

SQ3R SYSTEM

The study system described below was developed by Francis P. Robinson. For an explanation of rationale used in designing the SQ3R system, consult Effective Reading, written by Robinson. Also see Chapters 10 and 11 in the Pauk text, plus Chapters 5 and 6 describing forgetting and learning principles. The following description of SQ3R is taken from Effective Reading:

SURVEY: Glance over the headings in the chapter to see the main points which will be developed. Also read the final summary paragraph if the chapter has one. This survey should not take more than a minute and will show the three to six core ideas around which the discussion will cluster. This orientation will help you to organize the ideas as you read them later.

QUESTION: Now begin to work. Turn the first heading into a question. This will arouse your curiosity and so increase comprehension. It will bring to mind information already known, thus helping you to understand that section more quickly. And the question will make important points stand out while explanatory detail is recognized as such. Turning a heading into a question can be done instantly upon reading the heading, but it demands a conscious effort on the part of the reader to make this a query for which he must read to find the answer.

READ: Ready to the end of the first headed section, reading to answer that question. This is not a passive plodding along each line, but an active search for the answer. (Be ready, however, to refocus your reading if you find that you have asked the wrong question.)

RECITE: Having read the first section, look away from the book and try briefly to recite the answer to your question. Use your own words and include an example. If you can do this, you know what is in the book; if you can't, glance over the section again. An excellent way to do this reciting from memory is to jot down cue phrases in outline form on a sheet of paper. Make these notes very brief. No notes are written until the whole headed section is completely read.

Now repeat the QUESTION, READ, and RECITE steps on each subsequent section. That is, turn the next heading into a question, read to answer that question, and recite the answer, jotting down cue phrases in your outline. Read in this way until the entire lesson is completely read.

REVIEW: When the lesson has thus been completely read, look over your notes to get a bird's eye view of the points and their relationship. Also, check your memory as to the content by reciting the major subpoints under each heading. This checking of memory can be done by covering up the notes and trying to recall the main points. Then expose each major point and try to recall the subpoints listed under it.

SQ3R UNDERLINING

Underlining can be used as an effective study method if the reader (1) waits until the end of a headed section before marking, (2) determines the important points, (3) underlines only the key phrase or phrases, and (4) uses a numbering or marking system that shows relationships among the points marked. The SQ3R method of study (using underlining) would then proceed as follows:

1. Survey the headings and summaries quickly to determine what major points will be covered.
2. Turn each heading into a question as you start to read the section.
3. Read the section to answer the question. (Again, be ready to focus on other major points.)
4. Recite your answer to the question first by thinking what is important and then finding the phrase or phrases which briefly state this point. Be careful not to underline more than a phrase cue and use a marking system that shows the degree of importance of each point.
5. After reading the entire lesson in this manner, review your “outline” of underlinings to get a picture of what the chapter covered and then recite again. Fix these ideas in your mind.