

CREATING YOUR STUDY SYSTEM

SQ3R: THE BASIC SYSTEM

The SQ3R learning/study system is an organized approach to learning from textbooks, articles, and reports. Students who use a study system tend to read with greater comprehension and remember more over a period of time. What are the components of the SQ3R system? The essential rules are condensed into the following five specific steps:

The first is to **SURVEY**. This process is to give you a quick overview of the material that will be covered by the article or chapter. The survey should not take more than 3 or 4 minutes and involves reading the title and abstract, the introductory and concluding paragraphs, and looking at the figures and captions so that you get a general idea of what the article or chapter is about.

- Surveying the text provides your reading with focus and direction.
- Helps you develop an idea of what you'll be reading.
- Allows you to anticipate the text.

Step two is to **QUESTION**. Here you take all the major subheadings in the chapter and turn them into questions. For example, the heading "causes of World War II" changes to "What are the primary factors that led World War II?" Write these questions down on a sheet of notebook paper, leaving 4 to 5 lines between the questions. This is basically to help you organize your thoughts in advance and also helps you to keep your mind on what you are doing.

- Write out questions you develop from chapter headings.
- Examine the questions to find the direction of the text.
- Try to develop plausible answers to these question before reading.
- Attempt to answer these questions as you read.

Step three is to **READ**. Now you read the chapter or article in order to find the answers to your questions. Write the answers in your notebook under your questions. As you do this, you are creating a study guide for the chapter that will make later reviews easier. Make certain that you ask questions that are answered in the reading. If a question you come up with is not answered, then change the question. As you become more proficient at this, you may start to notice an interesting phenomenon. The questions that you make up in your studying **MAY** be the same ones that your instructor asks you on exams. In effect, you are predicting exam questions.

- Read for meaning and understanding
- Seek to answer the set up questions you developed in the previous step.

The fourth step is to **RECITE/RECALL**. This is very important when studying. Just say to yourself or to a partner, out loud, what it is you have just read. The more of your senses that you use while studying, the more likely you are to remember the material. If you can find someone else who is interested, discuss both the material and your questions.

Recall enable you to:

- Make sure you understood what you read
- Transforms information you retained from reading into a usable form.
- Find out what you didn't understand.
- Forces you to think about what you read.

Step five is **REVIEW**. Take the study guide that you have developed for the chapter and look it over whenever possible. Don't wait until the last minute. The review can be done in small chunks of time between classes or while waiting for friends. Engaging in short periods of intensive concentration is a very efficient study method.

The SQ3R System should greatly increase your learning efficiency. The key to this and other learning systems is repetition and then monitoring comprehension. The method involves reviewing the material several times and determining, through the use of your study guide, what you do and do not understand prior to moving on. Hopefully, these processes will help you to understand and retain the material for future applications.

CREATE A STUDY PLAN

A study plan is an organized schedule outlining study times and learning goals. A study plan is an effective way to help you navigate through your college education, and hold you accountable for your own learning outcomes. Time management can be challenging. Besides your classes, you likely have other commitments like extracurricular activities, work, and social engagements. Creating a study plan allows you to see how you spend your time, and ensures that you are setting aside

enough time outside of class to complete homework assignments, study for tests, and review and retain the information you are learning. It's important to understand that there is no "right" way to make a study plan. Your study plan will be personalized based on your specific needs, classes, and learning style.