



A Parent's Guide to Accelerated Reader

Developing Lifelong Readers

At Stanley Crook Primary School, we are committed to helping every child become a confident, fluent and enthusiastic reader.

We use **Accelerated Reader (AR)** as part of our reading provision from Key Stage 2. Accelerated Reader helps children to choose books that are suitable for their reading ability, encourages regular reading and enables teachers to monitor reading progress accurately.

This guide explains how Accelerated Reader works and how you can support your child at home.

What is Accelerated Reader?

Accelerated Reader is a computer-based programme developed by Renaissance Learning that helps teachers monitor and guide children's independent reading.

Children:

1. Choose a book within their recommended reading range.
2. Read the book independently.
3. Complete an online quiz when they finish.
4. Receive immediate feedback on their understanding of the book.
5. Track their progress towards individual reading targets.

The programme focuses on **reading comprehension**, helping children to understand and think about what they have read rather than simply reading words accurately.

Why Do We Use Accelerated Reader?

Research shows that children make the best progress when they:

- Read regularly.
- Read books they enjoy.
- Read books at an appropriate level of challenge.
- Understand what they are reading.
- Discuss their reading with adults.

Accelerated Reader supports all of these areas by:

- Motivating children to read independently.
 - Providing regular feedback.
 - Allowing teachers to monitor progress closely.
 - Helping children develop good reading habits.
 - Encouraging children to become lifelong readers.
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How is My Child's Reading Level Decided?

Teachers use a range of information including:

- Teacher assessment.
- Guided reading observations.
- National Curriculum assessments.
- Reading fluency checks.
- STAR Reading Assessments (where appropriate).

This information is used to identify the most suitable reading range for your child.

Reading levels are reviewed regularly throughout the year.

What is STAR Reading?

STAR Reading is an online assessment used to support teacher judgement.

The assessment:

- Adapts to your child's responses.
- Takes approximately 15-20 minutes.
- Identifies reading strengths and areas for development.
- Helps determine an appropriate reading range.

STAR Reading is only one part of our assessment process and never replaces professional teacher judgement.

What is a ZPD?

ZPD stands for **Zone of Proximal Development**.

This is the range of books that are likely to provide the right level of challenge for your child.

Books within a child's ZPD should:

- ☒ Be challenging enough to promote progress
- ☒ Be easy enough to allow successful comprehension
- ☒ Build confidence and enjoyment

Children are encouraged to choose most of their reading books from within this range.

As reading improves, the ZPD will increase.

Can My Child Read Books Outside Their ZPD?

Absolutely.

We strongly encourage children to enjoy reading for pleasure and understand that many children will wish to read books outside their recommended range.

For example:

- Shared reading with an adult.
- Family reading time.
- Favourite authors.
- Library books.
- Non-fiction books linked to hobbies and interests.

However, books used for Accelerated Reader quizzes should usually be within the recommended range to ensure children achieve success and develop comprehension skills effectively.

What Happens When My Child Finishes a Book?

Once a child has completed a book, they may take a Reading Practice Quiz in school.

The quiz:

- Is completed online.
- Usually contains 5, 10 or 20 questions.
- Assesses understanding of the text.
- Provides instant feedback.

Quiz results help teachers identify:

- Understanding of the book.
 - Reading habits.
 - Progress over time.
 - Appropriate next steps.
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What is a Good Quiz Score?

As a guide:

Quiz Score	Meaning
85% - 100%	Excellent understanding
80% - 84%	Good understanding
60% - 79%	Acceptable understanding
Below 60%	Book may have been too challenging or not read carefully enough

Children should aim for an average comprehension score of around **85% or above**.

What are Accelerated Reader Points?

Each book is allocated points based on:

- Length of the book.
- Difficulty of the text.

Children earn points according to their quiz score.

Points are used to:

- Motivate reading.
- Celebrate achievement.
- Support target setting.

While points can be encouraging, our main focus is always on:

Reading regularly, understanding books and developing a love of reading.

How Are Reading Targets Set?

Teachers set personalised targets based on:

- Reading ability.
- Reading volume.
- Individual needs.
- Previous performance.

Targets are reviewed regularly and discussed with children throughout the year.

What if My Child Finds Reading Difficult?

Accelerated Reader is designed to support readers of all abilities.

Teachers and support staff will:

- Help children choose suitable books.
- Monitor progress closely.
- Provide additional support where necessary.
- Celebrate success and effort.

The programme is particularly effective because children read at a level where they can experience regular success.

How Can Parents Support at Home?

You play a vital role in your child's reading development.

You can help by:

Listening to Your Child Read

- Read together regularly.
- Encourage expression and fluency.
- Praise effort and perseverance.

Talking About Books

Ask questions such as:

- What happened in the story?
- Who was your favourite character?
- Why did that happen?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What was the main message of the book?

Encouraging Reading Routines

Aim for regular reading at home, even if only for a short period each day.

Little and often is more effective than occasional longer sessions.

Promoting Reading for Pleasure

Children become stronger readers when they enjoy reading.

Encourage:

- Fiction
- Non-fiction
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Comics
- Audiobooks (where appropriate)

How Can I Find Out Whether a Book Has an Accelerated Reader Quiz?

Parents can search for Accelerated Reader books using the Renaissance BookFinder website.

BookFinder allows you to:

- Search by title.
- Search by author.
- Find books within a reading range.
- Check whether a quiz is available.

Please contact school if you require support accessing this information.

How Will I Know How My Child Is Progressing?

Teachers regularly monitor:

- Reading frequency.
- Quiz results.
- Reading comprehension.
- Reading age information.
- Progress towards individual targets.

Information about reading progress may be shared through:

- Parents' evenings.
- School reports.
- Reading records.
- Discussions with teachers.

If you have concerns about your child's reading, please contact your child's class teacher.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does Accelerated Reader replace reading with an adult?

No.

Children benefit greatly from reading with parents and teachers. Accelerated Reader supports independent reading but does not replace shared reading experiences.

Should my child only read Accelerated Reader books?

No.

Children should enjoy a wide range of reading materials at home and school.

What happens if my child fails a quiz?

Teachers will review the result and help your child choose a more suitable book if necessary. A low score is used as a learning opportunity rather than a punishment.

Can my child retake a quiz?

School staff will make decisions about retaking quizzes based on individual circumstances.

Is reading level the same as age?

Not necessarily.

Every child develops at their own pace. Reading ranges are intended to support progress and should not be viewed as labels.

Working Together

The most important factor in reading success is children developing a genuine enjoyment of books.

By working together, home and school can help every child become a confident, successful and enthusiastic reader.

If you have any questions about Accelerated Reader or your child's reading progress, please contact your child's class teacher.