

Studying Efficiently

The feeling of uncertainty, which follows the usual plan of study, can be avoided by carrying out an organized attack. The student will know what he has studied because he will have crystallized it in a question-answer form. The following steps will insure better mastery of a textbook chapter.

1. SURVEY THE CHAPTER:

Determine the structure, organization, or plan of the chapter. Details will be remembered because of their relationship to the total picture.

- a) **Think about the title.** Guess what will be included in the chapter.
- b) **Read the introduction.** Here the main ideas are presented, the “forest” which must be seen before the details, the “trees” make organized sense.
- c) **Read the summary.** Here is the relationship among the main ideas.
- d) **Read the main-headings (bold type).** Here are the main ideas. Determine where in the sequence of ideas each one fits.

FOLLOW THE NEXT THREE STEPS ON CHAPTER SUB-SECTIONS

2. QUESTION:

- a) Use the questions at the beginning or end of the chapter.
- b) Formulate questions by changing the main-headings and sub-headings to questions.

Example: CAUSES OF DEPRESSION. (What are the causes of depression?
What conditions are usually present before a depression occurs?)

Having in mind a question results in:

- (1) a spontaneous attempt to answer with information already at hand
- (2) frustration until the question is answered
- (3) a criterion against which the details can be inspected to determine relevance and importance
- (4) a focal point for crystallizing a series of ideas (the answer).

3. READ:

Read to answer the question. Move quickly. Sort out ideas and evaluate them. If content does not relate to the question, give it only a passing glance. Read selectively.

4. RECITE:

Answer the question—in your own words, not the author’s.

FOLLOW THE ABOVE PLAN FOR EACH SECTION OF THE CHAPTER

5. RECORD:

Record after each major section of the chapter. Select and adapt the method of notetaking to your learning style.

- a) Make flashcards.
- b) Begin to construct an outline and add sections as you go through the chapter.
- c) Begin to construct a concept map. Add sections as you go through the chapter.
- d) Write a summary.
- e) Create a divided note-taking page.

6. REVIEW:

Increase the retention and cut cramming time by 90% by means of immediate and delayed review. To do this:

- a) Review your written questions.
- b) Try to recite the answer. If you can't, look at your notes. Continue to practice reciting out loud.
- c) Review material regularly to promote cumulative learning.