the present.

- Read and think actively. Look for main ideas and supporting details. Use outlining, underlining, and test marking skills.
- Read to answer questions that were raised in the QUESTION step.
- Read carefully all of the underlined, italics, and **boldfaced** words or phrases.

R = RECITE

Talk to yourself. When you finish an assignment, make a speech about it. One way to get yourself to recite is to go over your reading and look at each underlined point. Note what you marked, then put the book down, and recite as much as you can about the particular points.

- Use good judgment about places to stop and recite.

- Use outlining and underlining skills. (Do not underline long passages. Highlight after you have read a passage and understand it.)
- Write your own summary statement of each section.
- Quiz yourself on the main points. Connect new material with what you already know about the subject.
- Write down any question you have or mark any material you do not understand and ask your instructor to explain it.
- Write the answers to the questions from the QUESTION step.

R = REVIEW (daily, weekly, and before a test)

Plan your first review within 24 hours of reading the material. A review within 24 hours can save you hours later on. When you review, look over your notes and clear up what you do not understand.

- Look over your outlines, underlining, and any notations you made in your textbook.
- Study briefly the main ideas to keep the information fresh in your mind.
- Create practice test questions from review notes.