



ACCELERATED READING: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



The use of Accelerated Reader in Key Stage Two (Year Three to Year Six) is only one part of improving a child's reading at Berkswich CE. Through many opportunities - from weekly reading adventures and daily reading for pleasure, to special events and days - we continuously strive to develop a delight and confidence in reading as a priority for every child in school.

Welcome to the Berkswich Accelerated Reader (AR) guide!

The following information will help you to make the most of the home-reading programme for children in Years Three to Six. Please see the separate Home Connect letter for your child's log on details. For a quick reference guide - it may be worth starting with the back page of this booklet.



Page 3

What is Accelerated Reader (AR)?

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

What is a STAR Reading test?

What is a Book Level?

Page 4

What is a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)?

Can my child read outside of the ZPD range?

What is Interest Level?

What is the Quiz Number for?

Page 5

What feedback will teachers and pupils receive?

Choosing Books

Step by Step Instructions for Book Searches

Page 6

Celebrations

Initial Hiccups!

Page 7

Quick Guide

A Parent's Guide to AR



What is Accelerated Reader (AR)?

AR is a computer programme which helps teachers manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. Your child picks a book at his or her own level and reads it at their own pace. When finished, your child takes a short quiz on the school-based AR website - doing well in the quiz is an indication that your child has understood what has been read.

Teachers may support pupils by:

- talking regularly with the children about what reading they have enjoyed
- guiding them to books appropriate to their ability and interests
- challenging them to read a wider range of books
- providing opportunities for your child to read, share reading or be read to

Since children are reading books at their own reading and interest levels, most children are likely to be successful and enjoy the books and quizzes. Best of all, they learn and grow at their own pace.

How can I help my child become a better reader?

As with anything, performance improves with practice. According to Renaissance Learning's research (the creators of AR), children who read for at least twenty minutes a day within their reading range, with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes, see the greatest gains. Please encourage your child to read at home, discuss books, ask questions about what they have read and visit your local library. Sometimes a child is able to read a 'hard book', but struggles to understand the text fully. Please help your child to remain focused on what is important - understanding and enjoyment. This will see the best gains.

What is a STAR Reading test?

STAR Reading is used to determine your child's reading level. It is a computer-based reading assessment programme that uses computer-adaptive technology. Questions continually adjust to your child's responses. If the child's answer is correct, the difficulty level is increased. If the child cannot answer a question or answers incorrectly, then the difficulty level is reduced. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately ten minutes.

What is a Book Level?

Inside each book, there is a Book Level (BL) on a white sticker. Book Levels are reported using the ATOS™ readability formula and represent the difficulty of the text. The levels range from 0.5 - 13.5. Books are chosen based on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) range, recommended for each pupil by the results of their initial STAR Reading assessment.

A child's range is fairly wide and there may be occasions when they need to be guided towards the lower or higher end of this.

Quiz N. 234344
Great Reading
Anderton, Thomas
BL 3.9 Points 5.0

What is a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)?



ZPD is the range of books that will challenge a child without causing frustration or loss of motivation. Your child has received a ZPD, or reading range, after taking a STAR Reading test. It is important for children to read with a high degree of understanding and within his or her ZPD. This means that your child will not only be able to read the book, but will understand enough of the words and meanings to have a good comprehension of what has been read. This sound understanding will also help your child to more easily draw on contextual clues to decipher new vocabulary and phrases or sentences which are less familiar.

Can my child read outside of the ZPD range?

In the same way that an adult will choose a relaxing read, an old favourite or a more challenging novel, children are free to select a book outside of their given range. However, it has been shown that when 60-70% of a child's reading is within this range, more progress is made. If a child is reading above their ZPD and falling significantly or regularly below 80% in their quizzes, then it really is worth encouraging him or her to choose something a little less challenging in order to be able to focus on understanding and enjoyment. Please note that 90% is an ideal result for a test, since 100% in each quiz may indicate that a little more challenge is needed from time to time.

What is Interest Level?

On the sticker inside the book, there is LY (Lower Years), MY (Middle Years) or UY (Upper Years). The Interest Level indicates for which age group a book is appropriate, based on the content and themes. These are recommendations; teachers and parents are advised to use their best judgement when guiding pupils.



The examples above have a book level of 4.0 as both have short sentences and vocabulary that are simple. However, the subject matter in Noughts and Crosses is intended for older pupils - Upper Years - while content of The Enormous Crocodile is more suited to Lower Years. Parental permission will be sought, before older pupils read UY books.

What is the Quiz Number for?

On the sticker, there is a quiz number for each book. In AR, there is a database of over 200,000 book quizzes, with about two hundred being added every month. Soon after completing a book, children log-in to AR in school and enter the quiz number. This really must be the quiz number, not the title since there may be more than one version of the story (e.g. an easier reader or the full version); in this way, the children will only be asked questions about the actual text read. There are around ten questions, written at a reading level suitable for what has been read. Children answer in school time. There are times when a child is capable of reading a book at a far higher level than they are comprehending. Ultimately, this will hinder progress. The quiz and discussions with the child will enable parents and teachers to check understanding easily and frequently.

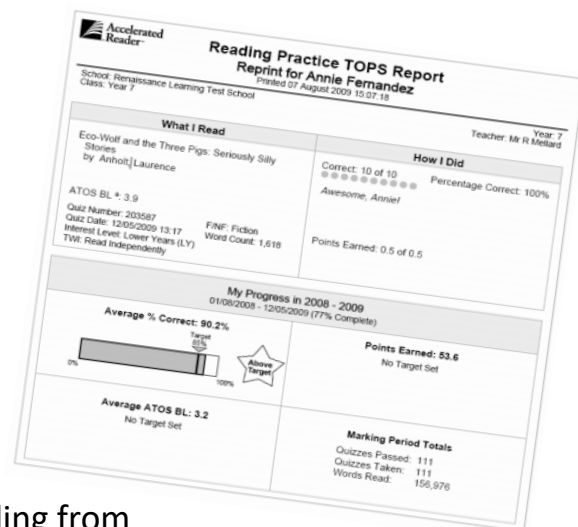


What feedback will teachers and pupils receive?

Accelerated Reader provides instant feedback for pupils and tracks all scores. Teachers monitor quiz results and provide encouragement and guidance. Students try to average 85% or above on their comprehension quizzes. This indicates good comprehension and will lead to greater progress in reading ability.



Parents, carers and children can track their children's reading from home, using the website Home Connect; you will have received a letter with your child's details and instructions for this. Ask your child to log on, using their username and password. Click on the bottom-left link to add an email address. In this way, parents and carers can receive instant feedback after a quiz has been taken. The bookshelf, in your child's area shows all of the books a child has read and been quizzed on and there is a dashboard showing your child's results.



Choosing Books

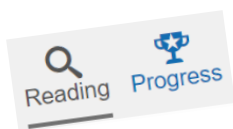
Children can continue to choose a book from school. However, you may wish to use your local library or books from home. AR Book Finder can be accessed directly via the link at the bottom right of the Home Connect screen (or via www.arbookfind.co.uk). You can carry out a quick search to see if a book has an AR quiz, or use an advanced search to check for books at a certain level or a particular genre or topic. For example, the search facility means that you can see if there is a quiz for a book that a child owns at home. Alternatively, if you are encouraging your child to read a wider range of books, then you can search for one with, for example, a historical or futuristic setting.

Children do not have to choose a book from school. Even if a book does not have an AR sticker inside, it may be listed on AR and the book finder will show you the quiz number. Of course, a child can also read books outside of AR; these will not be recorded on the system, but **will** continue to be valued and celebrated by children and teachers.

When the children use Home Connect, there is an option to search for books and receive recommendations on the home page.

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEND)

All children receive reading books to enjoy at home. With the guidance of the SENDCo, teachers will help children with SEND to select books, so that they are able to be supported and challenged appropriately. When necessary, some children will use an adapted version of the AR system; this may include the opportunity to take quizzes for books read to them by family members at home. Parents and carers will be informed if adaptations have been made. We will continue to celebrate the achievements of every child in the class.



Home Connect

Reading 1.10

Your child will have brought home a letter with their Home Connect details (website, username and password). This means that they are able to search for books, see recommendations and enjoy viewing their books already read. The children's progress can be seen by clicking on the 'Progress' tab top-right. Parents and carers are able to view quiz results by adding their email via the link on the homepage.

Celebrations!

Different aspects of AR will motivate different children. For some, seeing an increasing word count will be encouraging; the number of words in each book and each quiz are added to a running total. We celebrate with children as they meet their own specific goals (e.g. reading a wider range of books than before, reading more regularly or challenging themselves to learn new vocabulary found in their reading) as well as rewarding the child when they become a word-millionaire for the first time. Time is given in collective worships and each week in class, to celebrate successes, particularly when a child has encouraged or inspired others.

Regardless of any system, our main aim is for children to continue to enjoy their learning journey and develop a delight in reading that is life-long. We will monitor your child's reading closely, but if you have any concerns about their confidence or motivation, then please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher.

Initial Hiccups

With any system, there are bound to be a few initial problems. Please ask as many questions as necessary. There is so much information initially, but you will find AR simple to use within a short space of time.

There will be an opportunity to ask about AR in a Zoom drop-in session. Please see the email from your child's class teacher.





For more detailed information and definitions of terms used, please see the fuller guide inside this booklet.

To start

1. Do visit: [Accelerated Reader Explained | Berkswich CE Primary School](#) for a quick introduction presented by children at our school.
2. Your child will choose a book within their individual book level (BL) range. Each book in school is labelled with a book level number to help with this.
3. Your child will read their book.
4. Soon after finishing the book, your child will log-on to the school AR site **in class**.
5. Inside their book, there will be a sticker with a quiz number. They must type this number in and then tick the relevant box (I have been read to, I have shared reading or I have read independently). Your child will then answer the questions about the book.
6. After the quiz, the child receives instant feedback. You may view the results, word count and the bookshelf containing the books read, using Home Connect (see your child's letter sent home for further instructions and the log-on details).
7. Your child will then choose another book within their range. They may use the Book Finder at the bottom of the screen for ideas about what to read next, or simply find one with an appropriate sticker in school. Home books may be read too; just type the title in Book Finder to find out if it is listed and what level the book is.
8. Above all, it is vital that your child is enjoying their own reading and they continue to have opportunities to read at home and be read to. When reading to your child, we ask that they look at the text as you read.
9. AR is only one part of reading at Berkswich. Through many opportunities - from weekly reading adventures and daily reading for pleasure, to special events and days - we continuously strive to develop a delight and confidence in reading as a priority.
10. There will be an opportunity to ask about AR in a Zoom drop-in session. Please see the email from your child's class teacher.