

Parent's Guide to Accelerated Reader

What is Accelerated Reader (AR)?

AR is a reading program that helps teachers support and monitor children's reading practice. All students in Years 7 to 9 have a dedicated Library Lesson once a fortnight. Your child picks a book at an appropriate level, and reads it regularly. When finished, your child takes a short Reading Quiz to measure how much of the book they understood.

What is a STAR Reading test?

STAR Reading is an online reading test used to measure your child's reading ability. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes around 20 minutes. Your child takes a STAR Reading Test 3 times, at the beginning, middle and end of the academic year. It helps to track their reading progress, and provides an up to date Reading Age.

Why do students take a Star Reading test?

STAR Reading tests produce two important pieces of information:

Reading Age – an estimate of a child's reading ability, in reference to an average age at which a comparable ability is found. E.g. if your child has a Reading Age of 13 years, this means they have the reading ability of an average 13 year old. Reading Age does not always correlate with a child's actual age.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) – This indicates the difficulty level of books your child should be reading – books that are neither too easy nor too overly challenging. Books in the school library are colour coded and categorised according to how challenging they are to read, starting at Book Level 0.9 and going up to Book Levels of 8+. Your child will receive a ZPD Range (e.g. Book Level 4.5 to 6.9), meaning they will have a wide and varied selection of books to choose from. Reading books within their ZPD Range will reduce the possibility of your child getting bored or frustrated with what they are reading, and increase the likelihood of their reading ability improving.

Why do AR books have points?

Books are assigned Points based on factors including word count, sentence length and vocabulary. For example, a book that is Book Level 1.2, is very short, and contains simple sentences and words could be worth 0.5 points. A book that is Book Level 6.5, is of significant length and contains sophisticated sentence structures and vocabulary could be worth 25 points. Points are earned by passing Reading Quizzes, and students are set personalised points targets each term by their teacher.

How does the school motivate students to read?

In Library Lessons, students have individual conversations with their English teachers about what they are reading. As students complete a certain amount of quizzes and accumulate a certain amount of points, they receive certificates and achievement points to celebrate their progress. Prizes for the highest achieving students in each class and year group are awarded in Reward Assemblies three times a year.

How can I help my child become a better reader?

- **Make time for them to read at home.** Children need to read for at least 20 minutes every day to improve their reading ability. Reading frequently will make reading a far more enjoyable experience!
- **Encourage your child to read:** discuss books, asking questions about what they have read, and visit your local library.
- **Make sure your child is prepared for their fortnightly Library Lesson** – check they have packed their reading book the night before. Ask to see their Reading Log (in their English Book) to find out what they have been reading, and to check that they are keeping it neat and up to date.