The SQ3R reading system

S = survey.

Look over the contents of the text. Note chapter titles, which describe the information being covered. Look at the chapter subheadings, pictures, captions, graphs and diagrams. With advance knowledge of what information the book contains, students will be better focused when reading. Comprehension and retention will therefore be increased.

Q = question

When you read each chapter heading, turn that statement into a question. Turning a statement into a question gives focus to your reading and serves as a guide. When formulating your question use terms such as who, what, where, when, why, how, compare, contrast, describe, explain, list and trace. Write the question in the margin of your textbook.

Below are some examples of textbook headings turned into questions.

American History subheading: The End of the First Party System.  
SQ3R question based on the chapter subtitle: *Describe the circumstances surrounding the collapse of the First Party System.*

American Government subheading:The Job of the President  
SQ3R question based on the chapter subtitle: *List the duties of the President of the United States and describe in detail at least four Presidential constitutional responsibilities.*

R = read

Step three requires that the reader actively participate in the learning process. Read the section with the intent of finding the answer to your question. Highlight the answers to these questions, along with any key points, examples and definitions. Try the sample below. See if you can find the answers to the questions.

Text Example: Introduction to Computers

Chapter Subheading: Types of Information Systems

SQ3R question:*Define the term information system. List the different classifications of information systems.*

Below is a paragraph from a text on this topic. See if you can find the answers to the question above.

*"An information system is a collection of hardware, software, data, people, and procedures that are designed to generate information that supports the day-to-day, short range, and long-range activities of users in an organization. Information systems generally are classified into five categories: office information systems, transaction processing systems, management information systems, decision support systems, and expert systems. The following sections present each of these information systems."*

(Except taken from Discovering Computers 2001, Concepts for a Connected World, by Shelly, Cashman, and Vermaat, 2000)

R = recite

After reading and highlighting a section of the text, recite the answers to your questions out loud. Are you able to answer in your own words? If not, re-read the section again and formulate another response to the question. You may want to revise your question, now that you are more familiar with the topic.

R = review

After reading the whole assignment, review the chapter review questions as well as your SQ3R questions and answers. Re-read highlighted textbook material.