

Time Management Strategies for Reading

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about several strategies that will help you better manage your time when completing academic reading assignments. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. **Scanning**
2. **Skimming**
3. **SQ3R**

1. Scanning

The technique of **scanning** is a good one to use if you want to get an overview of the text you are reading as a whole— its shape, the focus of each section, the topics or key issues that are dealt with, and so on. In order to scan a piece of text, you should identify key words and phrases which give you clues about its focus.

Scanning is also used to find a particular piece of information or the answer to a specific question. Run your eyes over the text, looking for the piece of information you need.

➞ **EXAMPLE** If you are looking for a name, you would note capital letters. For a date, you would look for numbers. Vocabulary words may be bolded or italicized.

When you scan for information, you read only what is needed, so don't worry if you notice words or phrases that you don't understand.



TERM TO KNOW

Scanning

A reading strategy used to identify the focus of a text and locate specific pieces of information by looking for key words or phrases.

2. Skimming

Skimming is used to quickly gather the most important information, or "gist." This strategy helps you cover the text to get some of the main ideas and a general overview of the material. It is what you do first when reading a chapter assignment. You don't read for details at this point.

Both scanning and skimming help you to understand the big picture of what you're reading, but scanning is more focused on finding particular information while skimming is broader in scope.

To skim a text, follow these steps.



STEP BY STEP

1. Read the first paragraph of the text line by line.
2. Next, read all the bold print headings, starting at the beginning.
3. Read the first sentence of every paragraph.
4. Study any pictures, graphs, charts, and maps.
5. Finally, read the last paragraph of the text.

While you skim, it's also wise to write down the main ideas and develop a chapter outline.



TERM TO KNOW

Skimming

A reading strategy used to quickly gather the most important ideas from a text by focusing on topic sentences, headings, and visuals.

3. SQ3R

SQ3R is a useful technique for understanding written information, as it helps you to create a good mental framework of a subject, into which you can fit the right facts. It also helps you to set study goals and prompts you to use review techniques that will activate your memory.

The acronym SQ3R stands for the five sequential techniques you should use to read a book:

1. **S**urvey
2. **Q**uestion
3. **R**ead
4. **R**ecite
5. **R**evue

The chart below describes how to approach each of these phases.

Phase	Description
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Survey (S)	Scan the entire assignment to get an overview of the material. Read the headings to see the major points. Read the introductory paragraphs and the summary at the end of the chapter. Don't forget to look at the tables, pictures, etc. Remember, you are scanning the material and not actually reading every sentence.
Question (Q)	Form questions that can be answered during the reading of the material. This will give a purpose to your reading. You can take a heading and turn it into a question. For example, a heading in a chapter about cell division in a biology text could be made into a question by turning the title around: "How does cell division occur?" or "How many steps are involved in cell division?"
Read (R)	Now you read the material trying to find answers to your questions. This is a careful reading, line by line. You may want to take notes or make flashcards.
Recite (R)	As you read, look away from your book and notes and try to answer your questions. This checks your learning and helps put that information in your memory.
Review (R)	To check your memory, scan portions of the material or your notes to verify your answers. Review the material and note the main points under each heading. This review step helps you retain the material.



TERM TO KNOW

SQ3R

Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review; a technique that combines aspects of multiple reading strategies into a process for understanding written information.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that there are three main strategies that you can use to manage your reading time wisely. **Scanning** helps you understand the focus of a text as well as find specific pieces of information that you may be looking for. **Skimming** helps you gain a broad overview of a text and discover the main ideas. Finally, **SQ3R**, which stands for Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review, helps you break down and better understand a text's main concepts.

Best of luck in your learning!

Source: This content has been adapted from Lumen Learning's "Reading Strategies" tutorial.



TERMS TO KNOW

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Scanning

A reading strategy used to identify the focus of a text and locate specific pieces of information by looking for key words or phrases.

Skimming

A reading strategy used to quickly gather the most important ideas from a text by focusing on topic sentences, headings, and visuals.