

How does the programme work?

1. Your son/daughter will begin the programme by taking a Star Reading Test. This will test their vocabulary knowledge and sentence comprehension. These tests are done online and are individually calibrated to each student: if they make an incorrect answer, the next question will be a bit easier; whereas if they get the question correct, the next one will be slightly harder. The test continues like this until the student's reading age has been established.
2. After the test, the class teacher will speak to your son/daughter individually about their result. The test not only allows them to see the students reading age, but also tells the teacher what level of books your child should be reading so that they can progress as rapidly as possible. This level will be shared with your child so that when they go to the library, they will know what level of books to choose. This will normally be a range, such as 3.0 to 4.5. They will be advised to start at the bottom of this range and work up slowly.
3. Students will then go to the library to choose a book. Your child will have weekly library lessons with an English teacher so that they can get help with choosing books, if they need it.
4. Students are then expected to independently read the book they have chosen. This is their homework task. In KS3 we will set very little additional homework as we would like them to focus on their reading. They are expected to read for a minimum of 20 minutes, every day. However, they have a 1 hour library lesson each week and they also read during two tutor times, so if they make the most of these sessions in school, their homework will be reduced.
5. When they have finished their book, they will complete an online quiz which will test their understanding of the book. This must be done on a school computer. How well they do on the test will determine what level book they should choose next. **This quiz result will also determine their daily minutes. If they fail the book, they will not gain any extra minutes.**

If they get 80% to 100%, they should move up to a slightly higher level. For example, from 3.5 to 3.6/3.7/3.8.

If they get 70% to 80% they should choose a book at around the same level.

If they get below 70%, it means they have misunderstood quite a significant amount of the story, so they should drop down slightly in the levels.

6. Students will continue reading books until their next Star Reading Test. If their second test shows an improvement, the level of books they can read will increase.



The Accelerated Reader Process

Students take a Star Reading Test. This will show their reading age and the level of books they should be reading.

Students choose an appropriate book from the library. They start by choosing a book from the lower end of their recommended book level range.

Students read their book during tutor times, during their library lesson and for homework.

When they have finished the book, they will take the book's quiz to check that they have understood the story.

Students now choose a new book. The level of their next book will depend upon the score they get in the quiz.



Common queries

Q. Can my son/daughter read the book they got for their birthday, even though it's not at their level?

A. Of course, just let your teacher know the name of the book and enjoy!

Q. There are not many books in the top range in the library; what can they read?

A. If your son/daughter goes on the Accelerated Reader website they will find a list of books for their range. Pick one of those and the librarians will order it for them, free of charge. If they are not sure which book to choose, they should have a chat with their English teacher, who will be able to recommend other books for them, such as those from the Carnegie short list which they could alternate with AR books.

Q. Why are there so many classics at the top of the range?

A. The scheme is designed to stretch all students and once your son/daughter has reached gold, we would expect them to be reading books which will prepare them for the demands of the new GCSEs in English Language and Literature. In both these exams, there will be unseen extracts from classic literature; by getting used to reading challenging texts they will be giving themselves a head start.

Q. Isn't twenty minutes a day too long to be reading?

A. Remember they have an AR lesson every week, plus tutor time, so they should be able to keep up. In Miss Nunn's previous school, students were expected to read 40 minutes a day!

Q. What can they do if they have found a book that they really want to read, but there is no quiz for it?

A. Again, they should speak to their English teacher who will check if the book is appropriate. They can also request a quiz be written for a book; their teacher will submit the request if they ask. It is best to do this well in advance, as the quizzes take a bit of time to be written.

Q. They have just finished a book that is part of a series and they would like to read more in the series. Can they do this even if they are not all at the right level?

A. This is usually fine; we understand that if they have found a series they enjoy they will want to read as much as they can within it.

Q. I still don't really understand the scheme; what should I do?

A. You can email any queries to Miss Nunn at the College and you are very welcome to come into school for a visit, if you would prefer.

