

THE SQ3R METHOD OF STUDY

Adapted from Francis P. Robinson's book, *Effective Study*.

These five steps help you to

- select what you are expected to know
- comprehend these ideas rapidly
- fix them in memory
- review efficiently for exams

1. **SURVEY:** Glance over the headings in the Table of Contents or in the chapter itself to see main points that will be developed. Also read the synopsis of what is to come and the summary paragraph, if the chapter has either one. This survey should take only one to three minutes, and will reveal core ideas the author develops. This orientation will help you organize your own responses. If the text provides few or no heading cues, survey first sentences only, but read the first and last paragraph. (This survey is an active, RAPID attack on reading. During this step, do not slip back into plod-through habits.)
2. **QUESTION:** Think about what you found in your survey. Turn the first heading into a question. This arouses your curiosity and increases your comprehension. It brings to mind information you already know, thus helping you understand each section more quickly. The questions will make important points stand out while you recognize explanatory detail as such. Learn to develop demanding questions for which you must read to find the answers. Avoid questions that require only "True-False" or "Yes-No" answers. Train yourself to ask questions which search for possible subpoints, relationships, and subject development. Once you feel comfortable with this questioning step, you may find that you question efficiently while you survey.
3. **READ:** Read to answer your own questions. This may be to the end of the first headed section, or the first portion covered under the first topic sentence. Make this not a passive, plodding along of each line, but an alert, active search for answers to questions you've asked of the material.
4. **RECITE:** After reading the first section, look away from the book. Try briefly to answer your questions. Use your own words, and include an example—one of your own if possible. If your example fits the author's point, you know what's in the book. If you can't answer your question, or supply an example, glance over the section again. One good way to recite from memory: jot down cue phrases in outline form. Make your notes brief, but be able to expand on them. Recite silently or in writing. The latter is more effective, because it forces you to verbalize, and demands reinforcing kinesthetic cues. If your notes are accurate and legible, they provide a basis for quick review. Three reminders on the Reciting Step:
 - A. no notes written until whole section completely read
 - B. notes jotted from memory, not from book
 - C. notes in your own words, and brief
5. **REVIEW:** When the assignment has been completely read, look over your notes to get a comprehensive view of the points and their relationships. Check your memory of the material by reciting major subpoints listed under it. This kind of review will confirm what you do know, while highlighting what you still need to study for better recall. Do this kind of review-recitation at spaced intervals, for instance, shortly after reading, then a week later, and again briefly before an exam. Reinforced learning has a better chance of helping you weather the storm of exams.