



# The SQ4R Method Tip Sheet

## Overview

The SQ4R method is a strategy for reading and understanding textbooks, articles, or other written materials. SQ4R stands for survey, question, read, recite, relate, review.

## Survey

- Survey the chapter to get a sense of what the reading is about.
- Look at chapter and section titles.
- Look at highlighted words and words in margins.
- Look at the pictures and consider what the captions discuss.
- Look quickly over charts and graphs.
- Summarize what you've noticed to get a sense of what the reading is about.

## Question

Make a list of questions to focus your reading. It is helpful to write these questions out so that you can refer to them during your reading.

- Turn chapter and section titles into questions.
- Read the questions at the end of the chapter and / or section.
- Can you answer any of the questions already?
- Did your instructor cover this information in lecture or lab?
- What do you already know about the subject matter?

## Read

Read the text to answer the questions you created in the previous step. In order to find relevant material:

- Pay attention to captions and section summaries.
- Pay attention to bold, underlined, and italicized words and phrases.
- Stop and reread if not clear.
- Slow down if you need to and remember quality vs. quantity.

## Recite

Sometimes referred to as Recall, the goal here is to test and reinforce your understanding of the material by trying to recite it from memory using your questions as prompts.

- Ask your questions aloud. Answer those questions you can without looking to the text.
- If you need to, revisit the text to answer those questions you found difficult.
- Recite key terms and concepts.
- How would you put the information in your own words?

## Relate

Relate the material to other information with which you are familiar to reinforce and deepen your understanding of the material. This process is ongoing, so take a little time each day to review your notes and readings for each class.

- Try to link new information to concepts or previous information with which you are familiar.
- How does the new concept relate to the concepts you already know?
- How does the reading relate to your lecture notes? What are discrepancies?
- Aim to relate the information to information from the course, your field of study, and your own experiences.

## Review

To help build your long-term memory of new content, make time for ongoing review. This may take place immediately after you complete the reading, a few days after completing the reading, or briefly in the following weeks.

- Read the text to answer the questions you came up with.
- Review is an on-going process that helps build long-term memory of the material.
- When finished reading, go back over the chapter and your notes / questions one final time.
- Review is ongoing, so take a little time each day to go over your notes and readings for each class.