The PQ5R Method for Reading and Retaining Textbook Information

One of the best methods for reading and retaining textbook information is PQ5R, a systematic reading strategy. This technique incorporates active reading with recording of information read.

P = Preview the Material
Skim or scan the text. Be aware of and think about:
- ✓ The relationship between the title, main headings and subheadings.
- ✓ Pictures, graphs, and charts and what they suggest about the purpose of the text.
- ✓ Any review or summary questions at the end of the text.

Q = Question the Material
Develop questions about the text.
- ✓ Turn headings and subheadings into questions; write them down.
- ✓ Write down questions related to who, what, when, where, why, and how.
- ✓ Write a brief version of any question that appears at the end of the text.

R = Read the Material.
Read to answer the questions. Pay attention to:
- ✓ Pictures, graphs, and charts.
- ✓ Main ideas and supporting evidence.
- ✓ Structure and relationships identified by such key phrases as also, moreover, furthermore, in addition, although, nevertheless, however, therefore, in conclusion, and consequently.
- ✓ New vocabulary: look up and record the definitions of new terms.

R = Record Key Ideas Found During Reading
- ✓ Write down key ideas found during reading.
- ✓ Write the answers to questions.
- ✓ Write any new information that seems significant.
- ✓ Write reflections about the material.
- ✓ Write any new questions.

R = Recite from the Text
Look away from the text and try to answer questions about the information.
- ✓ Recite information about the headings and subheadings.
- ✓ React to the text.
- ✓ Generate more questions and answer them.

R = Review
Reread the text and notes.
- ✓ Skim the text again.
- ✓ Redefine the main ideas and their relationships to each other.
- ✓ Review questions and answers
- ✓ Skim for answers to new questions.
- ✓ Answer questions at the end of the section.

R = Reflect
- ✓ Think about the significance of the material. Ask questions such as:
- ✓ What is the meaning and significance of the material?
- ✓ How can this informative be applied?
- ✓ How is this information related to what is already known?
- ✓ Would other sources have different versions of this material?