



## Reading at John Wesley School

This guide is designed to answer your questions about helping your child learn to read, as they move through the school and explain Accelerated Reader. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher.

### **What books will my child take home after they start school?**

Children from Reception to KS1 are provided with a reading book from the Big Cat reading scheme. This reading scheme has been chosen to complement the synthetic phonic programme (Letters and Sounds) that operates in school. This reading scheme is a phonetically decodable scheme which is now recommended as the prime methods of teaching early reading skills. It is really important that they continue to practise their phonic skills with the Big Cat books which links to the daily phonics lessons and their weekly spellings. Once the children become confident and fluent readers, usually towards the end of Year 1, they will then be moved onto Accelerated Reader, which you will learn more about later in this booklet.

### **How often will my child's books be changed?**

Generally speaking, we will aim to change reading books in KS1 as and when is required. This will be a number of times in the week.

### **How do I listen to my child read?**



Please take time to read with your child at home. This should be a fun activity and choose time when your child is most responsive (i.e. not immediately before bedtime or during their favourite TV programme!) Find a quiet, place to curl up with a book! This involves taking time out of often busy schedules. Make sure there are no distractions and that the TV is off. Generally speaking, children should read with an adult. This teaches children that reading is a grown-up thing to do, is valued and important. If the evening is not convenient, try reading first thing in a morning instead.

### ***Regular reading practise is the key to success!***

### **What do I do when my child is reading?**

Encourage them to have a go at words they don't know by using the pictures in the story, the events of the book. Ask them questions about what they are reading from time to time. Above all, enjoy it! Laugh at the funny bits and enjoy this time.

Children who do often have little comprehension of the words they read they will often struggle to make deductions from the text, or predict. Worst of all, they may actually dislike reading which rather than being a pleasurable thing to do becomes a tiresome chore.

## What is Accelerated Reader (AR)?

AR is a computer program that helps teachers manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. Your child picks a book at his/her own level and reads it at his/her own pace. When finished, your child takes a short quiz on the computer - passing the quiz is an indication that your child has understood what has been read. AR gives both children and teachers feedback based on the quiz results which the teacher then uses to help the child set targets and ongoing reading practice.



Children using AR have a free choice of the books they read from our school library, rather than having one assigned to them. This makes reading a much more enjoyable experience as they feel in control and can choose books that are interesting to them. These will be challenging without being frustrating and will also be at a level at which your child can pass the quiz and experience success.

If your child does not do well on the quiz, the teacher may assist him/her by:

- Helping choose another book that is more appropriate
- Asking more probing questions as your child reads and before he/she takes a quiz
- Pairing your child with another pupil or even having the book read to your child.

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.

## Is this how reading is assessed in school?

No. A 'book level' or 'reading age' does not enable an accurate assessment of reading to be made. Through reading tasks in literacy, through guided reading, the teacher will assess children's ability: to decode print (to know what a words say) e.g. to sound out, to use the context of the writing to tackle unknown words, to vary intonation appropriately when reading) to understand what they have read (to know what the words mean) e.g. to make predictions about a story, to ask and answer questions about what has been read, to discuss words and phrases that engage the reader AR provides an additional tool for the teacher to use in informing this judgement.

For more information about how the school assesses reading, please view the assessment policy.

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

According to research, children who read at least 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains. Therefore, your child will 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 bookshop on a regular basis and by letting your child see you reading. When reading with your child stop and ask questions to be sure your child comprehends what they have read and in general make a habit of discussing books that each of you has read.

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

Teachers determine your child's reading level in one of three ways: a STAR Reading test, a reading age estimation from a standardised test, or by using his/her best professional judgment based on his/her knowledge of your child.

## What is a STAR Reading test?

STAR Reading is a computer based reading assessment program, within AR 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 cannot answer a question or answers incorrectly, the difficulty level is reduced. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 10 minutes.

## What is a ZPD Range?

After your child has undertaken an initial 'Star Reading' assessment which has provided them with a reading age, reading level and a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) range. This ZPD range will allow the children to select appropriate reading books that will be best suited to develop their reading ability and comprehension. A child's ZPD range could change during the year depending on their 'Star Reading' assessment which will be undertaken every half term. Every pupil will be given a note in their Reading Logs that will tell them, and yourselves, what their ZPD range is.

## Is it OK for my child to read outside of their reading level?

Yes – this is fine. However, just because a child can read the words in a book does not mean the content is appropriate. The Interest Level of the material must be considered. Interest level is based on content—a book's themes and ideas—and indicates for which age group a book is appropriate. The chart below shows which years fall into each Interest Level.

Interest Level	Year/ Level
Big Cat phonically decodable books	EYFS – Year 1
Lower Years Books	Year1/ 2 – Year 3
Middle Years Books	Year 4 – Year 6

However, if there is a book that is not on the Accelerated Reader system or there is a book that sits outside their ZPD range and they would really like to read it, we will not discourage them in doing so, but suggest that they read it as well as a book within their ZPD range. You can look for books in your child's range by using :

[www.arbookfinder.co.uk](http://www.arbookfinder.co.uk)

## What happens in the Quiz?

The most exciting part of the Accelerated Reader program is the quizzes that it provides. When your child has finished a book, they can take a quiz to test their knowledge of it and develop their comprehension skills. These quizzes can only be accessed and undertaken within school during reading sessions using an iPad or computer. A child needs to pass a quiz with a score of 60% or higher. However, a pass rate of 85% is recommended to optimise each child's reading development.

Accelerated Reader helps all children become better readers regardless of their reading ability. When children read books at their appropriate level, they experience success. Furthermore, teachers work with children to set appropriate targets based on each child's reading level.

## 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 his/her literal comprehension of the book and to provide immediate feedback. Each Reading Practice Quiz consists of 5, 10 or 20 multiple-choice questions depending on book level and length.

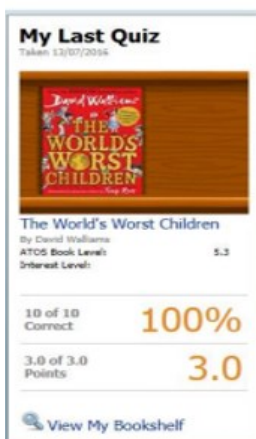
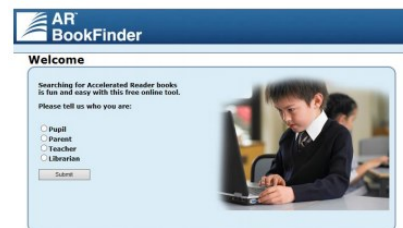
**Vocabulary Practice Quizzes:** Measure a child's command of vocabulary words in context while reading specific books. They are designed to reinforce vocabulary acquisition, assist with individualising vocabulary instruction and to stimulate your child's interest in words through authentic, in-context, literature experiences. Quizzes include 5, 10 or 15 words from a particular book as well as review words from previously read books.

**Literacy Skills Quizzes:** Are designed to give your child's teacher information on specific reading skills. Questions are randomly generated from a 36-strong item bank resulting in 12 or 24 quiz questions. Due to item-bank technology, Literacy Skills Quizzes can be taken up to three times. Quiz questions are based on 24 specific higher order reading comprehension skills.



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

You can also visit the AR BookFinder at [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk) to conduct a search of all available books with AR quizzes. Visit [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk) and click on [Advanced Search](#). By conducting an advanced search, you will be able to generate book lists that contain titles based on the criteria you enter such as Book Level, Topic, Interest Level and Fiction/Non-fiction, etc.



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

A TOPS Report prints automatically after a child takes a quiz to give feedback on your child's understanding of the book and shows cumulative data for the marking period and school year.

Parents are able to access their child's AR information in **Renaissance Place Home Connect** from any web-enabled computer or tablet. Once on the site, you will be able to view your child's progress towards targets, points and books read.