Two Study Skills
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I.   SQ3R Reading:

Overview:

Survey the entire section to be read; carefully read titles, section headings, lists and the first sentence of each paragraph.

Questions are to be devised which have the main topics as their answers; also answer the Study Questions at the end of each section - if the book has them.

Read the section, highlighting or underlining the important concepts.

Recite (read out loud - in a place or mode where you won't disturb others) when you go over the material the second time or say out loud what you've just learned.

Review the material, reading and reciting the highlighted passages several times.

Details:

The SQ3R method is the reading and studying system preferred by many educators. Reading research indicates that it is an extremely effective method for both comprehension and memory retention. It's effective because it is a system of active reader involvement.

Step 1. "S"= Survey: Before you actually read a chapter, or go over a particular section of notes, take five minutes to survey the material. Briefly check headings and subheadings in order to understand the author's organizational pattern of ideas to be discussed. Scan all visual material. Read introductory and summary paragraphs. This preview will enable you to anticipate what the chapter is about.

Step 2. "Q"= Question: Create interest in the material by asking: What are the main points of the chapter? As you read, keep the question in mind and figure out the most important points. It gives you a clearly defined purpose for reading, and helps you maintain interest in the material.

Step 3. "R"= Read: Read the chapter actively for meaning. Go through the paragraph before underlining, then underline key words and phrases to help you recall the main points. Be selective, you don't want to highlight non-important points or miss anything that can help your comprehension. Summarize main concepts in your own words in the margins. The more active you are in the reading process, the more you will retain.

Step 4. "R"= Recite: After every few pages, close your book and recite **aloud** the main points to the questions you posed in step 2. Try to recall basic details as to the author's intent by putting them in your own words. Verify your answer by checking the text. If you can't remember the text, read through it again. If you don't get it now, you won't remember it for a test. Take as much time as you need to answer your questions. Don't be frustrated, this takes more time but the information will be clearer in your mind.

Step 5. "R"= Review: Finally, review the chapter every so often to fix the material in your mind. Keep rereading your margin notes and underlinings. Verbalize the sequence of main ideas and supporting facts to aid retention. Numerous reviews are a lot more effective than one cramming session the night before an exam.

Review once right after you've finished reading and then every couple of days. The SQ3R is time consuming at first, expect it to take ten to fifteen percent longer to read a given chapter when you first begin. Research indicates a 70%% increase in retention after two months of using the system and, eventually, a reduction in time spent preparing for exams.

NOTE: You can make this method SQ4R by adding a new Step 5 above (Step 5 becomes Step 6.): "Write" (which has an "R" sound): Write out an outline of the main points and sub-points. By doing this you have now used all 3 learning methods:
> -Visual, by reading the material
> - Aural, by reciting out loud
> - Kinesthetic, by writing.

II.   Nightly Review (of everything studied the previous nights of the week)

 Do a Google search on **"Ebbinghaus forgetting curve"** (Look at both Wikipedia articles: "Forgetting Curve" and "Ebbinghaus") What all this means is: On Monday night, study Monday's assignments. On Tues. night, study Tuesday's assignments AND review everything you studied Monday night. On Wed. night study Wednesday's assignments AND review everything you studied Monday & Tuesday night. On Thurs. night study Thursday's assignments AND review everything you studied Monday & Tuesday & Wednesday night. Ect. ect, for Friday & Saturday nights. By reviewing every night, you negate the effect of the "forgetting curve"!

(The decay of knowledge ("forgetting") is exponential. Each time one reviews, the exponential decay gets "flatter". With enough review, the decay curve becomes flat - i.e. one doesn't forget the material. We don't have to review "$1 + 1 = 2$". We've reviewed this SO MUCH over the years, our "Forgetting curve" has become flat & the knowledge doesn't decay.)

Try the SQ3R technique of studying for a while & see how it works. HOWEVER, really good learning occurs when you ALSO use Nightly Review. Look at the Ebbinghouse Forgetting Curve to understand why nightly review is SO important. After you've studied new material with SQ3R, go back & briefly review (Review the highlighted passages) the previous night's/day's study material. Maximum learning occurs when you use BOTH methods together.