

## SQ3R

Reading and understanding your textbooks is an active process. In order to retain and use the information you learn from textbooks, you must read more thoroughly than you would a novel or a magazine. The **SQ3R** process takes a little bit of time to master initially; but once you learn the steps, you will be better able to find success when reading textbooks.

### **S: Survey Before You Read**

Textbooks are logically organized to help the reader better understand the material. Use the tools they provide! Before reading the chapter, take a look at the title, the introduction, the headings of each section, any pictures or diagrams, boldfaced or italicized words, and the last page. Not only will this give you a very brief overview of what the chapter is about, but it will also help you determine how long it will take to read the chapter.

### **Q: Questions Help Focus the Reading**

Asking questions forces you to get involved in the material that you are reading. Before reading, try turning some of the headings into questions and jot them down on a piece of paper. Also, ask yourself what you already know about the subject matter that is being discussed. The ability to answer the questions you've raised will help build a sense of accomplishment while reading the chapter. Each question answered brings you one step closer to understanding the material.

### **R: Read**

As mentioned before, reading is an active process, which means you need to be **DOING** while reading. First and foremost, break the reading down into manageable chunks. Underline passages, write notes in the margins, and ask yourself questions while you are reading each section. These strategies will help you stay focused and thinking about the material you are learning. At the end of each section, review with yourself what you just finished reading.

### **R: Recite at the End of Each Section**

At the end of each chapter section, verbally review the material you just read without looking back over the material. To be able to verbalize material, you must understand it. If you are unable to verbalize the author's major points, chances are you will need to reread the section. In addition to this, answer some of the questions you have poised as you are reviewing each chapter section. Finding the answers to your own questions will help to reinforce the material.

### **R: Review at the End of the Entire Chapter**

After you've finished moving through the entire chapter, review the chapter as a whole. Reread each section heading and see if you can recite the author's main points for that particular chapter. If you have a friend near, ask them to quiz you on each heading.

Yes...the SQ3R process adds a little more time to the reading of your textbooks, but it is a more effective way of reading information and retaining it. After you've used the technique for a while, it will become second nature to you and will help you successfully read your textbook assignments.