Atlantic Academy Portland

A Parent & Student Guide to Sparx Reader

Helping students build strong reading habits through regular, careful and independent reading.

What is Sparx Reader?

Sparx Reader is our online reading platform. It gives students access to e-books matched to their reading level and uses short checks after sections of a book to make sure they are reading carefully and understanding what they have read.

The key message: **The aim is not to read as quickly as possible. Students earn Sparx Reader Points (SRP) by reading carefully and successfully completing comprehension checks.**

What are the homework expectations?

At Atlantic Academy, Sparx Reader forms part of the weekly English homework and is due on Friday. Students should complete their reading during the week rather than leaving it until the deadline.

Weekly expectation at Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	Weekly expectation at Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)	How progress is measured
Around 30 minutes of careful reading	**Around 1 hour of careful reading**	**Complete the SRP target shown in the current homework**

Sparx Reader Points are personalised to reading speed: 10 SRP is roughly equivalent to one minute of careful reading. Reading can be spread across several sessions and Sparx Reader returns students to the place where they stopped.

Read carefully, not quickly: After each section, the text disappears and students answer a small number of questions. If they have read carefully, the check should be straightforward. If they do not pass, Sparx Reader asks them to re-read the section and try again.

A good Sparx Reader homework routine

Step 1	**GET READY**	Log in, open the current homework and choose or continue the book provided at the student's reading level.
Step 2	**READ**	Read the section carefully. Do not skim, rush or click through simply to reach the questions.
Step 3	**THINK**	At each check, recall the important events, characters or information from the section before answering.
Step 4	**RE-READ**	If a check is not passed, return to the section and read it again carefully. Use the second attempt to learn from what was missed.
Step 5	**KEEP GOING**	Continue until the weekly SRP target is complete. Extra reading is welcome and can help catch up recent incomplete homework.

How Parents and Carers Can Help

Support the reading habit, show interest in the book and let your child do the reading and thinking.

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If your child says, 'I don't know the answer...'

Try saying: 'What do you remember from that section?' • 'Who or what was it mainly about?' • 'Did you read that part carefully?' • 'If Sparx asks you to re-read, what might you have missed?'

Do...

- Know that Friday is the Sparx Reader homework deadline and encourage reading little and often during the week.
- Help create a quiet reading environment and reduce distractions while your child is reading.
- Show interest in the book: ask what is happening, which character they find interesting or what they think might happen next.
- Encourage your child to slow down and re-read if a comprehension check is not passed.
- Celebrate regular reading and careful understanding rather than speed.
- Use the weekly Sparx parent email/Parent Portal, where available, to see homework information and progress.

Avoid...

- Reading the section for your child or answering the comprehension questions for them.
- Encouraging them to skim the text in order to finish more quickly.
- Treating a failed check as a problem. Re-reading is an important part of becoming a stronger reader.
- Focusing only on points. SRP are evidence of careful reading; the real goal is stronger reading habits and understanding.

Accessibility and additional needs

Students can personalise the reading display in Sparx Reader. Available settings include font-size adjustment, line and letter spacing and dyslexia-friendly fonts on desktop and mobile devices.

If a book feels too difficult: Please encourage your child to speak to school rather than struggle silently. Sparx Reader continually learns from students' reading and uses this information to refine their reading level and book selection.

Useful things to know

- Questions appear after natural breaks in the text and are based on the important content students have just read.
- Students can complete their weekly reading in more than one sitting.
- Optional vocabulary practice is available in Sparx Reader and can earn additional SRP, but it is not required as part of the weekly homework target.
- Parents may receive weekly progress emails and a celebratory email when an e-book is completed.

Need help?

School support	Please contact the school if your child is regularly struggling to access or complete Sparx Reader.

Homework support	Homework Club is available after school, with access to computers and a quiet place to work.
Sparx Reader support	Use the official Sparx Reader Help Centre for platform guidance and technical support.

Final reminder: Regular, careful reading matters more than racing through a book. Encourage the habit, talk about the reading and let your child do the thinking.

READ CAREFULLY • THINK • CHECK UNDERSTANDING • RE-READ • KEEP GOING