Reading Effectively & Understanding What you Have Read

STRATEGY	INFORMATION
SQ3R	**S**urvey, **Q**uestion, **R**ead, **R**ecite, **R**eview. Breaks reading into steps that foster active engagement and better recall.
Mind Mapping / Concept Mapping	A visual method to organize and relate key ideas. Central concept in the middle with branches for supporting points. Helps with understanding structure and big-picture thinking.
Summary Writing	Writing a brief, focused summary in your own words after reading. Reinforces understanding, filters out non-essential information, and prepares for future review.
Annotated Notetaking	Making notes directly on the reading (margin notes, highlights, underlining, symbols). Encourages interaction with the material and tracks important or confusing content.
Active Reading	Fully engaging with the text through highlighting, asking questions, predicting, and reflecting during reading. Promotes deeper thinking and comprehension.
Text Coding	Using visual markers (like ?, !, *, →) while reading to label key ideas, confusion points, or important transitions. Makes review easier and faster.
Chunking	Dividing large texts into smaller, digestible sections. After each, summarize the content. Reduces overwhelm and improves focus and retention.
K-W-L Chart	A 3-part chart: What I **K**now, What I **W**ant to know, and What I've **L**earned. Encourages goal setting before reading and reflection after.
Reciprocal Teaching	A peer-based method where you take turns summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting. Excellent for group learning and building comprehension skills.
Reading Aloud / Whisper Reading	Helps maintain focus and comprehension by hearing the text. Useful for auditory learners or those with attention difficulties.
Double Entry Journal	Two-column notes: left side for quotes or paraphrased ideas; right side for responses, questions, or reflections. Builds critical thinking and personal connection to the material.
Use of Graphic Organizers	Visual tools (Venn diagrams, timelines, flowcharts) to help identify relationships and structure. Great for organizing cause-effect, comparison, or sequences.

References

- Brown, P. C., Roediger, H. L. III, & McDaniel, M. A. (2014). *Make it stick: The science of successful learning*. Harvard University Press.
- Dunlosky, J., Rawson, K. A., Marsh, E. J., Nathan, M. J., & Willingham, D. T. (2013). Improving students' learning with effective learning techniques: Promising directions from cognitive and educational psychology. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 14*(1), 4–58. https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100612453266
- Fiorella, L., & Mayer, R. E. (2015). *Learning as a generative activity: Eight learning strategies that promote understanding*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kiewra, K. A. (1985). Investigating note taking and review: A depth of processing alternative. *Educational Psychologist, 20*(1), 23–32. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep2001_4
- Kiewra, K. A. (2002). How classroom teachers can help students learn and teach them how to learn. *Theory Into Practice, 41*(2), 71–80. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4102_3
- Wittrock, M. C. (1990). Generative processes of comprehension. *Educational Psychologist, 24*(4), 345–376. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep2404_2

Last Updated: Jul. 9, 2025