

The QSRA Formula for effective reading of non-fictional texts

The QSRA Formula helps to capture relevant information from non-fictional texts in a targeted and comprehensive way. The abbreviation QSRA stands for:

Questions
Survey
Read
Analyse

Questions

Put down six or more specific questions on which you would like to get an answer.
Do it before you look at the text.

As a starting point for your specific questions, you can use the following basic questions:

Who?	Where?
What?	How?
When?	Why?

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____

Question 3: _____

Question 4: _____

Question 5: _____

Question 6: _____

Survey

- Check the headings and, if available, the abstract and the table of contents of the text. If you have the impression that the text contains answers to your questions, go to the next step. If not, immediately put the text aside and look for a better suited text.
- Scan the text by moving your eyes diagonally at a constant pace, without stopping from the top of the page to the bottom. Notice the paragraphs which could contain answers to your questions.

Read

- Read the paragraphs, which appeared as the most promising in the survey.
- Mark the key words and sentences in the text, which help answering your questions.
- Read the text as long as it takes to either answer all questions, or until you are sure that you cannot derive further answers to your questions from the text.

Analyse

- Go through the text and your marks. Note on a sheet of paper or directly in a text file on your computer the answers to your questions. Put down as well, to which questions the text does not offer any answers, or only dubious answers.
- Capture new questions, which the text brings up and answers.
- Read your analysis and check, if your questions have been answered satisfactorily, or if you require further texts in order to get answers.