



Home of Irresistible Learning

Dear Parents,

Accelerated Reader is used in Years 3-6 to increase your child's reading motivation, help them to choose appropriate books and allow their teacher to monitor their independent reading.

Accelerated Reader is for use mainly within school but there are ways that you can support at home.

All children in key stage 2 should have received a username and password in their diaries so that they can access the site easily in school. From home, DESS's Accelerated Reader website should be accessed through the DESS learning hub, where your child can input their username and password. They will then be given two options: Star Reading and Accelerated Reader.

### **Star Reading**

This is the program that we use in school to assess children's reading levels – this should not be accessed at home.

### **Accelerated Reader**

By clicking on the Accelerated Reader tab, your child can track their progress, see how many points they have achieved and receive personalised book recommendations. They are not able to take quizzes at home.

### **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 his own level and reads it at his own pace. When finished, your child takes a short 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. Every time a quiz is passed, a child receives points which accumulate over time. At different points levels, children will receive certificates and other rewards.

**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 STAR Reading™ test and their best professional judgment based on other reading assessments and their knowledge of your child.

**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 15 minutes. These short tests will be taken periodically throughout the school year.

**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, or teachers and librarians can use their best professional judgment to determine a ZPD. The ZPD 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 will be adjusted based on the needs of your child and after every STAR test. Children can take accelerated reader books within their ZPD range from the library. The higher within the range the child reads, the greater the challenge and the more points they will receive.

**My child already does well in school. Why does she 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 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?**

There are two different ways students can take Accelerated Reader quizzes at school: on the computer or on a mobile device (iPad®, iPod touch®, or iPhone®). **Quizzing from home is not permitted.**

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

Visit **arbookfind.co.uk** (this can also be accessed through the DESS learning hub). 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. You will also be able to see which of these books are available in the DESS library from home by typing in the code **YA461442**. Follow the steps below:

1. Do an open search to create your own list.
2. Go to **AR BookFinder** at this Web address: **arbookfind.co.uk** (this can also be accessed through the DESS learning hub).
3. Click the **Quick search** tab and type the author's name, a topic or a book title.
4. Click the **Advanced Search** tab for expanded search options. Your search results will provide details about each book.
5. Click the **Add to AR Bookbag** icon next to each book you are interested in to add the title to your virtual book bag. Click the **Remove from AR BookBag** icon to remove it.
6. Click **AR BookBag** to see a list of your selections.
7. Click **Print** to view the list in an Adobe Reader window. Then, click the printer icon to print your book bag list to take to your library or bookshop.

### **Accelerated Reader Rules and Guidance**

1. Key Stage 2 children should choose one Accelerated Reader book from the library each week from within their ZPD (children will be allowed up to three library books in total so they can still take other books which interest them).
2. Children should complete quizzes as soon as possible after completing a book.
3. Quizzes should only be taken at school.
4. Quizzes can be taken at library time, break times in the library or any other convenient time agreed by the class teacher.

We hope that your children enjoy using Accelerated Reader and that it will become a valuable component in helping to develop their lifelong love of reading.

Kind regards,

Matt Adams  
Literacy Leader

Tracy Ammourey  
Librarian