PSQ5R is a formula that stands for the basic steps in learning from reading in an efficient manner. The P stands for Purpose, the S for Survey, the Q for Question, the 5 Rs for Read Selectively, Recite, Reduce-record, Reflect, and Review.

**Purpose.** Why are you reading this article or chapter, and what do you want to get out of it? When you have accomplished your purpose, stop reading. For instance, your purpose in seeking a number in the telephone book is specific and clear, and once you find the number, you stop "reading." Such "reading" is very rapid indeed, perhaps 100,000 words a minute! Perhaps it should be called by its proper name, "scanning," but when it suits your purpose, it fast and efficient. This principle, of first establishing your purpose, whether to get the focus or theme, or main ideas, or main facts or figures, or evidence, arguments and examples, or relations, or methods, can prompt you to use a reading method that gets what you want in the minimum time.

**Survey-Skim.** Glance over the main features of the piece, that is, the title, the headings, the lead and summary paragraphs, to get an overview of the piece, to find out what ideas, problems and questions are being discussed. In doing this you should find the focus of the piece, that is, the central theme or subject, what it all about; and perhaps the perspective, that the approach or manner in which the author treats the theme. This survey should be carried out no more than two or three minutes.

**Question.** Compose questions that you aim to answer:

- What do I already know about this topic? - in order words, activate prior knowledge.
- Turn the first heading into a question, to which you will be seeking the answer when you read. For example: "What were "the effects of the Hundred Years' War"?" - and you might add "on democracy, or on the economy?" Or, "What 'the impact of unions on wages'?"

**Read Selectively.** Read to find the answers to your questions. By reading the first sentence of each paragraph you may well get the answers. Sometimes the text will "list" the answers by saying "The first point.... Secondly...:" and so on. And in some cases you may have to read each paragraph carefully just to understand the next one, and to find the focus or main idea buried in it. In general, look for information, evidence, etc., that will meet your purpose.

**Recite.** Without looking at the book, recite the answers to the question, using your own words as much as possible. If you cannot do it reasonably well, look over that section again.

**Reduce-Record.** Make a brief outline of the question and your answers. The answers should be in key words or phrases, not long sentences.

**Reflect.** Comprehension and retention increase when you "elaborate" new information. This to reflect on it, to turn it this way and that, to compare and make categories, to relate one part with another, to connect it with your other knowledge and personal experience, and in general to organize and reorganize it. This may be done "in your head," or on paper. Perhaps you will reorganize it into a standard outline, hierarchy, a table, a flow diagram, a map, or even a "doodle."

**Review.** Survey your "reduced" notes of the paper or chapter to see them as a whole. This may suggest some kind of overall organization that pulls it all together. Then recite, using the questions or other cues as starters or stimuli for recall. This latter kind of recitation can be carried out in a few minutes, and should be done every week or two with important material.