SQ3R: A Great Reading and Studying Technique

(Source: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/college-success/26666.html, retrieved Oct 21, 2011)

Improve Your Study Skills

SQ3R stands for "Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review." It is a proven technique to sharpen your study skills. In college, you'll be required to do lots of reading. You'll often have to complete reading assignments in several different books for several different courses at the same time. SQ3R helps make reading and studying purposeful and effective, so that you use your time most efficiently. Here's how this strategy works.

Survey

Let's say your assignment is to read one chapter. First, get an idea of what the chapter is about by reviewing the highlights:

- Read the title, headings and subheadings.
- Notice words that are italicized or bold.
- Look at charts, graphs, pictures, maps and other visual material.
- Read captions.
- Read the very beginning and end of the chapter.

Question

As you survey the text, ask a question for each section. Ask what, why, how, when, who and where questions as they relate to the content. Here's how you can create questions:

- Turn the title, headings or subheadings into questions.
- Rewrite the questions at the end of the chapter or after each subheading in your own words.

Write down your questions. Questions help you pay attention, understand the text better and recall the information more easily later on.

Read

Read one section of the chapter at a time, actively looking for an answer to your question for that section. Pay attention to bold and italicized text that authors use to make important points.

Be sure to review everything in the section, including tables, graphs and illustrations — these features can communicate an idea more powerfully than written text.

Recite

At the end of each section, look up from the text and in your own words recite an answer to your question for that section. Then write down your answer. Be sure to provide examples that support it.

Now repeat the Question, Read and Recite steps for each section of the chapter. First ask a question for the next section. Then read to find the answer. Finally, recite the answer in your own words and jot it down. The written questions and answers can help you study in the future.

Review

After completing the chapter, review your notes. Identify the main points by looking for the most important idea in each section. Recite, or write, a brief summary of the assignment.

Review your study notes every week to help you remember the information. When it's time to prepare for your tests, you'll find you've created an invaluable study guide.

Study Plan: Session 1

1. Read the outline for the chapter. Survey the topics for your chapter. This can be found on my website or the table of contents.
2. Read chapter objectives as shown below. The chapter objectives can also be found on the publisher's website.
3. Read the corresponding section(s).
4. Make a detailed outline of the section you just read.
5. Answer the objectives for the section shown below. Answer with as much detail as possible. Describe examples of the psychological concepts.
6. Practice learning the vocabulary. Use the electronic flashcards from the publisher's website.

Chapter outline	Chapter objectives
Memory **Encoding: Transforming Perceptions Into Memories** • **Elaborative Encoding** • **Visual Imagery Encoding** • **Organizational Encoding** • **Encoding of Survival-Related Information** Storage: Maintaining Memories over Time • Sensory Storage • Short-Term Storage and Working Memory • Long-Term Storage • **HOT SCIENCE** Sleep on it? • Memories, Neurons, and Synapses Retrieval: Bringing Memories to Mind • Retrieval Cues: Reinstating the Past • **CULTURE AND COMMUNITY** Is Language a Factor in Memory Retrieval? • Consequences of Retrieval • Separating the Components of Retrieval Multiple Forms of Memory: How the Past Returns • Explicit and Implicit Memory • Semantic and Episodic Memory Memory Failures: The Seven Sins of Memory 1. Transience 2. Absentmindedness 3. Blocking 4. Memory Misattribution • **THE REAL WORLD** Deadly Misattributions 5. Suggestibility 6. Bias 7. Persistence • Are the Seven Sins Vices or Virtues? • **WHERE DO YOU STAND?** The Mystery of Childhood Amnesia	Encoding: Transforming Perceptions into Memories 1. Provide an accurate and appropriate definition of memory, encoding, storage, and retrieval. 2. Discuss the distinctions between elaborative encoding, visual imagery encoding, organizational encoding, and encoding of survival-related information.

Study Plan: Session 2

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Study Plan: Session 3

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5. Answer the objectives for the section shown below. Answer with as much detail as possible. Describe examples of the psychological concepts.
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Study Plan: Session 4

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Study Plan: Session 5

After the entire chapter has been covered:

- Review all sections and objectives. Allocate more time where there are more exam items (the number of exam items can be found on the website)
- Take the practice quizzes from the publisher's website
- Spend about an hour reviewing the key concepts from previous chapters

Overall, you should have spent approximately 12 hours studying per chapter. If you are sleep deprived or multi-tasking, you will spend more than 12 hours studying and retaining less.