



Accelerated Reader: A Guide for Parents



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In Key Stage 2 all students take part in the **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.



How it works...

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

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

Once the student has completed the test, they are then given a **ZPD score** by their teacher.



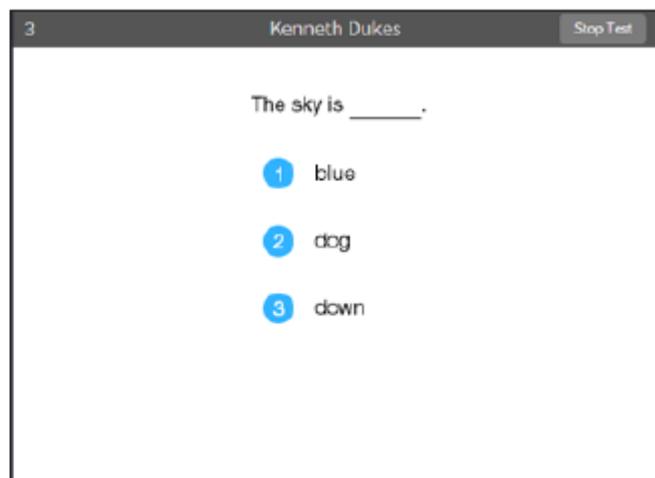
How STAR tests work

- 1) The student must take their time. It is recommended that each child should spend at least 20 minutes on their tests. Students are used to working quickly in timed conditions, but during a STAR test it is about concentration, focus and careful reading.
- 2) Students 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 student's reading ability.
- 3) Tests are done in exam conditions without any help from other students or the teacher.



Picture 1

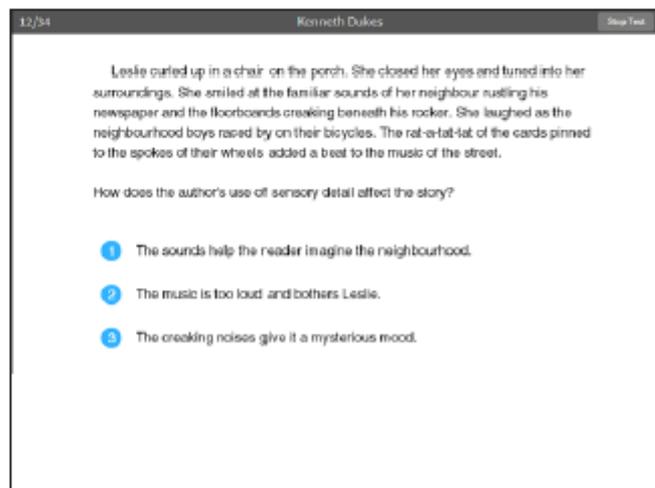
Fill-in-the-blank questions have a sentence with a word missing. There will also be a list of three or four words that could fit in the blank. Your job is to choose the word that best completes the sentence.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "Kenneth Dukes" and a "Stop Test" button in the top right corner. The page number "3" is in the top left. The main content is a fill-in-the-blank question: "The sky is _____." Below the question is a list of three options, each in a blue circle: "1 blue", "2 dog", and "3 down".

Web browser

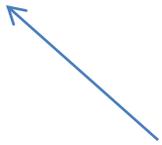
Short-answer questions have a text passage at the top, followed by a question about the passage. There will be a list of three or four possible answers. Your job is to choose the best answer to the question.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "Kenneth Dukes" and a "Stop Test" button in the top right corner. The page number "12/34" is in the top left. The main content is a short-answer question. It starts with a text passage: "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." Below the passage is the question: "How does the author's use of sensory detail affect the story?" and a list of three options, each in a blue circle: "1 The sounds help the reader imagine the neighbourhood.", "2 The music is too loud and bothers Leslie.", and "3 The creaking noises give it a mysterious mood."

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

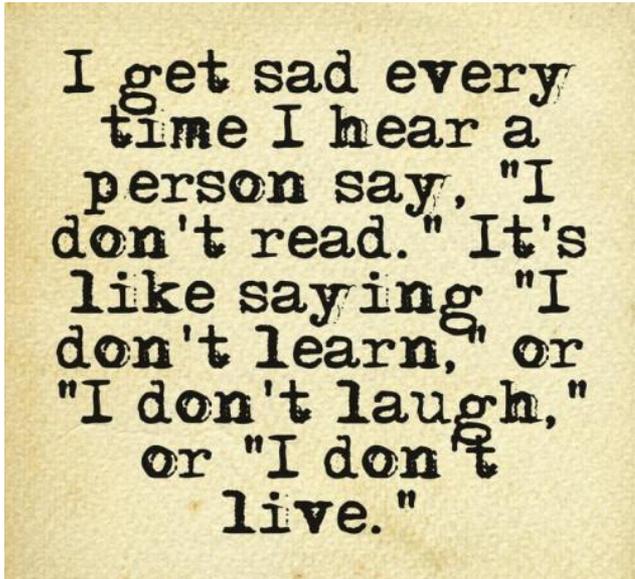
3.2 – 4.6



Lowest
number



Highest
number



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

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

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

Students keep a record of all their ZPDs in their planners or exercise books.

A new STAR test takes place every half term, so students can see improvements in their reading ability, but also choose more challenging books.

All the AR books in the LRC are colour-coded to help the student find the right one.



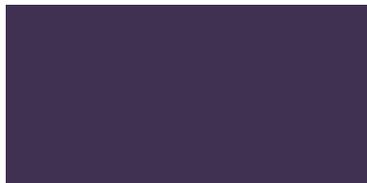
0.0 to 1.9



6 and above



2 to 2.9



3 to 3.9

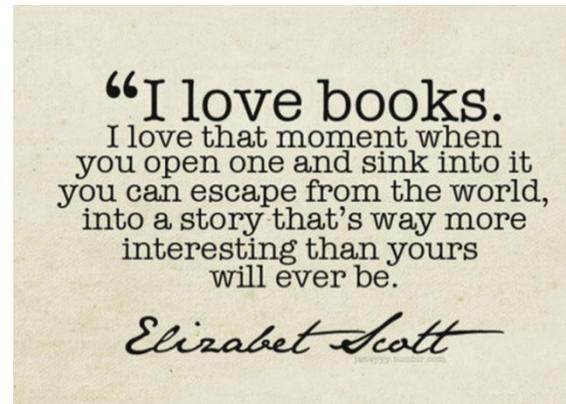


4 to 4.9

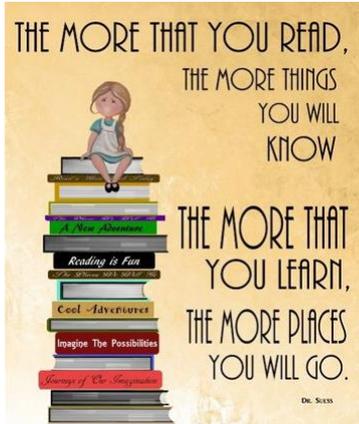


5 to 5.9

Students should only choose books within their numbers and the colours make it easier for them to choose the right book.



AR Quizzes



A quiz is different to a STAR test because students 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 students 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 student cannot take a quiz until they have read the entire text.
- 3) Quizzes must be done individually, not with anyone's help.

To read without reflecting is like eating without digesting.

- EDMUND BURKE

<http://fkf.me>

Feedback

- Every two weeks each teacher during the dedicated AR time will work with your child and provide them reading feedback.
- The AR time with the 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 students 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 at least 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains.
- Therefore, your child should have at least 20 minutes set aside for reading during day.



“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.

ARBookFind.co.uk

It's not just books from the school that students can read, they can read books from home and take quizzes on them!

You can use ARBookFind.co.uk to check whether your child's current book is on Accelerated Reader.



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.