

Reading For Retention

Have you ever read something and then realized that you don't know what you just read? If so, you may want to try using the *SQ4R Reading Method*.

What Does SQ4R Stand For?

- Survey
- Question
- Read
- Recite
- Relate
- Review

Survey

This is the first step. Use a few minutes up front to skim the chapter. Don't actually read it- just skim it, looking at the overall objective of the chapter, topic headings, visual images, captions, any key words, and read the chapter summary. This allows you to look at the overall subject matter before getting too far into the details.

Question

As you get ready to read the chapter, turn the first topic into a question- or even two. Then, as you read that section, search for the answer to your question(s). This helps you focus on the material you're reading because you have a purpose in mind while you read.

Read

Look for the answer(s) to the question(s) you created. Read in small chunks, maybe just a few sentences, then determine how/if it answers your question(s). Often, as you read, you'll think of other related questions.

Recite

Now, try to answer your question(s) in your own words. If you have difficulty, then reread the material. By doing this, you are practicing for a time when you'll need to know the answer(s).

Relate

Try to relate what you are reading to things you already know. It is easier to recall something if we can tie it to something personally meaningful to us. It may take some time to identify the relationship between what you are reading and something you are already familiar with, but it is worthwhile.

Review

One way to more permanently seal something in your mind is to review it. After you finish reading the chapter, skim over it again and skim over any notes you made. Recall the question(s) you posed about the material. Can you answer them all clearly and completely? What other questions could the instructor ask? Can you answer those questions as well?

In order to be successful as a student, you must be an effective reader. The SQ4R method helps you be one!

How to use SQ4R:

SURVEY (Overview)	Chapter Survey, Preview, Outline, Objectives, Headings, Visuals, Chapter Summary
QUESTION (What's it About?)	Chapter Survey, Headings
READ (Sections of the Chapter)	Headings, Key Words, Take Notes, Highlight
RECITE (Practice)	Key Words, Use Your Own Words, Verify Your Understanding
RELATE (Context)	Bridge to Existing Knowledge, Topical information, Personal Knowledge
REVIEW (Test Your Knowledge)	End of Chapter Quiz, Glossary, Study Guide