

Reading Strategies for Academic Texts

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How do you feel about reading?

- What kinds of strategies are you already using for reading academic texts?
- Do you think you need to improve your reading skills?
- What kinds of texts are you reading, for what purposes?

How is reading for academic purposes different?

When you are reading an academic text, you need to be **active**, **efficient**, and **critical**.

How is reading for academic purposes different?

When you are reading an academic text, you need to be **active**, **efficient**, and **critical**.

Reading actively means looking for deep structure, engaging with the text, asking questions about the text, and trying to understand what the writer is saying.

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When you are reading an academic text, you need to be **active**, **efficient**, and **critical**.

Reading efficiently means making the most of your time, extracting meaning, moving through (or past!) difficult sections.

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Reading critically means making judgments about a text and learning to ask the right questions.

What is one reading strategy to try?

SQ3R

What is SQ3R?

Survey
Question
Read
Recall
Review

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What is SQ3R?

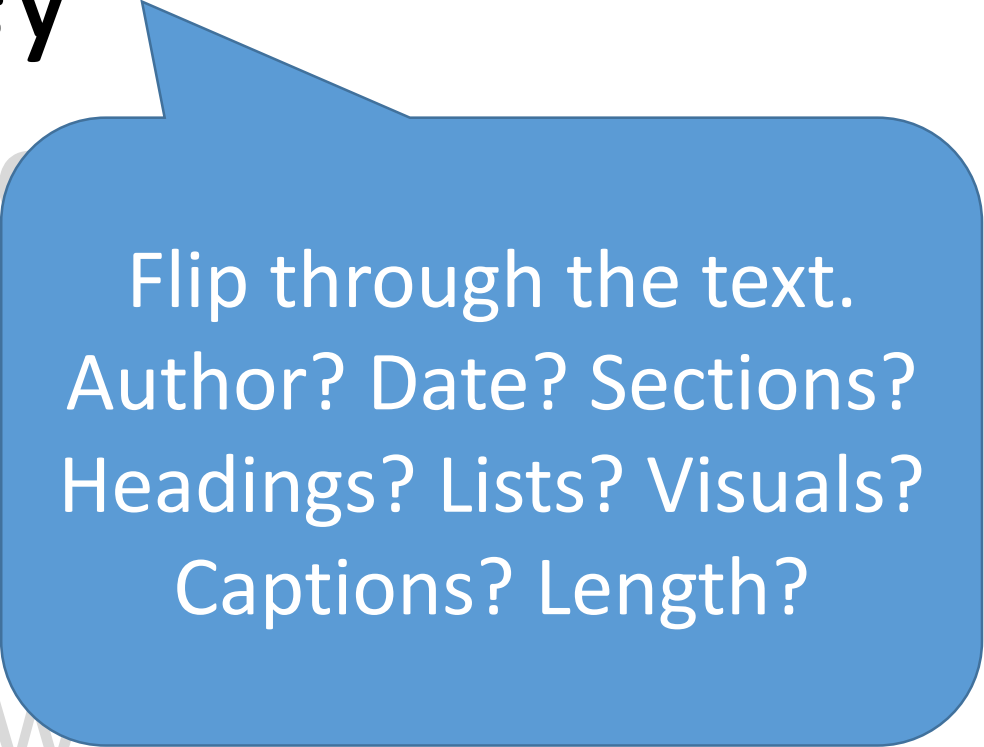
Survey

Question

Read

Recall

Review



Flip through the text.
Author? Date? Sections?
Headings? Lists? Visuals?
Captions? Length?

What is SQ3R?

What are you expecting to learn from this text?
Are there questions you are trying to answer?

Survey
Question
Read
Recall
Review

What is SQ3R?

Survey

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What is SQ3R?

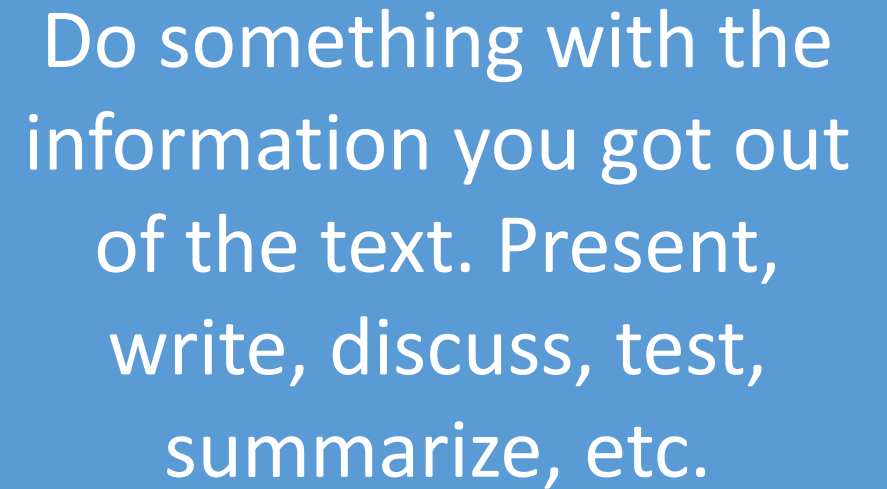
Survey

Question

Read

Recall

Review



Do something with the information you got out of the text. Present, write, discuss, test, summarize, etc.

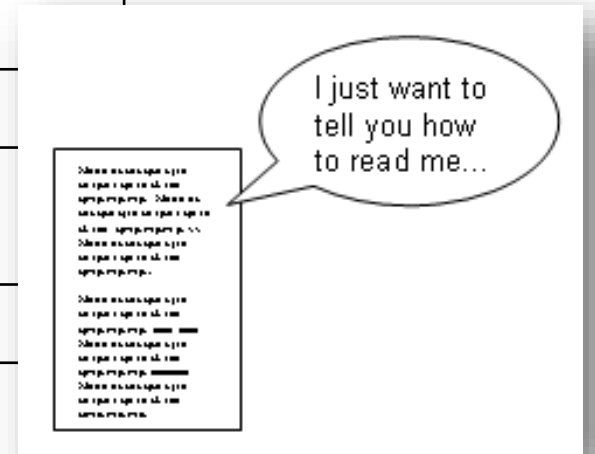
Practice

Sample texts

- *How to Think Straight About Psychology*
(<https://www.dawsonera.com/Shibboleth.sso/Login?entityID=https://sso.utu.fi/sso-idp&target=https://www.dawsonera.com/depp/shibboleth/ShibbolethLogin.html?dest=https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9781292036281>)
- *Riddles of Existence*
- *Deviance and Medicalization*

Are Finnish and English academic texts different?

Finns	Anglo-Americans
General rhetorical structure	
implicit	explicit
Information placement	
end-weight; start from distance	important points early
Main point	
comes late; in conclusions	start with main point; repeat in results
Text and meta-text	
less text about text	more text about text



How do English texts tell me how to read them?

Signposting

more information

cause/reason/result

example

emphasis

contrast/limitation/condition

similarity/clarification

time period

summary/conclusion

Source: Golder, M. (2016). **Far Right Parties in Europe**. *Annual Review Of Political Science*, 19(1), 477-497. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-042814-012441>

Although some find that unemployment helps far right parties, ...

What comes next? Go to the next slide for a hint.

Source: Golder, M. (2016). **Far Right Parties in Europe**. *Annual Review Of Political Science*, 19(1), 477-497. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-042814-012441>

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Although some find that unemployment helps far right parties, **most find that it either has no effect or hurts them.**

This procedure does not develop a *concept* of a blurg, though. The term 'blurg' does not get associated with any *way of thinking* of the three things. We have simply labeled those things as 'blurg' without attaching any general meaning to the label. Also, even if some procedure like this could assign some concept to an application, the concept thereby applies only to the things that we have singled out. Yet generally our concepts are not restricted in that way. For instance, there are constantly new and previously unknown things to which our concept of blue applies – they are new blue things. Clearly we did not single them out in setting up our concept of blue. So a 'blurg'-like specification of a concept's application would not explain why the concept of blue applies to the new things.

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What other tools can I use to help me work with texts?

- [Academic Word List](#) (570 most common words in academic texts)
- [Rewordify](#)
- [Key Word Extractor](#)
- [Vocab Profiler](#)

[Sample text]

The history of pellagra illustrates the human cost of basing social and economic policy on mistaken inferences from correlational studies. This is not to say that we should never use correlational evidence. Quite the contrary. In many instances, it is all we have to work with, and in some cases, it is all we need (for instance, when prediction, rather than determination of cause, is the goal). Scientists often have to use incomplete knowledge to solve problems. The important thing is that we approach correlational evidence with a certain skepticism. Examples such as the pellagra–sewage case occur with considerable frequency in all areas of psychology. The example illustrates what is sometimes termed the third-variable problem: the fact that the correlation between the two variables—in this case, pellagra incidence and sewage conditions—may not indicate a direct causal path between them but may arise because both variables are related to a third variable that has not even been measured. Pellagra incidence is related to SES (and to diet—the real causal variable) and SES is also related to sewer- age quality. Correlations like that between sewage and pellagra are often termed spurious correlations: correlations that arise not because a causal link exists between the two variables that are measured, but because both variables are related to a third variable. Let's consider a more contemporary example. For decades, debates have raged over the relative efficacy of public and private schools. Some of the conclusions drawn in this debate vividly demonstrate the perils of inferring causation from correlational evidence. The question of the efficacy of private versus public schools is an empirical problem that can be attacked with the investigative methods of the social sciences. This is not to imply that it is an easy problem, only that it is a scientific problem, potentially solvable. All advocates of the superiority of private schools implicitly recognize this, because at the crux of their arguments is an empirical fact: Student achievement in private schools exceeds that in public schools. This fact is not in dispute—educational statistics are plentiful and largely consistent across various studies. The problem is the use of these achievement data to conclude that the education received in private schools causes the superior test scores. The outcome of educational testing is a function of many different variables, all of which are correlated. In order to evaluate the relative efficacy of public schools and private schools, we need more complex statistics than merely the relationship between the type of school attended and school achievement. For example, educational achievement is related to many different indicators of family background, such as parental education, parental occupation, SES, the number of books in the home, and other factors. These characteristics are also related to the probability of sending a child to a private school. Thus, family background is a potential third variable that may affect the relationship between academic achievement and the type of school. In short, the relationship may have nothing to do with the effectiveness of private schools but may be the result of the fact that economically advantaged children do better academically and are more likely to attend private schools.

Remember: reading is a skill and
it can be improved with practice.

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