



EFFECTIVE READING

SQ3R

Survey

Question

Read

Recall

Review

Survey

Skim read and look for signposts.

Signposts in a book chapter or journal article might include:

- The abstract and/or introduction;
- The conclusion or summary;
- Subheadings (usually in **bold** or *italic*)
- If there are no subheadings, look for topic sentences in paragraphs (often the first sentence.)

Signposts in a book might include:

- The preface and/or introduction;
- The table of contents;
- The index (look for key words from lectures or essay topics);
- Charts, tables, figures and photographs and their captions.

Question

Samples of general questions:

- Why am I reading this text?
- Where do I expect to find the information I need?
- Which parts interest me?
- Which parts do I expect will be different?

Ways to generate specific questions include:

- Using essay or assignment questions;
- Paying attention to questions the author generates (you may have come across these in your survey of the text);
- Looking for definitions,

- Rephrasing titles, chapter headings and subheadings as questions by adding question words – who, what, where, when, why and how – or even “so what?”
- Write all your questions down before you move on to the next stage.

Read

Read the text at your own speed, pausing to think when a concept is difficult or when you recognise the answers to one of your questions.

It's best not to take notes at this stage – concentrate on reading and thinking. If you must take notes, use key words – don't copy out screeds of text.

Recall

This is where the note taking begins. Close the book and, using your own words, try to answer the questions you posed earlier, or, if none of your questions were answered, try to recall the MAIN POINTS of what you have just read. You can do this in writing, of course, but recitation – saying it out loud or talking it over with a fellow student – is also effective.

When to pause from reading and start recalling depends on the difficulty of the text. Very difficult reading or material that is entirely new to you may require a recall session after every paragraph.

Review

- Go back to the text to check whether your recall was accurate and complete:
- Add to or correct your notes as necessary;
- Do this as many times as you need to, to recall and understand the relevant information.



Related resources:
Effective Listening
Note Taking Tips

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Previewing Text

This is another activity you can do before you start reading:

