



A Strategy For Reading Textbooks

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SQRW is a four-step strategy for reading and taking notes from chapters in a textbook. Each letter stands for one step in the strategy (see below). Using SQRW will help you to understand what you read and to prepare a written record of what you learned. The written record will be valuable when you have to participate in a class discussion and again when you study for a test.

Survey

Surveying brings to mind what you already know about the topic of a chapter and prepares you for learning additional information. First, read the title, introduction, headings, and summary or conclusion for the chapter. Also, examine all visuals such as pictures, tables, maps, and/or graphs and read the caption that goes with each. By surveying a chapter, you will quickly become aware of what the chapter is about.

Question

Have questions in your mind as you read. Questions give you a purpose for reading and help you stay focused on the reading assignment. Form questions by changing each chapter heading into a question. Use the words *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, or *how* to form questions. For example, a chapter about how science improves lives, entitled "Uses of Electricity," might be changed to form the question "What are some uses of electricity?" If a heading is stated as a question, use that question. When a heading contains more than one idea, form a question for each idea. There is no need to form questions for the introduction, summary or conclusion.

Read

Read the information following each heading in order to find the answer to each question you have formed. As you do this, you may decide you need to change a question or turn it into several questions. Stay focused and flexible so you can gather as much information as you need to answer each question.

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Write

Write each question and its answer in your notebook. Re-read each of your written answers to be sure each answer is legible and contains all important information needed to answer the question.

As you practice using **SQRW**, you will find you learn more and have good study notes to help prepare you for class participation and tests.

HINT:

After you have **Surveyed** the entire chapter, complete the **Question, Read,** and **Write** steps for the first heading. Continue to use this strategy for each of the remaining headings in the chapter.