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**Tips for Improving Your Reading Retention**

There are a variety of techniques students can use to help identify important information from what they read and commit that information to memory.

**1) Prepare your reading area:**

* Read where there are few distractions (library, quiet place at home).
* Try to read in the same place.
* Make sure the area is well-lit and ventilated.
* Sit comfortably in an upright position.
* Avoid music and T.V.
* Know why you are reading – go in with a plan. Ex: "read chapter 1" or "learn about volcanoes".

**2) Get to know your textbook:**

* Examine the title page, introduction, preface, and table of contents.
* Familiarize yourself with the glossary, appendixes, and other material at the end of the book.
* Be familiar with study guides, review questions, exercises, activities, and other aids.
* Examine chapter headings, sectional headings, and margin guides.
* Look at all charts, maps, and tables.

**3) Remember more of what you have read:**

* Be an active reader, use the SQ5R method (explained on back of page)
* Read in 30 minute chunks and take breaks.
* Know why you are reading, what is the purpose? What is the main idea?
* Make connections; relate new material to material already learned.
* Make notes, mind maps, and pictures.

**4) Reading difficult theory-based material:**

* Read out loud, sometimes hearing the words can help them make sense.
* Ask someone to explain it to you, or explain it to someone else.
* Read slowly, you may also have to re-read sections.
* Elaborate on what you have read. Do something with the material you just read. (ie. Discuss with others, write it down, or reflect on how you feel about it).​

**SQ5R**

-Survey, Question, Read, Record, Recite, Review, Reflect-

The SQ5R study method enables you to actively study textbooks and readings.This method can help you process information actively which in turn leads to higher memory and mastery of the material. The **SQ5R** technique will also drastically improve your reading speed. **SQ5R** is an excellent technique to use with textbooks that provide a lot of information and require you to learn material in depth.

**SURVEY** - ***Before You Read:*** Read the introduction and summary (if given). Skim through the chapter paying attention to topic headings, bold-faced words, pictures, charts, margin guides, and graphs. These can give you an idea of the general structure and content before you begin reading.

**QUESTION** – ***While You Read:*** Set a purpose for your reading by developing questions about the material. Use the topic and heading information you gathered in the survey step to create questions to be answered. Begin asking yourself who, what, where, when, why, and how questions. Keep your questions general, covering main points and ideas.

**READ** - Break the material into sections that will take about 30 minutes to read (often the chapter is already divided into sections which will work just fine). Read the material section by section. Look for answers to your questions as well as key concepts, and supporting details.

**RECORD** – ***After You Read:*** After each section, think about the material you have just read and answer the questions you have asked. Go back and underline key concepts and take notes. This can be done on a separate sheet of paper, on note cards, in the margins of the textbook, or any way that works well for you. (Do this after each section.)

**RECITE** – ***After You Read:*** Next, look away from the material and try to recite the key information and ideas. Put the material in your own words and go back and re-read until you feel comfortable with it. This may be frustrating at first, but it will lead to better understanding and save you review time in the long run. (Do this after each section.)

**REVIEW** – ***An Ongoing Process:*** This should be done daily (schedule a time for this each day). After completing the entire chapter, scan back over the reading and review the information aloud or in your head. Try to recall the main points and notice how the ideas are linked. Talk about the material with a classmate if possible. Check your memory by quizzing yourself.

**REFLECT – *An Ongoing Process:*** Consider and reflect on what you have just learned. Try and connect new ideas to older ones, this process will help you start to form a bigger picture. Taking a few minutes to consider what you have just learned can go a long way in helping you understand and remember the content.