Get Studying with the SQ3R Method

S - SURVEY - Skim the text
Q - QUESTION - Ask yourself questions about what you have read
R - READ material carefully
R - RECITE what you read out loud, in your own words
R - REVIEW what you read for main ideas and anything you don’t understand
**SQ3R**

**What is the SQ3R Study System?**

**Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review**

**Why use the SQ3R System?**

1. It provides an overview.

2. Organises chapter(s) in a framework which connects the loose pieces of new information.

3. Focuses reading and encourages who, what, when, where and how questions as answers are identified.


5. It helps you remember what you need to know!
The Basic Steps:

1. **SURVEY** headings

2. **QUESTION** headings (turn heading into questions)

3. **READ** the section to answer the question.

4. **RECITE** out loud your answer to the question. Write down important sentence under each heading.

5. **REVIEW** notes when you have read the chapter.

**SQ3R**

**SURVEY:** Glance over the headings in the chapter to see the main points which will be developed in the chapter. Also, read the final summary paragraph if the chapter has one. This survey should not take more than a minute and will show the three to six core ideas about the topic. This will help you organise the ideas as you read them later.

**QUESTION:** Now begin work. Turn the first heading into a question. (e.g. *Heading = Martin Luther. My question = Who was Martin Luther and why is he important?*). This will focus your reading and so increase your understanding. It will help you remember information you already know, which in turn will help you to understand that section more quickly. And the question will make important points stand out from the detail. Turning a heading into a question can be done very quickly when reading, but it then demands you put effort into reading to find the answer to the question you created. (All this helps you understand and remember the information). (You can use question stems to help you create different kinds of questions and questions that require more complex answers. See sample sentence stems sheet).

**READ:** Read to the end of the first headed section, reading to answer that question. This is not a passive plodding
along each line, but an active search for the answer. (Be ready, however, to refocus your reading and change your question if you find you have asked the wrong question!).

**RECITE:** Having read to the end of the first headed section, look away from the book and try briefly to recite out loud the answer to your question – (or in your head if other people are around). Use your own words and include an example. If you can do this you know what is in the chapter/topic. If you can’t, glance over the section again. An excellent way to do this reciting from memory is to jot down key phrases and words on a sheet of paper. Make the notes very brief. No notes are written until the whole section is completely read.

*Now repeat the QUESTION, READ AND RECITE steps for the following sections in the chapter. That is, turn the next heading into a question, read to answer that question and recite the answer by jotting down key phrases and words on your outline/rough page. Read this way until the entire section/topic is completely read.*

**REVIEW:** When the section has been completely read, look over your notes to get a bird’s eye view of the points and their relationship and check your memory by reciting (out loud or in your head) the major sub points under each heading. This checking of memory can be done by covering up the notes and trying to recall the sub points listed under it. For best results, review by self-testing using the question page, checking your answers against your notes pages.

* Although the SQ3R method can be very effective with most expository or informational texts, it is difficult to apply to maths. The SQRQCQ strategy (Barton & Heidma, 2002) which stands for Survey, Question, Read, Question, Compute, Question is a six step maths word problem solving process. This strategy can help students decide what a problem is asking, what information is needed and what approach to use in solving the problem. It also asks students to reflect on what they are doing to solve the problem. (See NBSS handouts on the SQRQCQ strategy and KNWS strategy for maths).*
**SQ3R Underlining**

Underlining (use **colour** if that works for you) can be used as an effective study method if you:

1. wait until the end of the headed section before marking
2. determine/pick out the important points
3. underline only the key phrase/s or key words
4. use a numbering system or marking system that shows relationship among points marked (e.g. 1,2,3, or a,b,c, or i,ii,iii etc).

The SQ3R Method of Study (using underlining) would then go as follows:

1. **Survey** the headings and summarise quickly to decide what major points will be covered.

2. Turn each heading into a **question** as you start to read the section.

3. **Read** the section to answer the question. (Again, be ready to focus on other major points).

4. **Recite** (out loud or in your head) your answer to the question by thinking what is important and then finding the phrases and key words which briefly state this point. Be careful to underline only important phrases (otherwise you end up with whole paragraphs highlighted) and use a marking system that shows the degree of importance of each point e.g. 1,2,3 or a,b,c etc.

5. After completing the chapter, **review** your “outline notes” of underlined key phrases.
SQ3R Study Methods when Preparing for Exams

1. Keep up-to-date in your revision during the term, using SQ3R techniques for nightly revision too. Also use it for new notes you get in class. Underline selectively (don’t underline lots and lots of phrases and words - only important bits) and write notes in the margin of your textbook or revision copy. Do not wait until the last minute and try to cram half-understood, half-memorised material!

2. Allow enough time before the exam to review (go back over) properly the material you understood previously when you were revising it. Timetable several revision sessions for each subject rather than one long session before your exam.

3. Try this method of reviewing your revision notes and textbook:
   a. Glance at the heading of a section
   b. Recite (out loud) what you remember
   c. Scan the material to see if your memory is accurate – did you get it right!
   d. If you left out important material note it down carefully.

4. Next, jot down the points you believe are the most important ones on the topic.

5. Make up essay questions based on those key topics and try to recite answers to them. (This method of question-prediction-state main ideas, helps your memory).

6. Get a good night sleep. Do not come to exams full of coffee or Red Bull! If you have used SQ3R study method, there is no need for anxiety or cramming!

7. Make a realistic timetable for your time each week. List what things you have to do:
   o School
   o Work
   o Sleeping
   o Eating
   o Meeting Friends

Then plan study and revision/review times.

DO NOT list “study, study, study” but instead list study times based on topics/chapters in the different subject areas e.g Geography - Volcanoes.

REMEMBER!!!!!!! Allow time for fun too!
## Question Stems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is?</th>
<th>What did?</th>
<th>What can?</th>
<th>What would?</th>
<th>What will?</th>
<th>What might?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where or when is?</td>
<td>Where or when did?</td>
<td>Where or when can?</td>
<td>Where or when would?</td>
<td>Where or when will?</td>
<td>Where or when might?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which is?</td>
<td>Which did?</td>
<td>Which can?</td>
<td>Which would?</td>
<td>Which will?</td>
<td>Which might?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is?</td>
<td>Who did?</td>
<td>Who can?</td>
<td>Who would?</td>
<td>Who will?</td>
<td>Who might?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is?</td>
<td>How did?</td>
<td>How can?</td>
<td>How would?</td>
<td>How will?</td>
<td>How might?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Use these question stems to help you create your own higher and lower order questions.* Lower order questions tend to be ‘what’ or ‘when’ questions. Higher order questions tend to be ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions which encourage you to think more deeply about a concept (idea) or the reasons for an answer.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject:</th>
<th>Title/Topic:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Survey: | Record important titles and headings from the chapter. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Read:</strong></th>
<th>Read and mark answers to the questions you have written down above.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recite:</strong></td>
<td>Record/write key facts and phrases as needed for each question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Review:</strong></td>
<td>Create a summary paragraph for each question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SQ3R Student Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SQ3R Student Checklist</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Survey:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Look over the material</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bring up background knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Check out visuals and headings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read first and last paragraph</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Question:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Turn headings into ?s</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Think of ?s you have</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write all your ?s down</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Read:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Actively!!! Look for answers to your questions.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Talk/write</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Recite:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In YOUR own words: say it or write, in your copy what you’ve learned. You could also use a mind map or graphic organiser to summarise* what you’ve learned.</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Review:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Later....look back over what you’ve learned</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-read or study your notes</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Summary sheet examples follow
# Summary Sheet

When you finish reading a paragraph or page write down your 3-2-1 points to help you sum up the main ideas and to figure out any thing you don’t totally understand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Things I found out about...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interesting things...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question I still have...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: ____________</td>
<td>Title of Section: ____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Read the section and underline the key vocabulary and main ideas. Write these in the blank space below where it says ‘Main Idea Words’.

2. At the bottom of the sheet write a one sentence summary of what you have read, using as many main idea words as you can.

**Main Idea Words:**

Imagine you only have €2.00, and each word you use will cost 10 cents. See if you can ‘Sum It Up’ in 20 words!
Summary Tree
Summary Map
Compare and Contrast Summary
Summary Map
Event Summary

Event:

Cause:

Cause:

Cause:

Cause:

Cause:
To Summarise SQ3R...

1. SURVEY
   - Look at the title
   - Examine the back cover
   - Read the contents and index
   - Read the introduction and summary
   - Read the headings
   - Look at diagrams
   - Read graphs
   - Read tables
   - Look at bold and italics
   - Look at other text
   - Read first lines of paragraphs

2. QUESTION
   - What is the purpose of this text?
   - What is the format of this text and what does that tell me?
   - Is the writer biased?
   - Do I agree with this?

3. READ
   - Use any or all of the following:
     - Skim: Quick read for gist (overall sense)
     - Scan: Quick read to find specific pieces of information
     - Detailed: Reading to really understand (usually after skimming or scanning)
   - Step by step:
     - For following detailed instructions
     - Actively process
     - What are you learning from this? Is the following answering your questions?
     - Relate it to what you already know
     - For knowledge
     - For exam

4. RECITE
   - If you need it in long-term memory
   - For knowledge
   - For exam
   - Close text:
     - What can you remember?
     - Try drawing a mindmap to review the information
     - Check back - what have you missed or got wrong?
     - Read parts again if necessary

5. REVIEW
   - Why?
   - Know what to look for
   - Read actively
   - Do I need to reactivate?
   - What do I know about this subject already?
   - The more you know, the easier the text will be to understand
   - What do I want to find out?
   - What is the purpose of this text?
   - What is the format of this text and what does that tell me?
   - Is the writer biased?
   - Do I agree with this?
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SQ3R Study Method

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