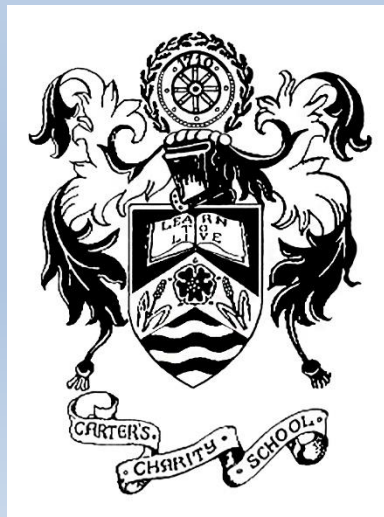# Accelerated Reader:
A Guide for Parents

Accelerated Reader: A Guide for Parents

We have introduced our **Accelerated Reader** programme, which is designed to do the following things:

- Find books that are the right ability for your child
- Encourage your child to read more
- Improve your child's reading ability.

Essentially, the AR project begins with all of those children who have completed Phase 6 in their Twinkl Phonics. Usually this is in Y3 but some children may start in Y2 depending upon their ability.

How it works...

At the start of the project every pupil took a **Star Test**, which is a computer-based test that measures a pupil's reading ability through a series of 34 questions.

Every test for every pupil is different, and the computer selects different questions for each pupil dependent on how well they answer the previous questions. Essentially, the computer adapts the test to suit your son or daughter.

Once the pupil has completed the test, they are then given a **ZPD score** by their teacher.
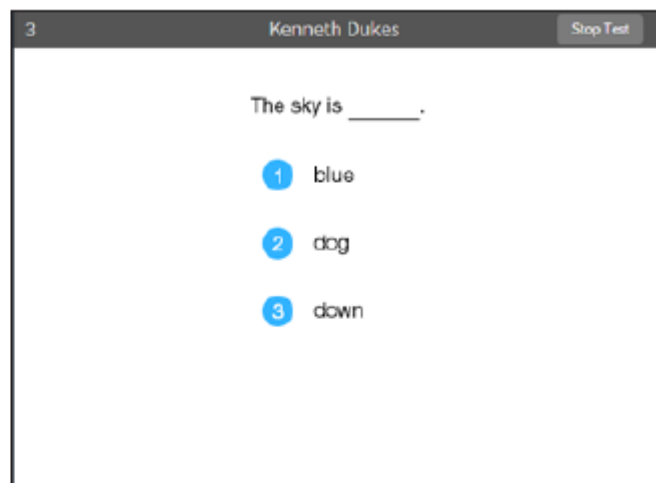
How STAR tests work

1) The pupil <u>must take their time. </u>It is recommended that each child should spend **<u>at least</u>** *20 minutes* on their tests. pupils are used to working quickly in timed conditions, but during a STAR test it is about concentration, focus and careful reading.
2) pupils should not guess answers to questions. Instead, they should wait for the question to time out. This is to ensure the computer is not given a false impression of the pupil's reading ability.
3) Tests are done in exam conditions without any help from other pupils or the teacher.

Picture 1

Fill-in-the-blank questions have a sentence with a word missing. There will also be a list of three or four words that could fit in the blank. Your job is to choose the word that best completes the sentence.
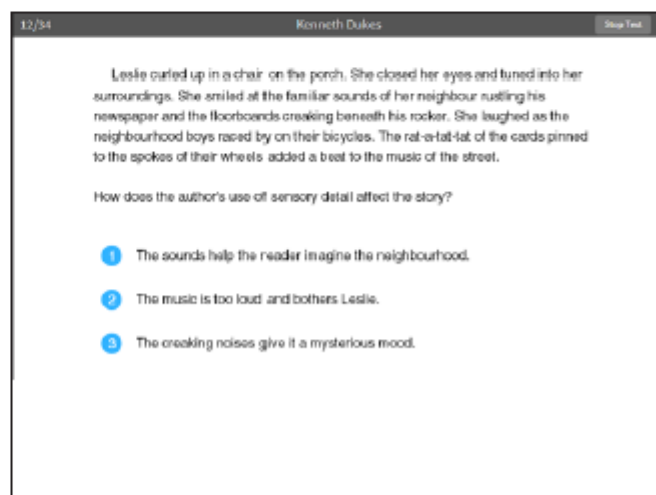
The sky is _____.

1 blue

2 dog

3 down

Web browser

Short-answer questions have a text passage at the top, followed by a question about the passage. There will be a list of three or four possible answers. Your job is to choose the best answer to the question.
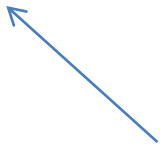
Leslie curled up in a chair on the porch. She closed her eyes and tuned into her surroundings. She smiled at the familiar sounds of her neighbour rustling his newspaper and the floorboards creaking beneath his rocker. She laughed as the neighbourhood boys raced by on their bicycles. The rat-a-tat-tat of the cards pinned to the spokes of their wheels added a beat to the music of the street.

How does the author's use of sensory detail affect the story?

1 The sounds help the reader imagine the neighbourhood.

2 The music is too loud and bothers Leslie.

3 The creaking noises give it a mysterious mood.

A ZPD score is given to your child after completing the STAR test

3.2 – 4.6

Lowest number

Highest number

I get sad every time I hear a person say, "I don't read." It's like saying "I don't learn," or "I don't laugh," or "I don't live."

ZPD is two numbers that the pupil uses to choose their next reading book.

The lowest number is the lowest level of book the pupil should be choosing.

The highest number is the highest level of book the pupil should be choosing.

A new STAR test takes place regularly, so pupils can see improvements in their reading ability, but also choose more challenging books.
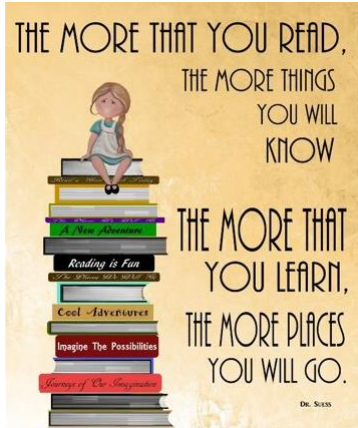
What books can my child read?

Unlike previous reading schemes, AR includes 1000s of titles and the list is updated almost daily! [Accelerated Reader Bookfinder](#) and just search.

Staff in school have catalogued all of the books we have, fiction and non-fiction, so, in the words of one child, "I've got a proper, thick book to read!"

Over the coming weeks we will be sharing guides about what the codes mean for you and your child.

AR Quizzes

A quiz is different to a STAR test because pupils only take a quiz **after** they have *finished* a book.

There are usually about 10 questions on the book that has been read. At the end of the quiz the pupils are given a percentage to show them how well they have done.

There are some important rules for taking quizzes:

1) The book the child is quizzed on **must be a book they have read in the last two weeks**. AR is not a memory test but rather measuring reading ability.
2) A pupil cannot take a quiz until they have read the entire text.
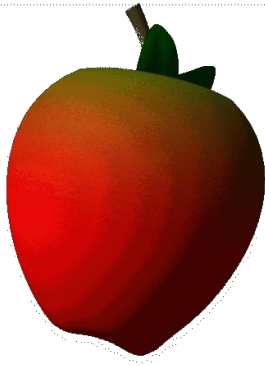3) Quizzes must be done individually, not with anyone's help.

Feedback

- An AR session with your child's teacher will go through how well your child is doing and what they need to do to get better at reading.

- Teachers are also there to ensure pupils are reading the right level and type of books.

- The computer can tell teachers very specific information about your child's reading development. For instance, it can even explain how many minutes a day your child is reading.
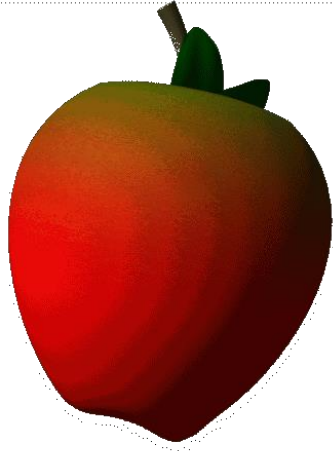
"How much should my child read each day?"

- According to Renaissance Learning's research, children who read <u>at least</u> 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains.

- Therefore, your child should have <u>at least </u>20 minutes set aside for reading during day.
- English teachers set reading homework on top of the other English homework they set.

"How can I help?"

- 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, charity shop 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.

Can a child who is not a strong reader still use Accelerated Reader?

- Accelerated Reader helps all children become better readers from pupil, regardless of initial 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.