

The Writing Center @ KUMC

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THE SQ3R METHOD

In academia, textbooks and research databases have knowledge and valuable information you want or need. An effective strategy for successfully reading and retaining the materials you 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/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/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? Does it relate to a lecture? Turn the headings and subheadings into *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, *Why* and *How* questions to be answered as you read.

- Ask yourself what the title, headings, subheadings, etc., mean. Make good questions about each. Create a study guide or write these questions down on index cards or a Word file.
- Ask yourself what you already know about the subject.
- Ask yourself what your instructor said about the assignment or distributed as a handout.
- Ask yourself what you want answered from reading the assignment.
- Ask yourself what you will 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 reading, make a speech about it. One way to get yourself to recite is to go over everything 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.
- 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 any question/material you do not understand and ask your instructor about 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. This 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/article.
- Study briefly the main ideas to keep the information fresh in your mind.
- Create practice test questions from review notes, write a summary, or hold a group discussion.

SQ3R was developed by American educator Francis P. Robinson in 1946. While intended for college students, this method has proven effective for all learners. Since its introduction, SQ3R has been utilized in classrooms throughout the world to enhance the learning process. Along with other techniques, it has proven quite effective for students in the health sciences. No one technique will answer all your needs in school. SQ3R isn't well adapted to math textbooks or articles. However, it's an excellent technique for in-depth learning, especially when a great deal of information is presented. Always have a range of study methods available for different situations. *And as always, plan ahead and start early!*