

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO ACCELERATED READER

Your son will be taking part in the Accelerated Reader Programme ("AR"). This guide has been designed to answer any questions that you may have about this program. If you have any additional questions, please contact Mrs Dale, Ms Ellam or visit the Accelerated Reader Web-site at www.renlearn.co.uk

What is the Accelerated Reader Programme?

Accelerated Reader is an exciting internet based computer programme that helps teachers monitor and manage students' independent reading practice. Your son will be able to pick a book at his own reading level and read it at his own pace. When they have finished their book, your son is able to take a short quiz on the computer about the book they have just read (passing the quiz is an indication that your son understood what was read). AR will give both the children and the teachers feedback based upon the results of the quiz. Teachers can then use this information to help your son set goals and direct his ongoing reading practice.

Children using AR have the ability to choose their own books to read, rather than having one assigned to them. This makes reading a much more enjoyable experience as they can choose books that are interesting to them. Teachers and other staff will help your son choose books at an appropriate level, that is challenging without being frustrating, and help to ensure your son can pass the quiz and experience success. If your son does not do as well at the quizzes, the teacher may help them by:

- Encouraging them to choose another book that is more appropriate.
- Asking more probing questions as they read and before they take a quiz.
- Pairing them with another student. 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 does the school determine my child's reading level?

Every child takes a STAR reading test in Year 6 when they visit the school. We use these results to help us plan provision for your child and these are part of the information we provide to teachers. Your son will take three STAR reading tests throughout the year and we will use his results to determine how much progress he has made.

What is a STAR Reading Test?

STAR Reading is a computerised reading assessment that uses computer-adaptive technology. Questions continually adjust to your child's response. If their response is correct, the difficulty level is increased. If the child misses a question, the difficulty level is reduced. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 10 minutes. No reading test is 100% accurate 100% of the time, but these tests give a good indication to the school of your child's reading and understanding level.

What is a book level (ATOS)?

Book levels are attached to each book and represent the difficulty of the text. Students will be given a ZPD which sets them a range in which they can choose a book level; for example 4.2 to 6.6.

What is a Zone of Proximal Development?

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 is important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within their ZPDs. ZPDs will be adjusted according to the needs of each child. What is a Zone of Proximal Development? 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 is important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within their ZPDs. ZPDs will be adjusted according to the needs of each child.

What is an interest level?

Books are also classified by interest level, depending on their content. These are classified as lower, middle or upper years. The content of upper years may be more suited to students over the age of 14.

What are points?

Every book that has an AR Reading Practice Quiz is given a point value. AR points are computer generated based on the difficulty of the book (ATOS readability level) and the length of the book (number of words). For example '13 Words' by Lemony Snicket is a 0.5 point book - about 849 words long and a book level of 3.5, whilst Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix' book, is a 44 point book – about 257,154 words long and a book level of 7.2.

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

All the stock in our LRC has been labelled to show it is an AR book and also the levels of the book. Alternatively, you may go to www.arbookfind.co.uk to conduct a search of all books with AR quizzes.

What rewards will my child get?

Awards assemblies are held termly and the rewards will be based on points accumulated over a period of time, words read over time and progress made in reading levels. There are opportunities for individual and whole form awards.

How can I help my child to become a better reader?

Performance improves with practice. Encourage your child to read at home and you can help record progress in the child's Reading Log, which each child will be given. Create a culture of reading in your household by reading with your child, visiting the library, letting your child see you read and discussing books that each of you has read. When reading together, stop and ask questions to check that your child understands what they have read. Reading with your child, no matter how old they are, is an important part of developing a good reader, building a lifelong love of reading and learning. According to research, children who read at least 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains.

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

All children need to be challenged, no matter what their ability is and Accelerated Reader stretches and challenges all children to become better readers. All children need to be challenged to reach their full potential.

What if my child doesn't like reading?

Using Accelerated Reader, your child will choose the books they want to read. Their teacher will make certain the book is at the right level so that after completing the book, your child should do well on the AR Reading Practice Quiz. Success on the quiz will encourage your child to read more. With guidance from the teacher, and success, even students who say they don't like reading will develop a love of reading.

I'm concerned that my child will be unfairly compared to others.

Then you will like AR because it helps the teacher to work with each child individually. Students are encouraged to progress at their own pace and set their own goals as independent readers and learners. The aim of AR is for all children to succeed in achieving their goals.

How will I know how my child is doing?

Students will be able to log onto Accelerated Reader at home with you through Renaissance Home Connect (<https://ukhosted20.renlearn.co.uk/2204469/homeconnect/>), there will also be link to this site on the school website (www.sandbachschool.org.uk). By entering your child's log in details, you will be able to see how they are doing and can access a TOPS Report that tells you and your child how they are doing so you can follow their progress.

Finally...

Thank you for taking the time to read this information about the Accelerated Reader Program. We know this reading scheme is going to develop our students' reading skills greatly – making them passionate and confident readers. This will equip them with the literacy skills which will empower them in their studies and in the wider world beyond school. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.