

SQ3R

SQ3R, developed by Francis P. Robinson, is a systematic reading technique to help you organize the reading process into manageable units. It is only one of many similar techniques that you can use to improve comprehension.

Steps:

1. **Survey** to get a quick overview of the reading before beginning to read word by word. Surveying requires looking over the reading's title, introductory paragraph, headings, summary, and tables and figures to get the main ideas.
2. **Question** to focus your attention on the important information in a section. Most likely, you can turn the heading for the section into a question, but sometimes headings are inaccurate or misleading, so you may need to look for other questions.
3. **Read** to answer the questions you have posed for yourself.
4. **Recite** to check whether you have comprehended material. Recite in your own words from memory. (Question, Read, and Recite for each section of the reading.)
5. **Review** to be sure that you understand the reading. Review can consist of reciting the answers to all the questions you have posed for the chapter.

APPLYING SQ3R TO TEXTS

Although the SQ3R strategy is designed to improve learning only at the knowledge and comprehension levels of Bloom's taxonomy, the questions included with each step below are designed to also move you toward higher levels of learning—application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. This is the kind of intellectualism required in English classes.

Steps:

1. **Survey:** What genre of writing is this work a part of? Non-fiction prose? Poetry? Drama? What is the title? Who is the author? When was the work written? How long or short is the piece? How much time do you have to read the work or the section? When should you be finished with the reading?

genre _____

title _____

author _____

time period of work _____

length of reading assignment _____

due dates for reading assignment _____

2. **Question:** What questions has the teacher raised about the work? How does this work relate to others you have read in this course? What themes and issues have you been discussing in class? How does each section of the work answer those questions? How does the entire work answer the questions?

teacher questions _____

themes _____

your questions _____

3. **Read:** Read the text with the questions you wrote above in mind. Use your questions and the teacher questions to help you select what to annotate, highlight, or take notes on as you read.
4. **Recite:** At the end of each section (scene, act, chapter, stanza, verse, etc.), briefly answer the question(s) you have asked. You can write the answers below, in the margin of your text, or in a reading journal. **(Repeat Steps 2-4 throughout the text, continuing to Step 5 at the end of each reading session.)**

5. **Review:** Look back over your notes and fill in the blanks so that when you study or write a paper later, you will be able to understand what you have written. Then, try again to answer the larger questions from Step 2 (e.g. How does this work relate to the others you have read in this course? What questions has your teacher raised about the work?) You may also want to write a list of new questions about the text to ask during class discussion, teacher conference, English Center conference, or your own further reading.
