

# A Parent's Guide to Accelerated Reader



**Accelerated™**  
Reader



**Atlantic Academy Portland**  
an Aspirations Academy

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At Atlantic Academy our children participate in the Accelerated Reader program. This guide is designed to answer your questions about Accelerated Reader. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or visit the Renaissance website at [www.renlearn.co.uk](http://www.renlearn.co.uk).

## **What Is Accelerated Reader?**

Accelerated Reader 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 a chromebook. (Passing the quiz is an indication that your child understood what was read.) Accelerated Reader gives both children and teachers feedback based on the quiz results, which the teacher then uses to help your child set targets and direct ongoing reading practice.

Children using Accelerated Reader 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 help your child choose books at an appropriate reading level that are challenging without being frustrating, ensuring that your child can pass the quiz and experience success.

If your child does not do well on a quiz, an adult can help them:

- Choose another book that is more appropriate.
- Ask more probing questions as your child reads and before taking a quiz.
- Pair your child with another child/ sibling
- Read the book to/ with the child instead.

In most cases, children really enjoy taking the quizzes. Since they are reading books at their 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?**

According to research, children who read at least **20 minutes a day** with a 90% comprehension rate (average percentage correct) on Accelerated Reader quizzes see the greatest gains. Therefore, it is fundamental that your child reads at least **20 minutes a day**. Children in KS2 are assigned 20 minutes reading for their homework daily.

### **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 or bookshop on a regular basis, letting your child see you reading and discussing books that each of you have read. When reading with your child, stop and ask questions to be sure your child is comprehending what is read. Reading with your child, no matter what the child's age, is an important part of developing a good reader, building a lifelong love of reading and learning and creating a loving relationship between you and your child. Make learning a family affair!

### **What if my child does not like reading?**

Using Accelerated Reader, your child will choose the books he/she wants to read. The teacher will make certain the book is at the right level so that after completing the book, your child should do well on the Accelerated Reader 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 do not like reading will develop a love of reading.

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

Teachers determine your child's reading level through completion of a Star Reading test.

### **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 responses. If the child's

response to a question is correct, the difficulty level of the next question is increased. If the child misses a question, the difficulty level of the next question is reduced. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 20 minutes.

### **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. It is important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within their ZPDs. ZPDs should be adjusted based on the needs of your child.

### **What are points?**

Every book that has an Accelerated Reader Reading Practice Quiz is given a point value. Accelerated Reader points are computed based on the difficulty of the book and the length of the book (number of words).

Children earn points, or a portion of a book's points, depending on how well they do on the Reading Practice Quiz. For example, a child who takes a 5-question quiz on a book worth 1 point will earn 1 point for 5 correct answers (100%), 0.8 point for 4 correct answers (80%), etc. A child 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. For quizzes with 3, 5 or 10 questions, a child needs to pass a quiz with a score of 60% or higher to earn points. For quizzes with 20 questions, a child needs to pass with a score of 70% or higher to earn points.

You may notice that some popular books have more points assigned to them than some classic pieces of literature. J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, for example, is a 44-point book, while Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is a 4-point book. Keep in mind that this does not mean we think *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* is a better book or more worthwhile to read than *Macbeth*, only that, at 257,154 words versus 19,048 words, it is much longer and provides more reading practice time.

## **How many Accelerated Reader quizzes are there?**

There are over 210,000 Accelerated Reader quizzes available, with more being written every month.

## **What is the purpose of the quiz?**

The purpose of the **Reading Practice Quizzes** is to determine whether your child has read a book, to measure your child's literal comprehension of the book and to provide immediate feedback. Each Reading Practice Quiz consists of 3, 5, 10 or 20 multiple-choice questions depending on book level and length.

## **How will I know if a book has an Accelerated Reader quiz?**

You can visit Accelerated Reader Bookfinder at [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk) to conduct a search of all available books with Accelerated Reader quizzes. You may find that lots of your books at home can be quizzed too.

## **Can my child take a quiz at home?**

Yes, every child can quiz their AR book at school or at home. You can visit the Atlantic Academy website, educational links, [Accelerated Reader](#) where your child can sign in with their AR login and take a quiz.

## **How can I help my child find books that are interesting to him or her?**

Visit [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk) and click **Advanced Search**. By conducting an advanced search, you can generate book lists that contain titles based on the criteria you enter such as book level, topic, interest level, fiction/nonfiction, 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 ages fall into each interest level.

Interest Level	Year Level
LY - Lower Years	Ages 5-8
MY - Middle Years	Ages 9-13
MY+ - Middle Years Plus	Ages 12 and above
UY - Upper Years	Ages 14 and above

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

Even if a child is gifted at playing a musical instrument, the child has to practise to develop his or her talent. All children need to be challenged. Teachers using Accelerated Reader software in their classrooms find it easy to guide each student to books that give the child both challenge and success, regardless of the child's level.

### **How will I know how my child is doing?**

A TOPS Report is available after a child takes a quiz for feedback on your child's understanding of the book and shows cumulative data for the marking period and school year. The TOPS Report will appear once your child has completed a quiz.

### **What reading incentives are available for my child?**

Every week, we reward children who have read **250,000, 500,000 and 1,000,000** words with Bronze, Silver or Gold reading badges. Winners are announced weekly on the morning Daily Message Board and badges are awarded in House assemblies. Class teachers have their own reward system in place for those children who have passed a quiz such as raffle tickets or positive points.

