

## Previewing: SQ3R

Previewing is a simple yet effective reading strategy that involves skimming the assigned reading before you actually start reading. The strategy helps you connect with what you read by creating a purpose and context for your reading. It also helps you to activate your knowledge base which aids comprehension.

SQ3R is a specific previewing strategy. Here is quick guide to using this strategy:

### SQ3R

**S = Survey**

What are you about to read?

**Q = Question**

What new information will you need to know?

**R = Read**

Take notes or highlight. Identify thesis and main points.

**R = Reflect**

Are you finding the answers to your questions?

Do you need to develop new questions?

**R = Review**

Do you know the answers to your questions?

Write a summary.

### The SQ3R Reading System

#### **S = SURVEY**

Look over the reading before you begin. Check the title, preface or introduction, and section headings. Make note of diagrams or illustrations and highlighted or boldface words. Scan the concluding chapter or summary section and any review questions that may have been provided. Ask yourself:

1. How long is it going to take me to read this?
2. How does this information fit into what we have done to date in this course?
3. What do I already know about the material?
4. What do I want to find out about the material?

#### **Q = QUESTION**

Refine your curiosity about the reading into specific questions that will guide your reading. Create questions about each section; you can use section headings and subheadings to find good questions. Write them right in the margins of the reading, close to where you think the answers will be. It's not too early to think about how your professor will test you on the reading. After all, it is likely that when he or she goes to write an exam, at least some questions will come from this reading. Will you need to know word definitions? Concepts? Formulas? Theories? Important events, people, or dates?

#### **R+R = READ AND REFLECT**

Read your assignments carefully – not just a quick scan. Underline or highlight as you read. If you don't know the meaning of a word, consult a dictionary or write the word somewhere in the text to look up later. Photos, diagrams, and illustrations are also important to “read.” Make sure you read any short sections not embedded in the text; they may appear as margin notes, side boxes, or larger chunks of writing in boxed or highlighted sections. Your questions can help you focus as you read and also reflect on the reading as you go. Each time you come to one of your questions, make sure you find the answer in the text. You may come up with more questions as you read. Write them down! Make sure you understand each section before you go on to the next. Checking your knowledge as you read is particularly important for math and some science texts.

#### **R = REVIEW**

Review right after you read. A quick survey of the reading and your notes will fix the material in your memory. Go through the reading and try to answer the questions you wrote without looking at the text. If you don't know the answers, read the relevant part of the text to rehearse the information. Make sure you have understood everything, and don't be shy about asking questions if you don't understand. Visit your Teaching Assistant or professor during office hours, or ask the questions right before or after class.

Review again right before the next class meeting.