

Accelerated Reader



There are over 100,000 books on the Accelerated Reader (AR) programme. They are all levelled according to ease of reading, in a grading system from 0.9 – 12.9. These incorporate multiple book schemes and popular children's fiction.



What is Accelerated Reader?

It is a practise reading programme in which children read books at a fluent and independent level. Initially, children undertake a comprehension test (STAR TEST) to find out their comprehension range.

Hoping to find out what my talents were, I took an _____ test.

- 1 optimistic
- 2 earthy
- 3 appraise
- 4 aptitude

The Star Test is a computer-adaptive assessment. It takes about 20 minutes and will be taken at regular intervals throughout the year and at any time that results are required.

The Star Test provides information on:

- **National Curriculum reading level**
- **Reading age (in years and months)**
- **Zone of Proximal Development:**
The range of difficulty level of books a student should read to allow for independent reading
- **Norm Referenced Standardised Score:**
How a student compares nationally with others of a similar age
- **Scaled Score:**
A measure of a student's progress against the expected standards in the new reading curriculum

After this, a child's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) score is used as a starting point to ensure initial independence and success with reading. So if a child scores 1.8 – 2.6 they will start AR by selecting a book from the 1.8 box.

Why was Accelerated Reader introduced?

Prior to the adoption of Accelerated Reader, it was extremely difficult to track a child's reading progress once they had gone beyond "learning to read" in Year 2. Children who were Free Readers, had free access to the shelves were able to pick at random from the many fiction and non-fiction texts available. There was little attention given to monitoring the child's progression, on an individual level, or ensuring the development of higher order, analytical thinking through answering higher level comprehension questions.

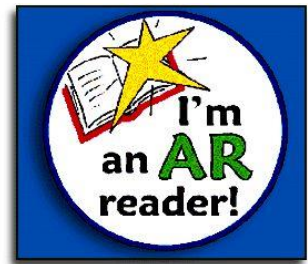
Accelerated Reader not only ensures that children can read and comprehend the books they are reading, it is also motivational, inspired by the pleasure of reading independently and gaining meaning from reading. Children often engage competitively with their peers to successfully complete quizzes and improve their AR level.

How does it work?

Children read a book at their level and will take an AR quiz. This is a series of between 5-20 comprehension questions on their book. (The number of questions posed is dependent on the book's complexity.)

Once a child has gained 80% or more on 3 books at this level, they can select books from the next level. Many children become highly motivated to succeed with quizzes and move up to higher level books in line with their peers.

Children who are not taking and passing tests on a regular basis will be monitored and additional support will be provided to ensure that progress is re-established.



Why, when children start AR do they have books that seem “too easy”?

In order to pass the quizzes it is essential that children are given books that they can read fast, fluently and independently. Smooth reading at the speed of talking is an indicator that children's brains are not overloaded by problem solving on a text and are free to consider the characters, main events and story as a whole. This will enable them to answer the quiz questions and gain success in higher order thinking.

What can I do to support my child at home?

Ask questions about a book that your child has read/is reading:

- a) Simple questions about the story, such as what happened, when, where, or to whom? Eg “What is a Paranha?”
- b) Ask questions to get children to think more deeply, such as, “Why did Henry react like that?” “What do you think will happen next?” “Is Peter a likable character?” “What do you think?”
- c) As adults we can also “verbally expose our own thinking” to help a child develop their own. Ie, “I don't think that is fair on Henry.” “I don't think I would have reacted like that.”

What about children in the upper school who are still “learning to read”?

Children who are still learning to read, who have difficulty accessing the star quiz, will be identified for additional reading support with an adult. This could be 5 minutes daily reading or Better Reading Partners which is more intensive, or a phonics programme. The level and nature of that support will be dependant on the identified needs of the child.

Should you require further information please contact the school office.

