

Chessington School A Parents' Guide to Accelerated Reader

What is Renaissance Accelerated Reader?

Accelerated Reader (AR) is a computer program that helps teachers to 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.

What is a Renaissance Star Reading® test?

Star Reading is used to determine your child's reading level. It is a computer based reading assessment program 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 20 minutes to complete.

What is a Book Level?

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 ZPD range recommended for each pupil by Star Reading.

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 will receive a ZPD, or reading range, after taking a Star Reading test. It is important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within his/her ZPD.

What are points?

Every book that has an AR Reading Practice Quiz is given a points value. AR points are based on the length of the book (number of words). Pupils earn a percentage of points according to how well they pass the quiz.

When should my child take a quiz?

When your child finishes a book they should take a quiz within 24 hours of finishing the book. This should be done at home or in homework club at school - not within the Accelerated Reader timetabled lesson. This lesson is reserved for reading.

How can I help my child at home?

As with anything, performance improves with practice. According to Renaissance Learning's research, children who read at least 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains. Encourage your child to read at home - perhaps ask them to read aloud to you - discuss books and ask questions about what they have read. At Chessington our expectation is that students are reading for at least an hour at home every week. Year 7 and 8 also have one timetabled lesson a week in which to read and one tutor time a week will be reading their book.

What are the expectations with regard to book borrowing?

Students may take out one book at a time. We are aware that students read at different speeds. For Year 7 and 8, given that we see them every week in an Accelerated Reader lesson, there is no time limit on how long they can have a book out for. However, the expectation is that students are reading the book and should finish it so will naturally need to return the book and borrow a new one. If it becomes evident that a student isn't reading their book, we will have a conversation with the student and perhaps a call to you to see how they are getting on with reading at home.

In the event that a book is lost or damaged we may ask you to pay for a replacement book.

When can my child return and borrow books?

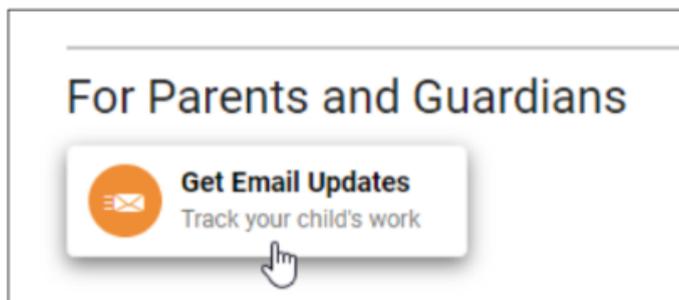
This can take place during the AR lesson, before school, during break, during lunch or after school. The library is always open!

We have lots of books at home. Does my child have to take a book out from the school library?

Not necessarily. Lots of books have had quizzes created for them by the Renaissance team. Go to www.arbookfind.co.uk to see if a book has been read and prepared by the Renaissance team, what ZPD it has and what its interest level is. We would like your child to have a reading book in their school bag every day, however.

How can I see how many quizzes my child has taken?

Ask your child to log into their Renaissance account. Scroll down and at the bottom of the page you will see this:



*The ATOS readability formula is applied to all the text that appears in a book and looks at three things: average sentence length, average word length, and word difficulty level. The higher book level a book has, the more difficult it will be to read. ATOS book levels are consistent, reliable and objective measures of text complexity, but they do not take the plot or themes of the book into account. The interest level will give you a recommendation of the appropriateness of the content.

To help you choose the books most appropriate for your children, Accelerated Reader Quizzes are divided into four interest levels:

- LY (Lower Years, Ages 5–8)
- MY (Middle Years, Ages 9–13)
- MY+ (Middle Years Plus, Ages 12 and above)
- UY (Upper Years, Ages 14 and above)