

Parent's Guide to Accelerated Reader

What is Accelerated Reader (AR)?

AR is a computer program that helps teachers and librarians manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. Your child picks a book at their own level and reads it at their own pace. When finished, your child takes a quiz on the computer. (Passing the quiz is an indication that your child understood what was read.) AR gives children, teachers, and librarians feedback based on the quiz results, which the teacher then uses to help your child set goals and direct ongoing reading practice. Children using AR 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 librarians help your child choose books at an appropriate readability 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 the quiz, the teacher, tutor or librarian may help your child:

- Choose another book that is more appropriate.
- Ask more probing questions as your child reads and before your child takes a quiz.
- Pair your child with another student, or even have the book read to your child.

In most cases, children really enjoy taking the quizzes. Since they're 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 will my child read during the school day?

According to research, children who read at least 35 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate (average percent correct) on AR quizzes see the greatest gains. Therefore, your child should have at least 20 minutes set aside for reading during each school day.

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 bookstore on a regular basis, letting your child see you reading, and discussing books that each of you has read. When reading with your child, stop and ask questions to be sure your child is comprehending what is read.

What if my child doesn't like reading?

Using Accelerated Reader, your child will choose the books he wants to read. The teacher or librarian 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 or librarian, and success, even students who say they don't like reading will develop a love of reading.

Will my child have to read a book I don't want him to read?

No. There are many, many choices of books at your child's level. Your child will never be forced to read a book you find questionable.

I'm concerned that my child will be unfairly compared to others.

Then you'll really like AR because it helps the teacher or librarian work with each child individually. Students using AR are encouraged to progress at their own pace and set their own goals with the help of the teacher. The aim of AR is for all children to succeed in achieving their goals.

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

Teachers or librarians determine your child's reading level using a STAR Reading™ test.

What is a STAR Reading™ test?

STAR Reading is a computerized reading assessment that uses computer-adaptive technology. Questions continually adjust to your child's responses. If the child's 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 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. The ZPD and the GE (Grade Equivalent) score from the STAR Reading test will show up in Accelerated Reader, making it easier for teachers and librarians to set goals for students. It's 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 is an ATOS™ book level?

Book levels are reported using the ATOS readability formula and represent the difficulty of the text. For example, an ATOS book level of 4.5 means that the text could likely be read by a student whose reading skills are at the level typical of Year 5.

How many Accelerated Reader quizzes are there?

There are over 160,000 AR quizzes available.

What kinds of quizzes are there?

Accelerated Reader includes several types of quizzes designed to support the development of several reading skills. Quiz types include:

- **Reading Practice Quizzes** are the most common type of assessment in AR. The purpose of these quizzes is to determine whether your child has read a book, to measure 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. They are available in English and Recorded Voice formats.
- **Vocabulary Practice Quizzes** measure a child's command of vocabulary words encountered while reading. They are designed to reinforce vocabulary acquisition, assist with individualizing vocabulary instruction, and generate your child's interest in words through authentic, in-context literature experiences. Quizzes include 5, 10, or 15 words from a particular book as well as review words from previously read books.

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

Visit the AR BookFinder™ at arbookfind.co.uk to conduct a search of all available books with AR quizzes.

How can I help my child find books that are interesting to him?

Visit arbookfind.co.uk and click on 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.

My child already does well in school. Why does she/he need this?

Even if a child is gifted at playing a musical instrument, she has to practice to develop her talent. Bright children, like all children, need to be challenged. Teachers using AR 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.

My child is not a strong reader. Can she/he still use Accelerated Reader?

Accelerated Reader helps all children become better readers, from students with special needs to those who are gifted and talented. When children read books at an appropriate level, they experience success. Furthermore, teachers and librarians work with children to set appropriate goals based on each child's reading level.

How will my child take a quiz?

Your child will take their quiz during class or tutor time, and within 48 hours of them having finished their book.