



What is Accelerated Reader (AR)?

AR is a computer program that helps teachers manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. 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 both children and teachers feedback based on the quiz results which the teacher then uses to help set targets and ongoing reading practice.

Children using AR have a free choice of the books they read, rather than having one assigned to them. This makes reading a much more enjoyable experience as they feel in control and can choose books that are interesting to them. Teachers will help your child choose books that are at an appropriate reading level. These will be challenging without being frustrating and will also be at a level at which your child can pass the quiz and experience success.

If your child does not do well on the quiz, the teacher may assist him/her by:

- Helping choose another book that is more appropriate
- Asking more probing questions as your child reads and before he/she takes a quiz
- Pairing your child with another pupil or even having the book read to your child.

In most cases, children 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 much should my child read each day?

According to Renaissance Learning's research, children who read at least 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains. Therefore, your child should have at least 20 minutes set aside for reading during each day.

How can I help my child become a better reader?

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, starting a home library, visiting your local library on a regular basis and by letting your child see you reading. When reading with your child stop and ask questions to be sure your child comprehends what they have read and in general make a habit of discussing books that each of you has read.

How does the school determine my child's reading level?

Teachers determine your child's reading level in one of three ways: a STAR Reading assessment, a reading age estimation from a standardised test, or by using their best professional judgement based on their knowledge of your child.

What is a STAR Reading assessment?

STAR Reading is a computer-based reading assessment program that uses computer-adaptive technology. Questions continually adjust to your child's responses. If the child's response is correct, the difficulty level is increased. If the child cannot answer a question or answers incorrectly, the difficulty level is reduced. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 20 minutes.

What is a Book Level?

Book Levels are reported using the ATOS readability formula and represent the difficulty of the text. For example, a book level of 4.5 means that the text could likely be read by a pupil whose reading skills are at the level of a typical year five pupil. Normally, however, books are chosen based on the ZPD range recommended for each pupil by STAR Reading and monitored by every class teacher weekly.

What is a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)?

In independent literature-based reading, 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 or teachers can use their best professional judgement to determine a ZPD. It is important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within his/her ZPD. ZPDs should be adjusted based on the needs and ability of your child. They are also influenced by the child's progress in quizzes, reading with an adult in school and what the teacher thinks based on their professional understanding of each individual child.

How many Accelerated Reader quizzes are there?

There are over 11,000 AR quizzes available and more being written every month.

How will I know if a book has an AR quiz?

You can also visit the AR BookFinder at www.arbookfind.co.uk to conduct a search of all available books with AR quizzes - this way children can read a book from home and if it has a quiz, they can complete it in school.

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.

Is it OK for my child to read outside of their 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.

Interest Level

LY—Lower Years - Key Stage 1 / Year 3

MY—Middle Years - Key Stage 2

If you need any assistance with your child's reading or would like to know more about Accelerated Reader, please don't hesitate to speak with your child's class teacher.