

Minimise Study Time Maximise Scores



VCE Exam/Study Tip 7: SQ4R: A Powerful Reading Technique

The SQ4R method is an effective strategy for academic and textbook reading and include 6 steps:

- Survey
- Question
- Read
- Recite
- Relate
- Review



The technique has been designed to maximise comprehension and to learn materials as thoroughly and as quickly as possible.

Survey

- Get a general picture of the material before you start to read. Surveying helps to form a cognitive map of what you'll be reading and provides a framework for organising the material.
- Read the headings, subheadings, table of contents, picture captions, tables and figures.
- Read the introductory and concluding paragraphs in each section.
- Take note of any bold, capitalised or italicised text.
- Read the chapter summary.

Question

- Turn headings, subheadings and titles into questions. For example, if you're reading part of a chapter called "Functions of the Spinal Cord," ask yourself, "What are the functions of the spinal cord?"
- Ask yourself the following questions:

What is the reading about?

What is the purpose of this text?

What are the key points, arguments, supporting evidence or examples provided?

What do I already know about this topic?

What do I want to find out?

- Ask “who, which, why, what, when, where and how” questions at each stage of your reading.
- Identify what you don’t know.
- Predict the questions that may appear in the exams.

Read

- Read the chapter, paragraph by paragraph.
- Read and re-read until you can answer the question: “What did the author say in this paragraph?”
- Try to answer your questions as you read.
- Re-read important sections.
- Reduce your reading speed when dealing with difficult passages.
- Underline or circle important information.

Recite

- Read a section out loud and then rephrase what you have read in your own words, out loud.
- Summarise important concepts in writing – in your own words.

Relate

- It’s easier to remember things that are personally meaningful. Therefore, try to relate the material to personal experience.

Does this apply to any experiences you’ve had or read about before?

- 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? Does it relate? Why?

How does this reading connect to your other readings?

How does the reading relate to your notes? Where are the discrepancies?

- Make up test questions that connect the sections and work through questions that enable you to apply your readings.

Review

- Briefly look back over the material, recite and test yourself. What have you missed or got wrong?
- Try drawing a mind map to review the information.
- Reflect on the meaning and application of the major points.
- Review on a regular basis.

Regards,
TSFX