

A Parent's Guide to Accelerated Reader

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have recently introduced a reading programme called Accelerated Reader (AR) to help us motivate the children to read and to measure and monitor progress. In a nutshell, your child will choose a reading book **pitched at their level** and read it at their own pace. When they finish the book, they will take a **short quiz** on a computer at school before choosing their next book. Using AR will provide your child with the opportunity to apply and improve the knowledge and skills they have developed in lessons.

What are STAR Reading Tests?

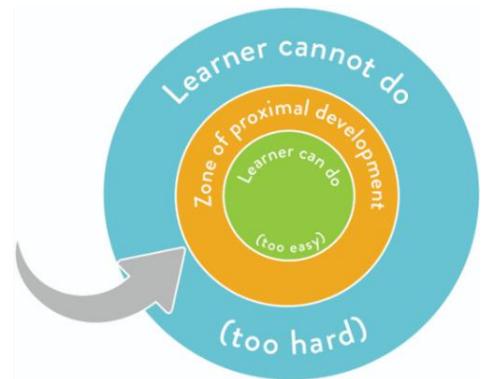
Every child will complete a **termly** STAR reading test on a computer. It takes a maximum of twenty-minutes and is multiple choice which the children find less daunting than a more formal test. Questions continually adjust to your child's responses, getting harder or easier accordingly.

We assessed the children just before Christmas and are assessing them again this week to ensure that we have the most up to date reading level for them.

What is a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)?

After your child takes a STAR reading test, they will be given a ZPD reading range. (This is in place of the old 'benchmarking system' which we used to assign reading levels for our Oxford Reading Scheme.) The range aims to challenge a child without causing frustration or loss of motivation.

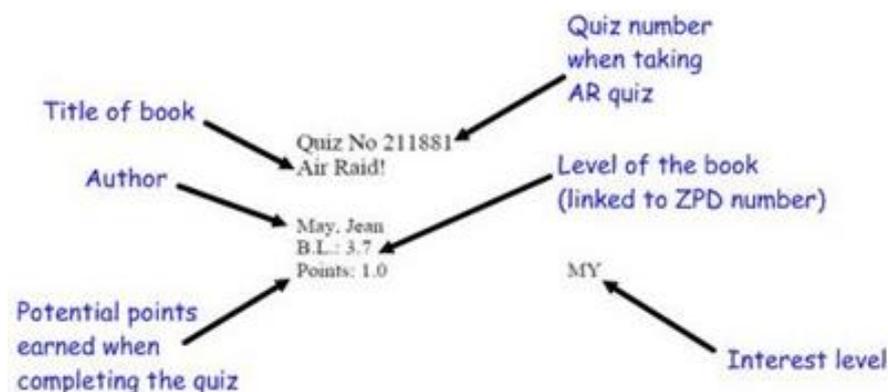
This week, your child will be told their ZPD range (and record it in their reading record book) and will know the range of the reading books they can choose from.



What books will my child read?

The Library Team have been busy recategorising the majority of our library books according to their ZPD number. All children will have access to a wide range of books which are suitable to their reading level. To ensure children experience success from the start, they will begin each term by taking books at the lower end of their ZPD range and then selecting a slightly more challenging book each time.

Each reading book your child will bring home has a personalised label on the inside cover which shows important information. This is an example of a book label.



B.L. = book level. A child uses their ZPD range to decide which books are appropriate for them to read. A child with a ZPD range of 2.8 – 4.0 would be able to read 'Air Raid' (see the example label) and it will be slightly challenging for them as it is towards the top end of their ZPD range.

Points = points value based on the difficulty of the book and the number of words.

LY/MY/UY = Lower Years interest level (5-8 yrs old), Middle years interest level (9-13 yrs old), Upper Years interest level (14+ yrs old) Just because your child can read the words in a book does not mean the content is appropriate. The interest level of the material is also be considered.

What are the AR Quizzes?

When your child has finished reading their book, **they will take an online quiz independently** on the computer **in school**. Passing the quiz is an indication that your child has understood the book. All quizzes should be taken within 48 hours of finishing a book.

There are two main types of multiple-choice online quizzes your child will take:

- Reading Practice Quizzes
- Vocabulary Practice Quizzes

Depending on the book level the quiz will take around 5-10 minutes to complete. The results are calculated and shown to the child instantly. If your child does not do well on a quiz, they will be encouraged to try the quiz again and/or choose a book that is more appropriate. The children who have started using these reading quizzes already have really enjoyed the process!

What do AR points mean?

Children are able to earn points for each AR quiz they do. For quizzes with 3, 5 or 10 questions, a child needs to pass a quiz with a score of 60% or higher to earn points. For quizzes with 20 questions, a child needs to pass with a score of 70% or higher to earn points.

We will shortly introduce a reward system to motivate children to read as much as they can and to celebrate individual successes.

How much time should my child spend reading?

As with anything, performance improves with practice. At Emmbrook Junior School, we encourage children to read at home for at least 10-15 minutes per day, a minimum of five times a week. Your support in this is much appreciated. According to research, children who read at least 20 minutes a day, with a 90% success rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains.

How can I help?

Encourage your child to read with you and/or discuss what they have read. A child may be able to decode and read the words but may not have understood it, so asking questions about the book is important. Reading with your child, no matter what the age, is an important part of developing good reading skills and a lifelong love of reading.

Try to either read **TO** or **WITH** your child every day as well as encouraging independent reading.

If you would like to find more books within your child's ZPD range, then here is a **link to Accelerated Reader Bookfinder**: <https://www.arbookfind.co.uk/UserType.aspx?RedirectURL=%2fdefault.aspx> Simply go onto the 'advanced search' option and type in their ZPD. Remember to indicate what interest level you are looking for too! You will then be able to browse from a selection of books perfect for your child's current level – ideal for gifts or to restock their bookshelves at home.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need more information or have any questions. I am more than happy to help.

Kind regards,

Miss R. J. Scales (Deputy Head Teacher)