

Reading Using SQ4R

SQ4R strategy has been around since the early 1960s and students have found it to be extremely helpful, especially with textbook reading. This method may seem time consuming at first, but once you practise it and know the steps, it takes only a few minutes.

SURVEY

Before you open your textbook to Chapter 1 and dive right in, take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with its contents. Read all the titles and subtitles; study any pictures, graphs and charts; read the introduction and the summary of the chapter as well as any study questions. Surveying gives you the “big picture” of what is covered in the chapter.

QUESTION

Change the title and/or subtitle of each section and turn it into a question. For example, if you are reading part of a chapter called “Aristotle on Women,” ask yourself, “How does Aristotle view women?” or “What is a woman’s role in society, according to Aristotle?” If there are no subtitles, then change the first sentence of a paragraph into a question.

READ

Read the information to find the answers to your questions. Keep asking and answering questions as you continue to read.

RECITE

Look away from the text now and again and summarize the main points and the answers to your questions. Try using your own words. Jot down some notes.

RECORD

Once you have understood the material and can summarize it in your own words, your next step is to record the information in some way. Some common methods are highlighting and/or marking the text, or taking notes, or some combination of both.

REVIEW

When you have read an entire chapter, review it. Look over your notes, the study guide and any questions you have written down. Repeat this review a few days later and then just before the quiz. If there is a lot of factual information and you have a final exam, it is best to set up a weekly review session so you won’t cram just before the final.

