



# IIT Madras

## BSc Degree

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**English – I (Basic English)**  
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**SQ3R and PQRST method**

Welcome, today we are looking at two reading methods one called SQ3R and the other called PQRST, these are acronyms for specific reading methods, both of which are basically going to serve the purpose of helping us really gain meaningfully from whatever reading we engage with so that it is most effective and most beneficial towards growing our knowledge base.

Not only that, over a period of time, any such method regularly and consistently practiced is certainly going to become a habit, a healthy pattern by which, in the long run, each time we approach a text, each time we read a text automatically we are tuning in to a far more effective way and automatically we are benefiting and impacted deeper from that engagement of reading.

So, let us begin with SQ3R, SQ3R really is 5 things the S, the Q and the 3 R's. This is a method that recommends survey, question, read, recite and review, this method was introduced by Francis P. Robinson an American educationalist philosopher, in his book called effective study that came out in 1946. Now, let us go a little deeper into each of these elements of SQ and the 3 R's, survey question, read, recite and review.

Starting with survey, what do we imply by survey when it comes to reading of a text? What do we usually understand by the word survey? A survey is a process broadly, where something is overall scanned, and certain elements and features are identified for the purpose of the study. If we were to consider loosely that definition of survey, what we really are doing, when we survey is we are overall getting a sense of the entire text, a sense of what are all the elements and the features of this particular text, what all does it offer me as a reader. And thus, it is a way of preparing oneself to better receive that particular text.

For example, let us say your friends have asked you to join to watch a movie. Now, if you know that it is a horror film or it is a period film about a historical conflict or it is a romantic film, there is a certain mind space that you prepare yourself and orient yourself to better receive that experience of that film.

Of course, in a film, we might enjoy a surprise where we completely did not expect having said that, when we know that this is what I am expecting as I go into the theatre, I am far

more prepared for that particular kind of an experience, in a very similar way this survey and the purpose of the survey is to prepare you to receive that kind of material in that particular focus area, and also to become aware of the various elements that are being employed.

So, taking the film analogy forward, let us say you happen to know who the director is and you have already seen other films by that particular director, you know his or her style or you know the writer of the film, you know the production house which is making it whatever, you know different kinds of information that help you steer into different elements that help you steer into the experience of watching the film, in a very similar way, a survey can serve all of these purposes.

So, the survey includes starting right from the title. What is it telling us, about the Author, about the text, perhaps about the approach of the text? About what areas the text might look at, how expensive or how brief it is going to be, what sense does it give you? So, survey includes looking at the title, it also includes reading the introduction, the foreword, and any other notes in the start, some reviews given which will all help you put together and make better sense of the chapters, of the sequencing of the chapters, of the focus areas of the chapters, all of which is going to just prepare you better for the reading experience, the introduction, the foreword, other materials about the text.

Prepare yourself to also look out with all earnestness for the textual indicators apart from the title of the book, the title of the chapters, the headings and subheadings within chapters, the various illustrations that are there to support your understanding, which could be maps, diagrams, flowcharts, sketches, photographs, what are all those available to aid your understanding. And further, what are the textual support and aids like footnotes, something in italics, something in asterix, and a little explanation outside a commentary, all of these include what we call the survey.

It is like getting a general sense of your map, the map of the terrain that you are actually going to walk into or travel through, the survey of the title, the introduction, the forward, the chapter headings, the subheadings, other illustrations, like maps, diagrams, flowcharts, sketches, photographs, and other teaching aid texts such as the footnotes, italics, some commentary, bibliography and other support.

From the survey, we move to the question. How different is pouring water on a stone and pouring water on a piece of sponge? The water on the stone flows away, while the one on the

sponge is absorbed by the sponge. A curious mind is a learning mind and that mind will soak in information far more naturally and easily, one good way to switch into the curious mode to switch into a learner mode is to question.

So, every chapter title, every little heading and subheading, see how you can convert those into questions, see what are the questions and curiosities that are coming up for you when you read that information, because the more you go with a mind of curiosity and a sense of learning, the more your mind is tuned and open to reception and absorption of information.

We now move to the first R of the 3 R's. The first one is read, chunked down your material into sections and read it part by part. As you read each part, each little chunk see if you can fill up all the answers to the questions that are coming to your mind, see what is getting filled up for you apart from the answers to the questions in your mind. So, the first is to read in sections in smaller chewable bite double handleable chunks, read.

The second R is Recite, it really is related to recall. So as soon as you finish a chunk a section, see if you are able to answer all of the questions, recall them, recite them back, if you are not able to go back to the text, verify for yourself, and then recite it. Do not go further ahead without having done this completely, try and recite, try and recall, if you are successful move ahead if not, go back check, verify, make sure you are able to recall, you are training your mind to concentrate and to store the information. Also, you are better prepared to read what comes ahead, because that is how the author has written the text assuming that you would have read this far understood all of it and now you can read the next part and you can remember it and read better.

So, the next, the second R is the recite. Coming to the last R which is review. Review, so what is review? In common parlance review would be when something is over, something is completed, you look back at the whole of it, a film review, a book review, a song review, reviews given for a hotel, for the dinner, the meal you had there in a similar way, do a review for the entire chapter.

So you are quickly going to look back look at all the questions, see how many of them you have been able to recall an answer, get a general sense of the whole picture of that entire chapter for you of your understanding and comprehension of that chapter, that really is the review process, looking at all the questions and seeing which of those you are able to answer which of those you are able to remember and how well.

And as is the case with recite, if you are able to answer great, and if you are not, just go back, look back, verify, ensure that you are able to refresh your memory, restore in your memory and then go forward. So, quickly summarizing SQ3R survey, quickly survey the entire terrain before you enter it, the titling, the author notes, introduction, foreword, any other material about the text, all of which gives you a sense of how the text proceeds.

Also keep in mind the visual illustration support that you are getting, whether it is flowcharts or diagrams, photographs, any other pictorial representation. Then be very aware and focus on the headings, the subheadings and textual aids and support like they are italics, footnotes, some explanation, bibliography, anything that is going to come back for referencing and be of value.

Next question, look at the headings and see what are the questions that come to you, what are the questions existing there as well, focus on those, these helps you go with the mind of a learner, a curious mind and open mind. Then come to 3 R's, read chunk down, read sections, read with the intent of focusing on what exactly is the concept of the key idea here being addressed, 1 or 2 or 3. Then recite where you are going to actually see if you can answer the questions that have come up and wherever you can great, wherever you cannot go back and ensure that you are able to before you move ahead further into the next section.

Review the process which comes at the end of an entire chapter completion of an entire chapter. So, you look back at the whole chapter at all the questions and all the answers, see which of those have gotten answered which you are able to recollect, which you are not able to recollect, refresh your memory if required by going back, and then when all of that when that entire chapter makes sense to you is registered well in your mind, then choose to go ahead. This is the SQ3ER reading method.

We now move on to the PQRST reading method. The PQRST method, again is an acronym preview, question, read, state or self-recite and test. These are 5 steps which help read in an organised manner and research has shown that the retention of information is also stronger and deeper, when PQRST reading method is employed by a reader. So, let us look quickly at this method PQRST of the 5 elements, the first and the last are relevant for the entire chapter itself and the middle 3 for the specific sections.

Preview again, referencing from the usual common usage of the word. Preview is where you get a sense of what is the larger, longer piece of work all about, you can get a preview of a

film. Here similarly, what we are doing is quickly glean over the chapter and get a sense of it from the title, the subheadings, the various illustration support. As we mentioned earlier, like flowcharts, tables, diagrams, graphs, photographs, all of which support the understanding, what else is giving you a sense of what the chapter is about maybe keywords that are highlighted, footnotes that would all come under preview.

Next is question. A good question to keep in mind is what point is the author making in this particular section or in this particular chapter? What is it that I am expected to gather from this to learn from this? When that question becomes your pivotal point and you read with that the possibilities of comprehending and off looking out for the comprehension better is more likely.

Then comes R read, read with intentionality, read with the intention to understand and comprehend the key ideas to retain them to remember them, therefore read very consciously, read carefully, read making connections with your prior knowledge on the same topic, making connections with your prior knowledge on related topics, when we read in this manner, we are more likely to engage with the reading and consequently recollect what we have read. In this process, if it helps you to underline to identify keywords, to make little notes here and there, please do so, but all of it in moderation and balance of course.

Next comes self-recite or state. When you finish a section, sit back, look back at what are the main ideas, what are the key concepts that you actually learned from that? What is the information you have gathered, say it out? Of course, think about where you are before you say it out loud. Say it out and cross check back with the book, whether it is what you thought it is, try and answer those questions that had come to your mind or that you had brought up for yourself before you started reading that section. See if you have been able to answer those questions when you said them aloud.

Remember how, when a friend asks you for a doubt regarding a chapter, and you explain it to them, it becomes far more clear to you. And it also goes deeper into your memory now that you have explained it to someone else, think of it like that. In this case, you are explaining it to yourself, you can talk out the answers to yourself if you would like. Again, depending on who is allowed, but a very valuable way is this next step of self-recite, also called as the state.

Last is the T which is test. There is a saying that that which you measure grows. Testing is a way of measuring of evaluating whatever it is that you have engaged in learning. So,

evaluating your own knowledge, your own information, and evaluating and testing and checking your own growth. It is best done freshly at the time you have just finished reading the chapter, go back and review all of it, answer all those questions again, check if it is there in your memory, wherever it is not go back reread wherever required, look at the summaries, write out the summaries again if need be, check-check-check for yourself, test out how much you have gathered information or knowledge required, how much you have comprehended how many of your questions got answered, how well are you able to answer the questions from the texts, test it out, test it out, test it out for yourself.

Research has shown that this entire model of PQRST, preview, question, read, self-recital state and lastly, test is quite effective in being a more meaningful and impactful reader, both in terms of comprehending what is read and recollecting far more easily the material that has been read. With that we come to the end of this episode on two reading methods SQ3R and PQRST. Thank you.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:03)

The slide has a blue header and footer. The main content area is white with a thin black border. At the top center, the title 'SQ3R Reading' is displayed in a bold, black, sans-serif font. In the top right corner, there is a small logo for 'IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE' featuring a circular emblem with a lamp and the text 'IIT MADRAS'. The main text on the slide is divided into two sections. The first section, located below the title, states: 'The information we collect from a written text is important'. The second section, located further down the slide, states: 'The SQ3R reading method helps to gain as much as information and as deeply and clearly as possible in the process of reading'.

SQ3R Reading

The information we collect from a written text is important

The SQ3R reading method helps to gain as much as information and as deeply and clearly as possible in the process of reading

## SQ3R Reading

Reading comprehension method with 5 steps

1. Survey
2. Question
3. Read
4. Recite / Tell-aloud
5. Review

## PQRST Reading

This is method that helps the reader to understand the organization of the written text and to analyze it deeply for meaningful reading with an effective outcome.

## PQRST Reading

The 5 steps involved in PQRST method are as follows:

1. Preview
2. Question
3. Read
4. State/ Self-recite
5. Test /evaluate