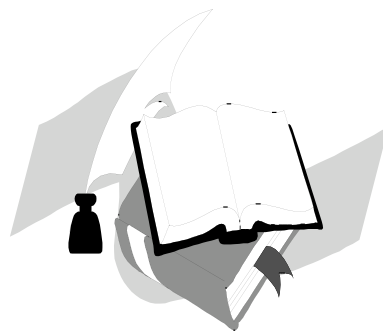
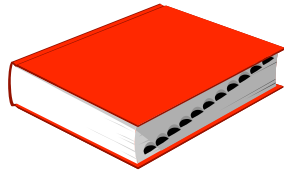


STRATEGIES FOR BETTER READING



**Mayland Community College
SOAR Program
Revised June 1998**



This module contains suggestions for students who don't like to read, who don't read or comprehend well, who love to read, and who don't think they are getting the most out of their reading. No matter what your approach to reading, you will learn methods to improve your reading and increase your comprehension. Because reading is the key to learning, becoming a better reader is the single most important thing you can do for college success. You will become a better student by applying what you learn in this module.

I. General Guidelines for Reading College Textbooks

Reading a college textbook is different from reading a novel or a magazine. The following suggestions will make the task easier and the results more rewarding.

- Buy your textbooks early and read first few chapters before the semester starts.
- Always do reading assignments before coming to class.
- Take notes from your textbook reading.
- Familiarize yourself with your textbook by scanning it from cover to cover.
- Read summaries and study guides and do quizzes in the text.
- **Read or review the text before the lecture.**

Why?

- It gives you a background for the lecture.
- You will understand the lecture better.
- You will take better notes.

II. Monitor Your Comprehension

Be aware of how you are reading and what you are reading; concentrate on what you are doing; pause frequently to reflect on what you read.

Ask yourself the following questions:

"Does it make sense? Do I understand it? What did I just read? Could I explain this to someone else?"

Think about the main ideas. Did you highlight **as** you read or **after** you identified the main ideas?

III. Textbook Reading Systems

Over the years educators have combined the elements of mastery into easy-to-remember study systems. The best known of these systems is the SQ3R Method. Many others are available and **you may find one that works better for you.** **First, try out the SQ3R Method and see what results you get.**

SQ3R Method of Reading

SURVEY ----- QUESTION ----- READ ----- RECITE ----- REVIEW

Survey:

This step takes only a few minutes. Go through the chapter quickly. Glance at the chapter title, the introduction, headings, and summary paragraphs, if any. Notice any pictures, diagrams, graphs, tables, etc. Read any bold print.

Previewing your text gives you some background about topics you may have never encountered before. You pick up general information. You know where to find information. You gain a better idea of how the information is organized and presented. It opens up a place in your brain where the new information will be stored. It saves time by reducing the amount of time it takes to read the chapter.

Another advantage is that it creates an interest in what is coming up. It motivates you to read less interesting material to get to the “good stuff.”

Question:

Before you begin reading a section, turn the heading into a question. For example, if the heading is **Basic Causes of Stress**, your question would be **"What are the basic causes of stress?"** This arouses your curiosity and increases your comprehension. It also brings to mind information you already know. The questions you ask help make important points stand out as you read. This forces you to think about what you are reading.

Read:

Read the material under the heading with the purpose of getting the answer to your question. Read with concentration. Identify the main ideas and highlight or underline them. Read sections at a time and stop to ask questions. Jot down notes and ask yourself what you just read. If you can answer your question, read on. If not, look it over again.

A good practice for more difficult reading is to do an outline of chapter in your notes. By leaving extra space you can fill in details during the class lecture. Make note of new vocabulary and write definitions in your notes.

Recite:

This step requires that you recite **out loud** the answer to the question you asked prior to reading a section of the text. Say it in your own words. If you find you cannot answer your question, go back and look for the answer, then try again. This way you will know if you have understood the material.

Besides answering your questions, look away from the book and try to state in your own words what the reading is about.

You may jot down brief notes about what you read. When you are done, go back and make an outline of the chapter.

Review:

After you have read the entire chapter, look over the notes you made to familiarize yourself with the important information. Check your memory by reciting the main points out loud. Then review the main points in your notes, making sure you understand them. Add to your notes from the text, if necessary. Always do a review of the chapter after completing your reading. Then do quick reviews **before and after** each class. Do longer, more in-depth reviews before exams.

Don't wait until exam time to review your textbook. Review once a week all the readings from that week. Be sure you can summarize the key points. Write them down to further reinforce learning.

Finally, make up test questions from what you have read. Be sure to write them down and answer them.

ADVANTAGES OF THE SQ3R METHOD

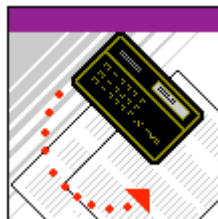
The **SQ3R Method** of reading sets the stage for interacting with your text material. As you go through the five steps you are gaining information, formulating questions, thinking about what you are reading, and trying to find answers to your questions. You are also reciting information out loud. All of these steps require the use of your **auditory, visual and kinesthetic senses**. When more senses are involved, more effective learning takes place.

One of the best advantages of the SQ3R Method is that it allows for a great deal of **repetition** of the important information in the chapter. Repetition is a key ingredient in learning.

Another advantage is that, in formulating and answering your own questions, you are preparing yourself for **test taking**. By writing questions and answers in your notes, you have developed your own study guide.

How to Read a Textbook: A Quick Review

- Know what to read by following your syllabus or list of assignments. Never fall behind, but always stay ahead in your reading.
- Divide chapters into readable chunks. Reading ten pages at a time will seem manageable compared to reading forty pages.
- Always preview the chapter before you read.
- Read titles and first paragraphs, bold print. Look at pictures, graphs, etc.
- Think of questions that pertain to the headings and prepare to find the answers.
- Read for meaning and highlight only after you have read a section and identified the main ideas.
- Jot down notes and make an outline from your reading.
- Review at regular intervals. Check your understanding by asking yourself questions and answering them out loud. Take five or ten minutes to review a chapter you just read.
- Write down possible test questions and be able to answer them.
- Review textbook readings and notes before class to be ready for the lecture.



Exercise:

Apply the SQ3R Method to one of your required reading assignments. Pick a reading that may be more difficult for you than others.

Summarize how this reading method worked or did not work for you. Jot down your experience with each of the SQ3R steps. Did you understand what you were reading? Did previewing the reading help you get more from it? Did you jot down notes on important points? If it did not work, what ideas do you have for making it work better for you?

Survey: _____

Question: _____

Read: _____

Recite: _____

Review: _____

Exercise: Read the following section applying the SQ3R Method, then answer the questions below.

WHY ARE OCEANS IMPORTANT?

As landlubbers, we tend to think of Earth in terms of land, but Earth is largely a water planet. A more accurate name for the planet would be Ocean, because oceans cover more than 70 percent of its surface.

The oceans play key roles in the survival of virtually all life on Earth. Because of their size and currents, the oceans mix and dilute many human-produced wastes flowing or dumped into them to less harmful or even harmless levels, as long as they are not overloaded. Oceans also play a major role in regulating Earth's climate by distributing solar heat through ocean currents and by evaporation as part of the global hydrologic cycle. They also participate in other important biogeochemical cycles.

By serving as a gigantic reservoir for carbon dioxide, oceans help regulate the temperature of the troposphere through the greenhouse effect. Oceans provide

habitats for about 250,000 species of marine plants and animals, which are food for many organisms, including human beings. They also serve as a source of iron, sand, gravel, phosphates, magnesium, oil, natural gas, and many other valuable resources.

Questions:

1. What is the first question to ask before you begin reading this section?

2. What three other questions might you ask as you read the section?

3. List the key words you would underline or highlight in this section:

4. Make up two test questions based on this reading:

1.

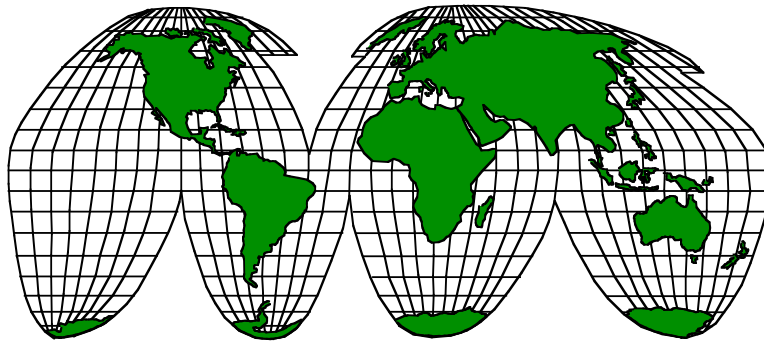
2.

5. Without looking at the section, summarize what you remember about it:

A Final Word...

*When reading is tough, you may have to read the text more than once before the meaning is clear. Use a **dictionary** whenever you read and **record new vocabulary in your notes**. Discuss what you read with other students. Try to make reading an important part of your daily life by planning some reading time everyday.*

*If textbooks are not your favorite source for reading, have something to read that interests you and use it as a reward, after you have completed your textbook reading. **The more you read, the more you will enjoy reading, and the more you will learn.***



"Reading furnishes our mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours." John Locke

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE EVALUATION FORM
ON THE NEXT PAGE.**

Module Evaluation: STRATEGIES FOR BETTER READING

Name _____ Date _____

Please answer the following questions:

1. How will the reading method described in this module change your present method of reading textbook material?

2. What further questions do you have about reading strategies after completing this module?

3. How helpful did you find this module to be? (Put an "X" above the number of your choice.)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Not Helpful | | | | | | | | | Very Helpful |

PLEASE RETURN THIS EVALUATION FORM WHEN YOU MEET WITH YOUR SOAR COUNSELOR TO REVIEW THIS MODULE.