Accelerated Reader

Information for Parents
Y2 – Y6

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, 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.

If necessary, staff will help your child choose books that are at an appropriate reading level. 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.

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.

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
- Showing different ways of taking notes e.g. mind-maps, post-it-notes
- 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

Getting Started

Children take a STAR Reading Test.

STAR Reading is a computer based reading assessment programme 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 - 15 minutes to complete.



The completed STAR Reading Test then determines your child's reading age; book level and ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development). Children then pick a book at his/her own level and reads it at his/her own pace.

Taking a Test

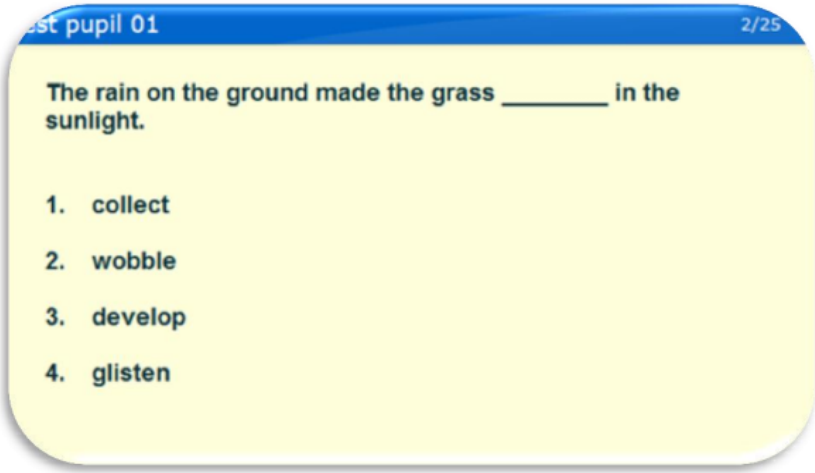
Accelerated Reader™ Advantage



10 minutes to take

Starting point for AR Formative Assessment

Measures growth and progress



Computer adaptive

Provides real-time data

Reading Ages

National Curriculum Levels

ZPD's

Renaissance Learning

Accelerated Reader

A database of quizzes to test comprehension of books read. Provides instant feedback and monitoring.

AR Books – Each quizzed book has a book level which represents the difficulty of text.

ZPD – An individual range of book levels recommended for each child's reading ability.

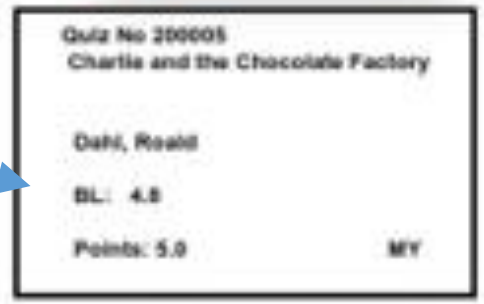


Children select books appropriate to their individual reading level and interests (using ZPD from STAR Reading test)

Books are labelled in the following ways to help guide choices:

Book level: The difficulty of the text (0.5 – 13.5) It is recommended that children read from the beginning of their ZPD.







What is a ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development)?
ZPD is the range of books that will challenge a child without causing frustration or loss of motivation. Your child will receive a ZPD after taking a STAR Reading test. It is important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within his/her ZPD. ZPDs can be adjusted by the teacher based on the needs and ability of your child.

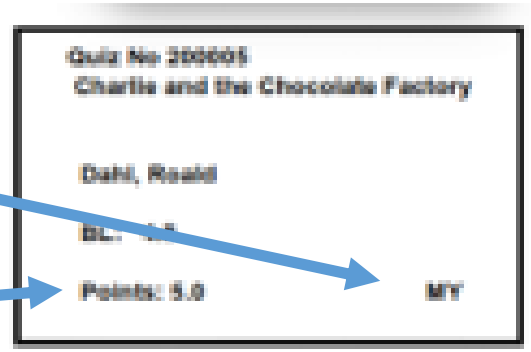
Your child's ZPD will look something like this: 3.6 – 4.2

It give a rage of material in which your child will read most comfortably with a level of challenge. The levels move from 0.1 through to above 10. All books within school associated with AR have a coded label on the front cover so that the children can easily see the level of the book they are considering.

Your child will be asked to choose books from AR that fall within the range of their ZPD. At the beginning of the term, they may be asked to work from their lower ranges of ZPD until the scores on their quizzes have become successful (90% or above each time)

Personal books, gifts and library books can be checked against the levelling system by entering their title or ISBN into ARBookfinder at www.arbookfind.co.uk . This can be a useful tool for determining if a book is suitable for your child to read independently. If a book is not on the levelling system, your child is still free to read it, as reading for pleasure is what is really important.

Interest Level: Relates to the content and appropriateness
Lower Years LY (5 – 8 years)
Middle Years MY (9 – 13 years)
Upper Years UY (14+ years)



Points: Points are based on the length and the number of words within a book.
For example:

Diary of a Wimpy Kid
BL: 5.2
Points: 3.0
Words: 19, 784

The Borrowers
BL: 5.3
Points: 5.0
Words: 34,792

The Borrowers is much longer and provides more reading practice time.

Earning Points

Children earn points on a pro rata basis depending on how well they do on the Reading Practice Quiz.

For example:

5 question quiz on a book worth 1 point

1 point will be earned for 5 correct answers (100%)

0.8 points will be earned for 4 correct answers (80%) and so on.

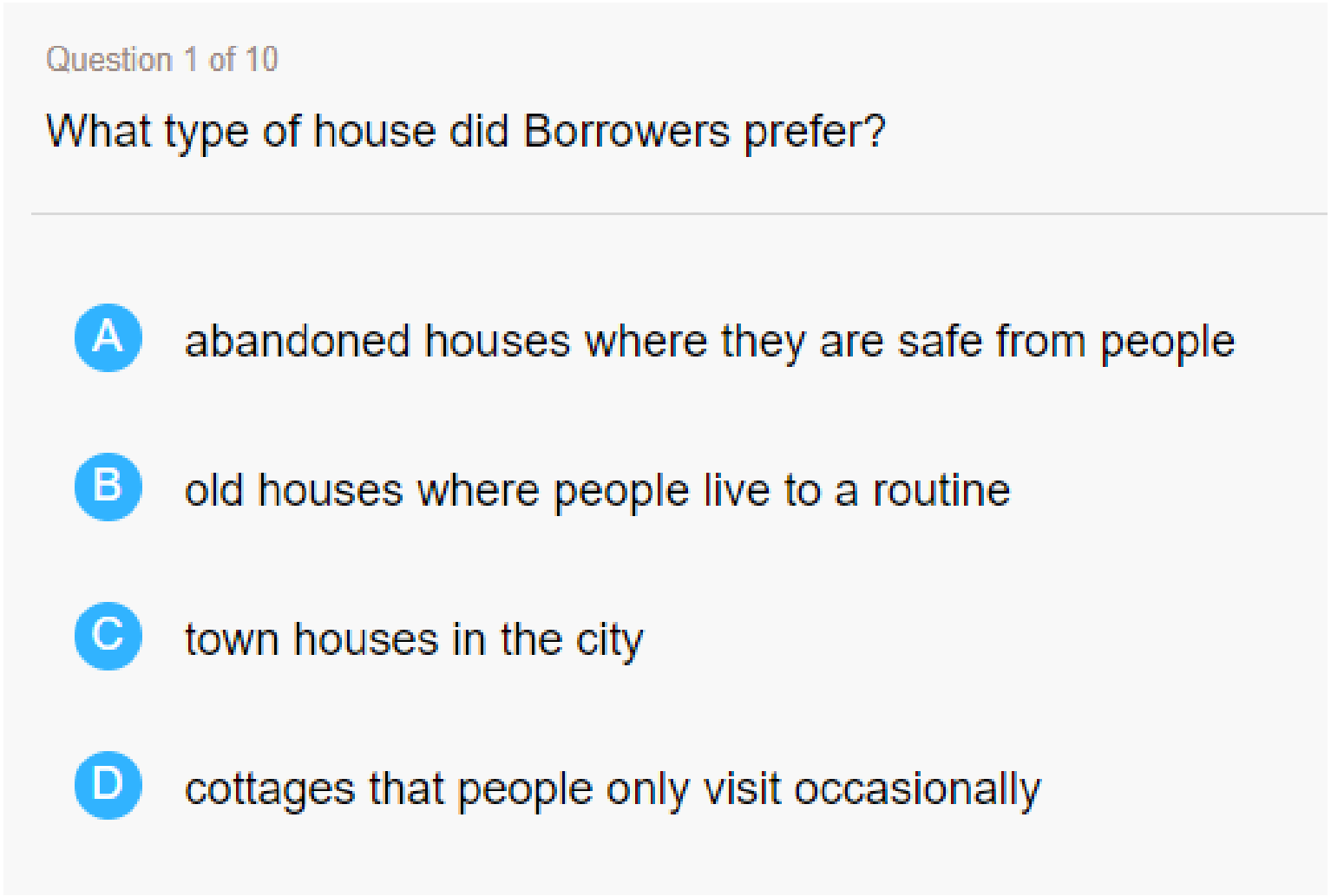
10 question quiz on a book worth 5 points

5 points will be earned for 10 correct answers (100%)

4.5 points will be earned for 9 correct answers (90%) and so on.

Please note a child needs to pass a quiz with a score of 60% or higher to earn points and words read.

A score of 90% or higher indicates a solid understanding of the text and your child will then be expected to choose a more difficult text (but still within their ZPD) for next time.



Quizzing:

- Quiz within 24 hours
- Multiple choice questions
- Earn points depending on score
- Tests comprehension
- Vocabulary quizzes reinforce words encountered
- Literacy Skills for higher order thinking
- Teacher monitors progress – average percentage correct

How much should my child read each day?

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.

Therefore, it's beneficial if your child has at least 20 minutes set aside for reading during the day.

How you can help your child to 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. E.g. What is the genre of the book they have picked, who are the key characters, what happens in the story
- Why not read the same book as your child so that you can actively discuss character and plot structure.

- Ask about the book title: what might be the significance of this? You might ask before they read and then as they near the end of the story as ideas are likely to change.
- Download the AR app and use the ARBookfinder to check appropriately levelled material at the library or bookshop.
- Ask your child whether they can empathise with the characters. Can they remember a time when they felt the same way?
- Ask your child to predict what might happen at different points in the text and ask them to consider how the plot might develop.
- Read with your child, reading a page each or taking roles of different characters is often fun. You might choose to read as a family – the Knocking Game is fun for this. (Each reader can read as little as four lines or a whole page. When they have had enough, they knock on the table and say the name of the next reader. The game carries on until the chapter is complete or when reading time is over. This gives children the opportunity to challenge themselves but also stop reading when they come to a difficult section or words they are unsure of.)
- Choose more difficult books with your child, ones they would like you to read to them or share some of your all-time favourites reads as a child.

How will I know how well my child is doing?

- You can access your child's AR information in **Renaissance Place Home Connect** from any web-enabled computer using the log in details, user name and password provided – ask your child's class teacher.
- Once in the program, you can view your child's progress towards targets, points and books read.
- You can also access **AR BookFinder** to search for titles of interest.
- You can only access information about your own child.
- If you'd like to receive emails showing your child's quiz or test results, click the Email Setup link in Renaissance Home Connect and follow the directions. To be sure these emails reach your inbox, add homeconnectautodelivery@renlearnrp.com to your address book.



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

- Accelerated Reader helps all children become better readers from pupils with special educational needs to those who are gifted and talented.
- When children read books at their appropriate level, they experience success.
- Teachers work with children to set appropriate targets based on each child's reading level.

If you have any further questions about Accelerated Reader, please speak with your child's class teacher.