

READING ACTIVITY
READING TEXTBOOKS* (PQRST Strategy)

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Objective : To enable readers to employ PQRST strategy to read intensively to get the most out of a text and make use of them for the appropriate purposes

Participation : Individual

Material : Any lesson from a prescribed textbook

Preparation : Reading the lessons deliberately employing the PQRST strategy

Procedure :

Start with the **previewing** of a lesson. While previewing one looks at the titles, sub-titles, abstracts, summaries, illustrations, highlighted parts, graphs, charts, and other visual texts to get a sense of what the lesson is about before actually reading it. However, as most of the lessons in textbooks do not have these features students after glancing at the title should read the first paragraph completely and proceed to read the first sentences of a few paragraphs at random and end with reading the last paragraph. This will acquaint the students with what the lesson is about.

Questioning begins along with previewing the title itself. For instance, for a lesson namely, "The Selfish Giant" (Periyar University, Interactive English p. 49) one could raise questions such as how do giants look like?, are they imaginary or real creatures?, how could the giants be selfish like humans?... so on and it continues till the end of reading the lesson. The last strategy, testing, essentially depends upon the number of questions asked throughout the lesson. The more the merrier as the comprehension will be better and deeper.

Reading, as against the normal practice of plunging into the first paragraph of the first page, begins only after previewing and questioning and these two aspects lend sufficient familiarity to the text which enables a reader to read and comprehend the text faster. And, the processes of questioning and finding answers should continue even while reading between and beyond the lines and making inferences as well. As it is an intensive reading one may have to vary the reading speed and even pause at places to reflect over and integrate new knowledge with the existing ones.

Summarizing, again like questioning, is an ongoing affair. As and when a reader comes across an important idea it has to be summarized in his own words to internalize and to transfer it to the long term memory, which is the primary purpose of reading. A smart reader resorts to various mnemonic devices such as mind mapping to remember the ideas. What is stored in the memory comes handy while writing tests and assignments.

Testing, like other components such as questioning and summarizing, should happen all through reading as a reader has to constantly check whether he has understood all the significant aspects of the lesson. Testing doesn't mean answering those questions given at the end of the lesson after reading the entire text. And, it is obviously easier to answer the questions immediately after reading but one should be able to recall all the key ideas even after some time lapse which is possible only by frequently testing oneself.

Learning outcomes:

- 1) Students realize that learning from textbooks, even if it is challenging and tiresome, can be made possible by resorting to strategies such as PQRST.
- 2) Students understand that reading with a strategy, unlike blind reading, can make them effective readers by deeper comprehension and application of the knowledge gained.

Further activity:

Reading all the lessons of a textbook using the PQRST strategy.

***PQRST** is an acronym wherein P stands for Preview; Q for Question; R for Read; S for Summarize; and T for Test. While all the components are somewhat similar to the strategy SQ3R, the only variation is the last one, testing, which could be different from reviewing.