

## Try Making Selective Use Of Strategies

Chose the parts of the PQ3R strategy which are most applicable to your immediate reading purpose. For example, when you are new to the material you are reading, you may find it more beneficial to take the focus off the questioning stage and focus more on the previewing stage to give yourself a stronger sense of the contents of the text. If your purpose is to review for an exam, implementing the questioning stage of the strategy may provide you with a quick way to quiz yourself.

## Monitor Your Progress

As you read, monitor your comprehension of the text, and try to make note of your difficulties or things you need clarify.

## Create Alternative Strategies

If your reading material is not divided into sections and does not have headings, it may be helpful if you try to write your own headings as you proceed through the reading so that you may return to review the reading later in an organized fashion. Also, reading a general introduction, or background on the subject from another book or from class may be a useful start to your reading.

## Focus On Staying Motivated

Remember that implementing a reading strategy is not going to provide a quick fix, it is going to take practice but is going to benefit you immensely in the long run. Don't get discouraged!

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## **Become An Active Reader**

If you've ever found yourself moving your eyes over the words of the text but found your thoughts were off somewhere else, you'll know how much time re-reading long passages of text consumes. Reading more actively (that is, thoughtfully) can make reading more effective and efficient. Read with the aim of understanding and relating the ideas of the text to your existing knowledge, previous readings, lecture material, and the goals of the course. As you read, summarize main ideas, interpret the themes of the reading, think critically, and try to state the material in your own words. It isn't necessary to memorize everything written in the text. Instead, focus on reading selectively, extracting information that is relevant to your course and your purpose as a reader.

### **The PQ3R Strategy**

Try the PQ3R method (Preview, Question, Read, Recite and Review) the next time you read. Key learning steps are comprised in this strategy: surveying/previewing for an overview, questioning, summarizing, recording ideas in key word form, reciting ideas, reflecting about what was read, reviewing learning regularly. The benefits include reduced reading and studying time, greater concentration and focus while you read, and improved recall of key information.

## **Begin by Previewing The Material**

"Preview" before you begin reading. This step will allow you to get an overview of the material you are about to read. You can quickly determine what information will be covered and the way in which it is laid out by examining the chapter and section titles, headings and subheadings, as well as by reading introductions, conclusions and chapter summaries. You may also want to take note of any bold or italic type, charts, diagrams, or photographs. Skim or scan these structural features of your text to establish general awareness about the contents of a specific reading, and to help you focus in on the key information.

### **Ask Yourself Questions**

After surveying/previewing the text, develop a series of guiding questions and apply them to what you read. Reading is a thinking activity. Direct your thinking by formulating and applying fact questions, analytical questions, and critical questions. Typical initial questions begin with "who, what, where, when, why and how." Once you are more advanced, you can begin questions with, "how does x relate to y, what are the pros and cons of, why is this valid or invalid, etc..."

Questioning also assists you in concentrating and evaluating the depth of your own understanding as you go along, and provides a short cut to reviewing later on. As well, when you read, you are now "mining the reading" for answers to your questions. This helps you zero in on what's important and improves your focus and reading speed.

## **Make Summary Notes**

Highlight/make notes about the main ideas of the text in the margin as you go. Usually there is one main idea per paragraph, or group of paragraphs; the remainder of the material is supporting details/arguments that elaborate on the central concepts. Your marginal notes may also refer to details, questions, disputes, or ideas that require clarification. Notes are meant to abstract ideas from longer stretches of text. Creating summary notes after each major section, or at the conclusion of your reading, will help you to consolidate the learning you have done while reading. Reviewing and reflecting on the notes you take can help you continue to think about the ideas you have read about.

### **Practice Reciting and Reviewing**

Review your summary notes, highlights, and questions frequently. Compare this information to your lecture notes, and make note of any differences emphasized in the readings that are not mentioned in class. By writing out or verbally reciting the material you have read, you provide yourself with a way to recall that information more readily and it requires you to think through what you have read. By looking over your reading notes or your book again at the end of each week, you will remember much more information than if you were to wait until exam time before you review.