

# A Parent's Guide to... Accelerated Reader



## Welcome! Your child is taking part in the Accelerated Reader Programme ("AR").

### What is the Accelerated Reader Programme?

Accelerated Reader is an exciting internet based computer programme that helps teachers monitor and manage students' independent reading practice. Your child will be able to pick a book at their own reading level and read it at their own pace. When they have finished their book, your child is able to take a short quiz on the computer about the book they have just read (passing the quiz is an indication that your child understood what was read). AR will give both the children and the teachers feedback based upon the results of the quiz. Teachers can then use this information to help your child set goals and direct their ongoing reading practice.

Children using AR have the ability to 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 and other staff will help your child choose books at an appropriate level, that is challenging without being frustrating, and help to ensure your child can pass the quiz and experience success.

If your child does not do as well at the quizzes, the teacher may help them by:

- Encouraging them to choose another book that is more appropriate.
- Asking more probing questions as they read and before they take a quiz.
- Pairing them with another student.

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

## Questions and answers about the Accelerated Reader Programme and the BookFinder

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

Every child takes a reading test in June / July each academic year. We use these results to help us plan provision for your child and these are part of the information we provide to teachers. However, students take another test for AR called a STAR Reading Test which provides us with their ZPD (Zone of Proximal development) for AR.

### 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 response. If their response is correct, the difficulty level is increased. If the child misses a question, the difficulty level is reduced. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 10 minutes. No reading test is 100% accurate 100% of the time, but these tests give a good indication to the school of your child's reading and understanding level.

### My child has a low reading age, should I worry?

AR is being introduced to help your child to increase the amount of reading they do and also their reading skills. Many students with low reading ages will already be on our SEN register and many may already receive extra support. However, the important thing is to make sure that your child benefits from AR and hopefully makes gains over the year. As a parent/carer, please make sure you support your child's reading at home and talk to the school if you have any concerns.

### What is a book level (ATOS)?

Book levels are attached to each book and represent the difficulty of the text. This is not the same as the reading age. As well as a reading age, students will be given a ZPD which sets them a range in which they can choose a book level; for example 4.2 to 6.6.

### What is a Zone of Proximal Development?

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 will be adjusted according to the needs of each child.

### What is an interest level?

Books are also classified by interest level, depending on their content. These are classified as lower, middle or upper years. The content of upper years may be more suited to students over the age of 14.

### What are points?

Every book that has an AR Reading Practice Quiz is given a point value. AR points are computer generated based on the difficulty of the book (ATOS readability level) and the length of the book (number of words). For example '13 Words' by Lemony Snicket is a 0.5 point book - about 849 words long and a book level of 3.5, whilst Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix' book, is a 44 point book - about 257,154 words long and a book level of 7.2.



### How will I know if a book has an AR quiz?

All the stock in our Library has been labelled to show it is an AR book and also the levels of the book. Go to [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk) to conduct a search of all books with AR quizzes.

### What rewards will my child get?

Rewards will be based on points accumulated over a period of time, words read over time and progress made in reading levels and you will be informed of the details of rewards over the coming weeks.

### How much should my child read during the school day?

One of the English lessons is dedicated to AR each fortnight. We will be encouraging children to read at other times though - registration, breaks, lunchtime, after school and at home. According to research, children who read at least 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains.

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

Encourage your child to read at home. Create a culture of reading in your household by reading with your child, visiting the library, letting your child see you read and discussing books that each of you has read. When reading together, stop and ask questions to check that your child understands what they have read. Reading with your child, no matter how old they are, is an important part of developing a good reader, building a lifelong love of reading and learning.

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

All children need to be challenged, no matter what their ability is and Accelerated Reader stretches and challenges all children to become better readers. All children need to be challenged to reach their full potential.

### What if my child doesn't like reading?

Using Accelerated Reader, your child will choose the books they want to read. Their teacher will make certain the book is at the right level so that after completing the book, your child should do well on the AR 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 don't like reading will develop a love of reading.

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

You can log onto Accelerated Reader at home with your child through the link on our school website. Click on 'Students', 'Literacy' and then you will see the link. By entering your child's log in details, you will be able to see how they are doing and can access a TOPS Report that tells you and your child how they are doing so you can follow their progress.

### Finally...

Thank you for taking the time to read this information about the Accelerated Reader Programme. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.



# A Parent's Guide to... AR Book Finder



## What is the Accelerated Reader Book Finder?

AR BookFinder is an exciting internet based book searching tool from Renaissance Learning that works alongside the AR program. With this free online tool you can search for books that are both interesting and are the appropriate level for your child, quickly and easily.

We would encourage you to take the time to explore this tool with your child, to visit the AR BookFinder just go to [www.arbookfind.com](http://www.arbookfind.com).

## How to use the AR BookFinder.

- To use Quick Search in AR BookFinder:
- Go to [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk).
- Click the **Quick Search** tab (on the top of the page).
- Type a book title, author, topic, or quiz number into the blank field.
- Click **Go**.
- To narrow the search results, select any of the options on the left of the screen under **Refine Your Search**.
- You can continue to refine your search until you get your desired results.
- To create a book list from the titles you have found,
- Click **Add to AR Book Bag** below the description of any book you want to add to your list.



This guide has been designed to answer any questions that you may have about this programme.

If you have any additional questions, please contact either Mr Roper, Miss Chorley, or Mr Halligan, or visit the Accelerated Reader Web-site at [www.renlearn.co.uk](http://www.renlearn.co.uk)

## How to use the Advanced Search on AR BookFinder

The Advanced Search tab allows you to enter more search criteria such as reading level (ATOS), interest level, topics, fiction/nonfiction, and language to get more specific results.

- Click the **Advanced Search** tab (on the top of the page).
- To determine the parameters of your search, select **Contains**, **Starts With**, or **Exact Match**. Enter your search criteria and click **Go**.
- To be sure that the results are appropriate for your child, we recommend that you enter a Reading Level (ATOS). When entering a Reading level, you are also required to enter an interest level. For more information on ATOS book levels and interest levels, click the question mark icon.
- If you are uncertain what books may interest your child, choose a topic and a subtopic to see a list of book categories.
- When AR BookFinder returns your list of search results, you can narrow the results list by selecting any of the options on the left of the screen under **Refine Your Search** (not shown). You can continue to **refine your search** until you get your desired results.

