

Reading Strategy: SQ3R

SQ3R is a strategy designed to help you become a more active reader with stronger retention of material. First introduced by educational philosopher Francis Robinson in 1946, this method guides readers through five steps for longer-lasting, more meaningful reading comprehension:

Survey (S)
Question (Q)
Read (R1)
Recite (R2)
Review (R3)

Let's look at these steps in more detail below.

S **Survey:** Briefly skim the chapter or unit to get a general sense of what it's about, focusing on features like headings and sub-headings, figures, tables, charts, key terms, intros/summaries, and similar features.

Q **Question:** Based on the headings of each section, develop questions that you think the section will answer. Then, try to answer those questions as you read. Example: if a section heading is Earthquakes, you might form questions like, "What is the scientific definition of an earthquake?" or "How do scientists track earthquakes?"

R1 **Read:** Read each section carefully & break your reading time into manageable chunks, rather than skimming multiple chapters or the whole text in one sitting. As you read, jot down answers in your own words to your questions from the previous stage.

R2 **Recite:** After each section, stop and try to answer (out loud or in writing) your questions from memory. If you struggle with an answer, look back at the text for support; try not to move on to the next section until you can recite the answers from the previous one.

R3 **Review:** Once you've finished the entire chapter/unit, look over your questions again and see if you can still answer them. Use this "bigger picture" step to identify gaps in your knowledge and locate where to fill in those gaps from the text. Tip: do this after each study session to minimize cramming on the day before a test!

Sources:

[Virginia Tech Cook Counseling Center](#)

[Northern Arizona University](#)