

A Parent's Guide to

Accelerated Reader



As part of our commitment to developing a culture of reading for pleasure and a lifelong love of reading, we are excited to announce that your child will be participating in Accelerated Reader - a program which aims for all children to experience success in achieving their reading goals.

This guide is designed to answer your questions about AR. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or visit the Accelerated Reader website at www.renlearn.co.uk.



What is Accelerated Reader?



Accelerated Reader is a computer-based reading program designed to encourage and promote successful reading. Your child picks a book at his/her own level and reads it at his/her own pace. When finished, your child takes a short quiz on the computer - passing the quiz is an indication that your child has understood what has been read.

AR gives children, parents and teachers feedback based on the quiz results which the teacher then uses to help the child set targets and ongoing reading practice.

Children tend to really enjoy taking the quizzes. Since they are reading books at their own reading and interest levels, they are likely to be successful. This is satisfying for most children. Best of all they learn and grow at their own pace.

How is my child's reading level determined?



At the beginning of the school year, your child will take a Star Reading test that determines his/her appropriate reading level using computer adaptive technology. This test is taken three times a year.

After undertaking this assessment, the class teacher is then provided with a range of information related to your child's reading ability. This includes: their reading age, the difficulty range of books that your child should be reading (ZPD) and how children can be supported to improve their reading comprehension.

Based on your child's performance on this diagnostic tool, he/she is assigned a zone of proximal development, or ZPD.

What is a ZPD?

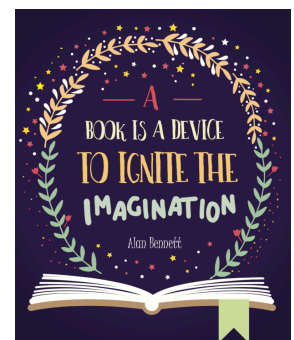
ZPD is the range of books that will challenge a child without causing frustration or loss of motivation. Your child will receive a ZPD range after taking a STAR Reading test. It's important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within their ZPDs.

How can I help my child become a better reader?

According to research, children who read at least 35 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate (average percent correct) on AR quizzes see the greatest gains. Therefore, your child should have **at least 35 minutes** set aside for reading each day.

At our school, we have timetabled a '**Read and Relax**' session in school each day for 25 minutes. Each child is then expected to read at home for 10 minutes each day.

As with anything, performance improves with practice. Encourage your child to read at home. Create a culture of reading in your household by reading with your child and show that you value reading. Reading with your child, no matter what the child's age, is an important part of building a lifelong love of reading and learning.



Choosing appropriate books

Each book will contain a label stating the book level (BL), the interest level (LY, MY, UY) and a points value.

Quiz No 218263
My Name Is Mina

Almond, David
B.L.: 4.2
Points: 5.0

MY

What is a book level?

Books are levelled using a nationally recognised readability formula and represent the difficulty of the text. The levelling criteria covers such factors as vocabulary, average word length, average sentence length, grammatical complexity – not how long the book is or how many pictures it contains. The books are organised on shelves according to level to make it easier for children to choose an appropriate book. Your child will choose books to read within their ZDP range recommended by the STAR reading assessment.

1.6 – 2.0
2.1 – 2.5
2.6 – 3.0
3.1 – 3.5
3.6 – 4.0
4.1 – 4.5
4.6 – 5.0
5.1 – 5.5
5.6 – 6.0
6.1 – 6.5
6.6 – 7.0
7.1 – 7.5
7.5 – 8.0
8.1 +

What is an interest level?

Just because a child can read the words in a book does not mean the content is appropriate.

When choosing a book, it is essential that the child is interested in the book, will enjoy reading it and feel success in having finished it and understood it.

Within AR, the 'Interest Level' of a book is based on content—a book's themes and ideas—and indicates for which age group a book is appropriate. The chart below shows which years fall into each interest Level.

Interest Level	Year Level
LY—Lower Years	Key Stage 1
MY—Middle Years	Key Stage 2
UY—Upper Years	Key Stage 3/4

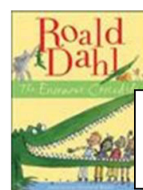
What are points?

Every book that has an AR Reading Practice Quiz is given a points value. AR points are based on the difficulty of the book (ATOS readability level) and the length of the book (number of words).

Children earn points on a pro-rata basis depending on how well they do on the Reading Practice Quiz. For example, a pupil who takes a 5-question quiz on a book worth 1 point will earn 1 point for 5 correct answers (100%), 0.8 points for 4 correct answers (80%) and so on.

A pupil who reads a book worth 5 points and takes a 10-question quiz will earn 5 points for 10 correct answers (100%) 4.5 points for 9 correct answers (90%), etc.

A child needs to pass a quiz with a score of 60% or higher to earn any points.



BL: 4.0

IL: LY



BL: 4.0

IL: UY

Pts: 14.0

The examples above both have a book level of 4.0 since both have short sentences and simple vocabulary. However, Noughts and Crosses is intended for older pupils (Upper Years) and the Enormous Crocodile for is Lower Years.

Frequently asked questions

My child is not a strong reader. Can he/she still use Accelerated Reader?

Accelerated Reader helps all children become better readers from pupils with special needs to those who are gifted and talented. When children read books at their appropriate level, they experience success.

Furthermore, teachers work with children to set appropriate targets based on each child's reading level.

How many Accelerated Reader quizzes are there?

There are over 12,000 AR quizzes available and more being written every month. The school has an extensive book stock. We are always looking to extend our book stock even further, so if you are considering getting rid of any old books that are in a decent state, please consider donating them to the school for us to check the catalogue and use them in classes.

How will my child take a quiz?

Quizzing from home is **not permitted**. Time is allocated each school day for children to take quizzes on iPads when they have completed a book. Your child needs to take a quiz within 24 hours of completing their book where possible. Children may take quizzes of books they have read at home but should make sure they have read and understood each book before completing a quiz.

How can parents/carers be involved?

At our school, we strive to ensure parents are an integral part of their child's learning. Please share reading with your child regularly regardless of their age or ability. Use their personalised reading diaries to support you in asking reading comprehension questions to check your child's understanding. If teaching staff have a particular concern regarding your child's progress they will endeavour to contact parents directly. Parents are always welcome to speak to class teachers to check how well their child is progressing across the term.

How will I know how my child is doing?

Children will record their quiz scores in their reading diaries for you to see.

A TOPS Report is available after a child takes a quiz to give you feedback on your child's understanding of the book and shows cumulative data for the marking period and school year. The TOPS Report may be sent home with your child.

My child already does well in school. Why do they need this?

Even if a child is gifted at playing a musical instrument, they have to practice in order to develop their talent. Gifted children, like all children, need to be challenged. Teachers using Accelerated Reader are able to guide each student to books that give the child both challenge and success, regardless of the child's level.

Is it OK for my child to read outside of his/her reading level?

Just because a child can read the words in a book does not mean the content is appropriate. The Interest Level of the material must be considered. Interest level is based on content—a book's themes and ideas—and indicates for which age group a book is appropriate. The chart below shows which years fall into each Interest Level.

How is my child's point targets set?

Teachers set a target of a number of points your child is expected to achieve in a half term. Each child's target is personalised and relevant to their individual ability in reading. Children are encouraged to progress at their own pace and the aim of Accelerated Reader is for all children to succeed in achieving their goals. Achieving a half term's target will be rewarded as the teachers look to develop their own in-class systems alongside the children's own ideas! Your child's target is designed to be realistic, motivational and to ensure enough reading practice is happening to guarantee progress. Children are able to track their progress each time they log in to Accelerated Reader and through their TOPS (The Opportunity to Praise Students) report.

How will success be celebrated?

At our school, we want to encourage children to strive to do their best and to achieve the realistic reading goals that have been set for them. Therefore, achieving a term's target will be rewarded. Teachers will look to develop their own in-class systems alongside whole school rewards. Your child's target is designed to be motivational and to ensure enough reading practice is happening to guarantee progress. Staff in school will closely monitor children across the term to ensure they are on track to achieve their goal / target by the end of the term.

How can I help my child find books that are interesting to them?

Visit www.arbookfind.co.uk and click on Advanced Search. By conducting an advanced search, you will be able to generate book lists that contain titles based on the criteria you enter such as Book Level, Topic, Interest Level and Fiction/Non-fiction, etc. If the books are at your child's AR reading level, then they may be able to access the book from home, from school stock, or from the school or village library. Once they have enjoyed the book, they can complete the relevant quiz in school!

