

Lesson 12: The SQ3R Method to Reading

When reading a book or a book chapter, students must learn to apply special reading and marking skills, especially when studying complicated materials. The **Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review (SQ3R)** method can reduce the study time and significantly increase the ability to grasp essential information.

1. The Five Steps of SQ3R Method of Reading**Step1: Survey/ Skim**

Before diving into a text, take some time to get familiar with the author's style of writing by skimming through some of the introductory sections of the material (e.g. read the preface and introduction to a book or the abstract and introductory paragraphs of a journal article). After reading the introductory sections of the text, you should:

- Examine the title of each chapter.
- Note headings and subheadings and the relationship between the important headings in each chapter.
- Glance at diagrams, graphs or other visuals.
- Quickly skim the concluding sections of each chapter.
- Note any study questions or activities at the end.

Step2: Question

- Begin with the first part or section.
- Read with the intent to answer a question by using the words: who, what, when, where why and how to turn each heading into a question. For example, if you're reading a section with the heading "Long-Term Effects of Early Stressful Life Experiences", you can turn that into, "What are the long-term effects of early stressful life experiences?" Writing the questions in the margin, by the relevant heading, could be very useful.

Step 3: Read and Underline

Having surveyed the text and asked a few initial questions, you are now ready to start reading. Read each passage with the question you developed in mind. After reading the section, go back to the beginning and *underline, highlight and/or mark* the material.

► Suggestions for Underlining/ Marking a Text**a) Underline after Reading:**

Read a paragraph/ section of the text and then go back and underline only the main points, but do not underline the first time you read the material.

b) Use Numbers

- Use numbers for 1) lists 2) enumeration 3) sequences

c) Vertical Lines

- Place vertical lines in the margin to emphasize main points of several lines.

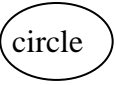

d) Recall Phrases

- Place recall phrases in the margin to condense major points and provide supporting details.

e) Definitions and Examples

- Underline all definitions and write “def” in the margin.
- Put parenthesis () around examples.
- Do not underline or highlight the entire example or the purpose or marking will be lost.

f) Circles or Boxes

Some students like to  important concepts, ideas or headings. Others prefer a 

g) Highlighting

- Highlight the points underlined or highlight in place of underlining.

h) Question/ exclamation marks (???!!!)

- React to what you read: agree, disagree, question and stay involved.

i) Practice

- Practice is the best way to learn marking skills (one cannot drive a car after simply listening to a lecture)

Step 4: Recite and Write

- Once you have formed questions on your reading and have read the questions, you are ready to recite the answers.
- Recite the answers out loud.
- Write brief study notes which will help encode the information in your long term memory.
- Write a sentence summarising the main idea in each paragraph if the material is extremely difficult.

Step 5: Review

- Once you have read an entire section/ chapter, you are ready to review the material. So, you need to:
 1. **Re-read** each main heading.
 2. **Review** the underlined and/or highlighted material.
 3. **Answer** the questions you have formed for each section. Use your reading notes to help you review.

2. Practise the SQ3R Method

Task One: In groups, survey your textbook and answer the following questions.

Questions:

1. When was this book published?
2. How many units/ chapters are there in this book?
3. On what page is the preface? Does the preface have a title?
4. How are the subheadings set apart from the text?
5. How does each chapter end?
6. On what page is the index?
7. Is there a glossary?

Task Two: The headings and subheadings of a chapter can be used to predict what a section will cover. The subheadings below were taken from two books chapters. Survey these subheadings and answer the questions that follow.

a)

Transportation by Foot

Pack and Draft Animals
 The Wheel
 Water Transportation
 b)
 Origins
 The Language of Ice Cream
 Ice Cream in the U.S.
 Ice Cream by the Numbers

Questions

1. What is the chapter about?
2. Give each chapter a title.

Task Three: Survey the subheadings listed below and then turn each into a question in the table provided.

GREENING YOUR LIVING SPACE

Seeing the Light	-
Keeping Cool and Staying Warm	-
Go Solar	-

Task Four: Too many students begin to read an assignment without any preparation. The results are usually poor comprehension, mind wandering, and lots of rereading of parts that don't make sense. Surveying and questioning prior to reading will result in increased reading efficiency. Apply the second step (Questioning) to this study skills unit (Reading Skills) . **Below list three questions to which you hope to find answers to by the end of this study skills unit.**

1.?
2.?
3.?

Task Five: Varying your rate according to purpose is an important aspect of reading. Listed below are several different types of printed material. Put an "S" in front of those which must be read slowly and an "F" in front of those which could probably be read somewhat faster.

- ___ Newspaper
- ___ Biology textbook
- ___ Novel entitled The Cat Ate My Gym Suit
- ___ Math chapter
- ___ A magazine article
- ___ Apartment lease

Task Six: Read the paragraph below and underline the answer of the question "*What are the advantages to surveying?*"

The time spent surveying is well spent. A group of sophomores at the University of Michigan practiced techniques for surveying a selection in sociology. Matched partners did not receive such practice. When the two groups were tested on their reading selection, the group, which surveyed read twenty-four percent faster than the control group and with the same degree of comprehension. The time spent surveying also resulted in less total time spent on the assignment.