

Effective Reading Strategies

There are many different approaches to help students engage in the reading process and be able to recall the most important points. While the following list isn't exhaustive, consider these strategies as you fine tune your own approach. If you have questions or want to discuss these methods in greater details, schedule an appointment to meet with a professional student success coach or peer academic coach in the Student Success Center.

What should you read?

- Lecture notes
- Textbook or supplemental readings your professor assigns

Where should you read?

- A distraction-free location
- Somewhere comfortable but not too comfortable (your bed isn't a good idea)

When should you read?

- During the day when you are alert and attentive
- Read for 30 to 45 minutes and then take a 10 minute break
- Every day

How do you retain what you read?

- Create a study group to generate discussion
- Read aloud
- Take notes as you read
- Skim first then do a full read

SQRRR or SQ3R -

This strategy has been around since 1946 when Francis P. Robinson developed and published it in his textbook *Effective Study*.

•**Survey:** Preview the chapter by reading the introduction, headings, illustrations, and summary.

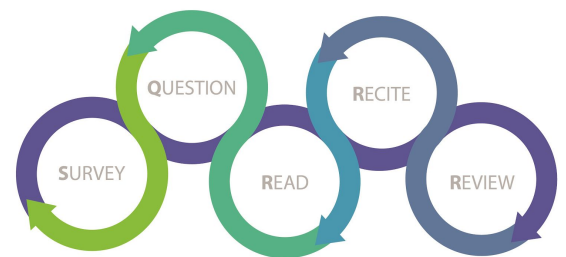
•**Question:** Turn each heading into a question.

•**Read:** Find the answer to your questions, but read only from one heading/ question to the next heading.

•**Recite:** Say the question aloud to yourself and mentally answer the question in your own words.

•**Review-** Go over the questions and answers you developed.

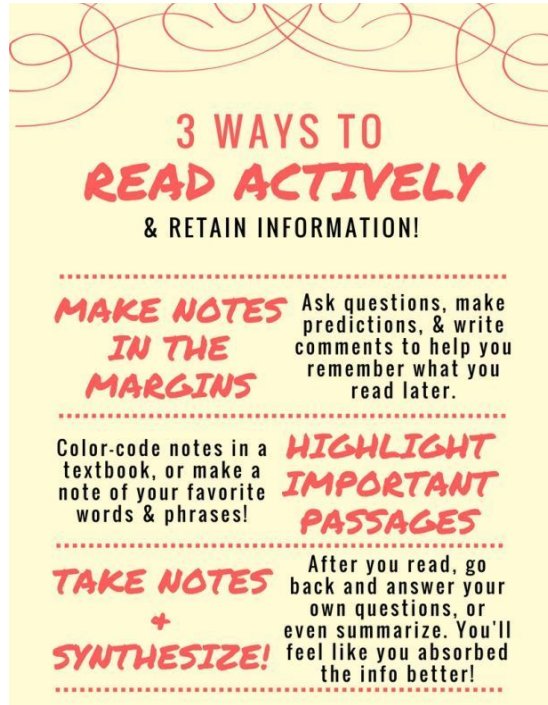
SQ3R Method



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Additional Strategies -



PARROT: This strategy was developed at the University of South Florida by Barbara McLay. It integrates steps from the traditional SQ3R but is more simplified. It includes:

- **P**review
- **A**sk and activate
- **R**ead
- **R**ecite
- **O**rganize
- **T**est

The PRR Method: This three step process was designed to make your reading more effective and efficient through **P**reviewing, **R**eadng actively, and **R**ecalling immediately.

Memory Tricks

In addition to reading strategies, consider these mnemonic devices or memory tricks. These help you remember factual information like names, dates, formulas, or other information that requires rote memorization. Some sample mnemonic devices include:

Rhymes

"In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue."

"Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November..."

Creative Sentences

"**M**y **v**ery **e**ager **m**other **j**ust **s**erved **u**s **n**ine **p**otatoes."
(the planets in order from the sun)

Acronyms

NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)

ROY G BIV (the colors of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet)

Used and adapted with permission from: Developing Effective Study Habits. (2002). S.O.A.R. Program, Maryland Community College. Retrieved from www2.gcc.edu/arc/docs/StudyTips1.pdf



How to Analyze a Reading

Exactly what does it mean to analyze something that I read?

College assignments often ask you to “analyze,” “infer,” or “interpret” an article or other reading. This is called “critical thinking.” Understanding exactly what these terms mean can help you as you plan a paper or a class presentation. Next time you’re asked to analyze a reading, look over these definitions and use them to plan out your response.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Evaluate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When <u>evaluating</u>, you decide whether something is good, bad, accurate, misleading, worth buying, worth seeing, and so on. When you see a movie, and you tell someone else that it’s good, great, or lousy, you are giving your <u>evaluation</u> of that movie. You often add the reason why you did or didn’t like it - the plot was funny, there was too much violence, you liked the characters, and so forth. In the same way, when you <u>evaluate</u> something you read, you <u>give your opinion</u> of its value. You should be able to point to a reason why you have that opinion- for example, the writer was logical (or illogical), the story was interesting (or boring), the point made was important (or not important). Be prepared to point out your reason for your opinion.
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Infer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When <u>inferring</u>, you pick up meaning that is not specifically stated or written out. For instance, if you read: “This dog that I am taking care of is big, smelly, dirty, and noisy, and has chewed up my best shoes,” then you can <u>infer</u> that the writer does not like taking care of the dog, even though this is not specifically written. “<u>Inferring</u>” means about the same as “<u>reading between the lines.</u>”
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Interpret</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When <u>interpreting</u>, you express – in your own words – the meaning of something you’ve just read. You might <u>interpret</u> a very long poem, for example, by stating in a few short sentences your understanding of what the poem means or says. According to your own personality, you can make your interpretations very short and concise or very long and creative. It’s your own personal interpretation. Be prepared, however, to be able to point to some words or phrases that influenced you to form your particular interpretation.

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SQ3R Worksheet for Textbook Chapter

Survey. Read the title of the chapter, each boldface section heading, the introduction and summary, and look at any illustrations.

1. What is the chapter about? _____

2. What major topics are included? _____

Question 1. Turn the first section heading into a question: _____

Read. Read the material following the first section heading, looking for the answer to your question. **Recite.** Reread the heading and recall the question you asked. Briefly answer this question **in your own words** without looking at the section.

Now check to see if your answer makes sense.

Question 2. Turn the second section heading into a question: _____

Read. Read the material following the second section heading, looking for the answer to your question. **Recite.** Briefly answer the question in your own words:

Continue using the question, read, and recite steps on a separate paper until you have finished each section of the chapter. Then complete the review step.

Review. Look over the whole chapter by rereading the section headings. Summarize the chapter's main points in your own words.

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