

# The **WRITING** CENTER

**Elftmann Student  
Success Center**

## **A Guide On How To:**

### **SQ3R**

- What is SQ3R?
- Steps to SQ3R
- Effectiveness of SQ3R

Question

Survey



Read

Review

# SQ3R

## What is SQ3R?

SQ3R stands for **Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review**. SQ3R was designed by the Department of Defense for World War II draftees who needed to know a lot of detailed, technical information in a short amount of time. It continues to give students an excellent routine to use for studying the same detailed material found in technical textbooks.

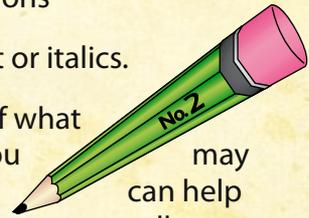
## What are the steps to SQ3R?

1. **Survey** – Page through your textbook chapter, and take note of anything visual that **stands out**:

Title headings and sub-headings

- Pictures or graphics and read the captions
- Vocabulary words written in bold print or italics.

Your purpose is to get a **mental outline** of what the reading is about and consider what you **already know** about the topic. This step “warm-up” to a long reading, and is also to prepare for a class.



may  
can help  
an excellent way

2. **Question** – Create a question from each chapter title, headings, and sub-headings using who, what, when, where, why, or how.

<b>Chapter Title:</b> <i>SQ3R</i>	Question: “What is SQ3R?”
<b>Section Title:</b> <i>Surveying the Chapter</i>	Question: “How should I survey a chapter?”
<b>Bolded Vocabulary Term:</b> <i>Hybrid</i>	Question: “What is a hybrid?”
<b>Caption from a Graph:</b>	Question: “What percentage of cars on the road today are hybrids?”

Questions can be written as part of your **notes**, and give you a **purpose for reading** since you now have answers to find. Additionally, these questions will probably look similar to the ones you'll face on the **test** later on.

3. **Read** – Read the first bold print section of the chapter.

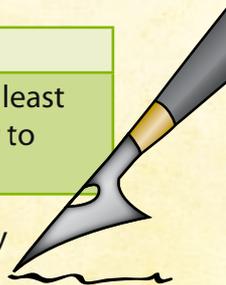
- Read until you **find the answer** the question you recreated from the heading. Write it down as part of your notes and/or highlight it in the textbook.

Question	Answer
What is a hybrid?	A vehicle that uses at least two sources of power to move.

- If you cannot find the answer to your question, try **rephrasing** your question with a different "W".
- For more complicated readings, stop after each paragraph and ask yourself "**What do I need to remember?**"

4. **Recite** – Before you begin reading the next section, put the key ideas in **your own words**. If you can't, re-read the section until you can.

- Ask yourself your question and see if you can answer it - **out loud** - without looking.
- Select **1-3 key words** that will help you remember the main ideas of the reading.
- Rework the key ideas into a **different format**, such as a diagram, table, or flash cards.
- **Reflect** on what you've read. Think about any reaction you had to the reading, what it made you think of or visualize, or if you agreed or disagreed with the ideas.



5. **Review** – After you're done reading the chapter, review your questions and your answers every two to three days.
- Over time you will develop **mastery** of the key concepts presented without trying to memorize them.
  - Research has proven that **several shorter rounds** of studying are much more effective in both the short- and long-term for students.
  - Continue to review your questions and answers until the test.

## Does SQ3R really work?

This particular strategy is commonly used by high school and college students, but it is one that needs to become a **habit** to be truly effective. Technical students need a **thorough understanding** of the complex material offered by their textbooks; investing in the routine of SQ3R will allow you to gain that understanding.

## References

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- Wright, Ron. (n.d.). The sq3r method. Retrieved from <http://www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/wrightr/other/sq3r.html>

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