

## **STEP 5 – REVIEW**

This is not just glancing over the material again, but a later repeat of the question and recite steps. Come back to the chapter the next day or next week and see how much of it you can restate in your own words. Now is the time to fill in the weak spots.

If you spend one hour today studying, by next month you would be lucky to retain 15-20% of the material. BUT, if you spend 30 minutes today, then review for 15 minutes tomorrow, 10 minutes next week, and 5 minutes next month, you may retain 80-90% of what you first learned with the same hour (total) of effort!

In conclusion, there are three primary things to keep in mind about study:

1. Divide any study time you have between reading and reciting. At least half of your time should be spent reciting what you have learned.
2. A systematic plan of study gives the best return on your time investment. Rather than grabbing chunks of time here and there for studying, plan some time for study and review.
3. This system is simpler than it looks, so give it a chance. Don't let yourself skip any steps. Previous students have discovered that by using more effective study techniques they have improved their grades and had more free time than ever before.

# **READING FOR COMPREHENSION**

*from the  
Effective Study Series*

*provided by*  
**GCSU Counseling Services**

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There are a variety of systems available for **reading textbooks**, but all are organized in basically the same way and are designed to accomplish the same ends. This brochure is a brief summary of the **SQ3R system (Survey, Question, Read, recite, Review)**.

Before you begin, the key to any study system is simply this: you remember more when you are actively involved and understand the content. The SQ3R method is designed to keep you involved and increase understanding.

### **STEP 1 – SURVEY**

Before you begin reading, take just a few minutes for a preliminary survey of the chapter or section of your assignment. The goal of this step is simply to get an overall picture of the nature of the material and how it is organized. If you're not accustomed to doing this, you will be amazed at how clear the material can become even before you start reading. Some authors make this step easy by providing chapter outlines, descriptive headings, key sentences, or chapter summaries. If so, read through these as your first step. The outlines, headings, and sentences will show you how the material is organized, and the summaries will tell you what the author considers to be most important in the chapter. If you understand this first, it will be much easier to go back and fill in the details.

Even if your authors don't make it easy, don't skip this step. Make your own survey by reading the table of contents, or if necessary, simply quickly scanning the entire chapter to get a rough idea of what it is all about.

### **STEP 2 – QUESTION**

After completing your survey, formulate questions about the material. Again, some authors provide questions either at the beginning or at the end of each chapter. If so, read and be prepared to answer them after reading the material. If questions are not provided, make up your own. If the topic is learning, some of your questions might be: "What is learning?" "How do we learn?" "What processes are involved in learning?" "Are

there different rates of learning?" As you grow more skilled in the art of questioning, you may find more and more of your questions appearing on examinations!

### **STEP 3 – READ**

Now and only now are you ready to begin the reading assignment. As you read, try answering the questions that you formulated in the previous step. Doing so gives your reading purpose and direction and increases your attention and concentration.

### **STEP 4 – RECITE**

After reading a section, actually recite or restate the important ideas from it – preferably aloud. If you are in a public place and don't want to be seen talking to yourself, then put down the book and silently do your recitation. If you can't put your new-found knowledge into your own words, you don't really understand it! Don't allow yourself to cheat on this step! If you can't restate the important points, go back and re-read that section until you can.

At first, you may want to do this for each paragraph. Then as you get better at it, use a sub-topic section, then a whole section, eventually maybe a whole chapter, but don't stop until you can put the material into your own words.

Research has demonstrated that for most effective learning, at least one-half of your study time should be spent on questioning and reciting. These steps require your active participation. You can't be daydreaming while you are reciting what you have learned.



(See back for Step 5)