

The SQ3R Reading System

S = Survey

Look over the contents of your assigned reading. Note chapter titles, which describe the information being covered. Look at the chapter subheadings, pictures, captions, graphs and diagrams. With advance knowledge of what information the reading contains, you will be better focused when reading increasing comprehension and retention.

Q = Question

When you read each chapter heading, turn that statement into a question. Doing so focuses your reading and serves as a guide. As you read, your brain will be actively looking for the answers to your questions.

Below are some examples of textbook headings turned into questions.

1. American History subheading: The End of the First Party System.

SQ3R question based on the chapter subtitle above:

What caused the First Party System to end?

2. American Government subheading: The Job of the President

SQ3R question based on the chapter subtitle above:

What are the jobs of the President and how does he or she carry out these jobs?

R = Read

Step three requires that the reader actively participate in the learning process. Read the section with the intent of finding the answer to your question. Highlight the answers to these questions, along with any key points, examples and definitions. Often the answers to the questions will be found in the summarizing sentence at the end of the paragraph.

R = Recite

After reading and highlighting a section of the text, recite the answers to your questions out loud. Are you able to answer in your own words? If not, re-read the section again and formulate another response to the question. You may want to revise your question, now that you are more familiar with the topic.

R = Review

After reading the whole assignment, answer the chapter review questions as well as your SQ3R questions. Re-read highlighted textbook material.

Adapted from the Columbia University website at

<http://web.ccis.edu/en/Offices/AcademicResources/WritingCenter/StudySkills/TextbookReadingStrategies/TheSQ3RReadingSystem.aspx>