

Academic Success Programs University Learning Center

SQ4R

What is SQ4R?

SQ4R is a more efficient way to read your textbook. If you find yourself re-reading because you cannot remember what you've just read SQ4R will help you immensely.

Why does SQ4R work?

When you read something and then don't remember what you've read, or don't understand it, you haven't read it at all. You have "read" words, not ideas. If you don't understand a passage, or can't remember it directly afterwards, you haven't read it.

Reading is an active process that involves a transaction between the reader, the writer, and the text. Effective reading involves actively mastering course material. Reading is also a skill that involves steady progress. It requires efficient use of your reading time; the ultimate goal of any reader is to make his/her reading process more effective and more efficient.

What can I expect from SQ4R?

When you have used it a few times, it becomes easier to follow, and after you have practiced using it enough, it becomes a habit that should develop into a smooth and effective method of efficient study reading.

- You will learn to pick out the important points quickly.
- You will understand difficult material better.
- You will be able to remember more of the material longer.
- It will help you to predict questions for quizzes.
- You can review your notes quickly and easily without going back to the text.
- You will read faster without wasting time.

University Learning Center

The Steps in SQ4R

SURVEY

Briefly survey the chapter. Read the authors' headings and sub-headings. Remember your main goal at this point is not to go into detail, but to develop a general idea of the structure. This will prepare you for what you are going to read and grasp a general understanding of the chapter. Read any summary that might be given. This will remind you of what is important throughout the chapter. This step helps you to get acquainted with the chapter.

QUESTION

Think about the material as you are reading and ask yourself questions about what you read. These questions will serve to keep you more involved with what you are reading. This will keep you focused on the more important material without becoming overwhelmed by details. By asking questions, you facilitate concentration and you prepare for the test.

READ

Read carefully and try to answer the questions you have asked yourself. At this point, you will have to concentrate. Remember you read a text differently than you read a novel. A novel is read passively. Textbook reading requires more concentration and retention. Read **actively with involvement**, which in turn will increase your understanding of the material. If you become tired or distracted, stop reading. Remember, your job here is not to cover as many pages as possible, but to cover enough pages so that you retain what you have read, and so that you have engaged in "**deeper-level reading**". During this step, avoid reading aloud to yourself. Instead, read silently as this is much faster.

WRITE

After you have answered a question, write the answer down. Summarize the information in your own words. Restructure the information so that it makes the most sense to you.

University Learning Center

The Steps in SQ4R-Continued

RECITE

Recite to yourself what you have read. Recall main headings and ideas. Be sure to put ideas in your own words, as this will improve your ability to retain the material. Answer questions aloud and listen to your responses to see if they are complete and correct. If they are not correct, re-read the material and answer the question again. This form of rehearsal increases the likelihood that you will retain the material.

REVIEW

Reviewing is the key to figuring out what you know and what you need to concentrate on. The best times to review are right after reading while the material is still fresh on your mind and again before the test. Try to summarize major points in the chapter and answer questions you posed to yourself while reading.