



21 October 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Accelerated Reader Programme – English

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of how the Accelerated Reader programme that we use in Year 7, 8 and 9 English works and how you can support your child to make the most of it.

What is Accelerated Reader and how does it work?

The Accelerated Reader programme is a tool that we use in the English department to measure and increase students' progress in reading across Key-Stage 3 and beyond. At the start of each term, students complete 'Star Reading Tests', these measure students' levels of reading comprehension. The purpose is to establish a suitable level of challenge for each student.

Accelerated Reader Levels

All of the books in our library are assigned a level, based on the level of challenge that the book will present for students. As a result of their 'Star Reading Tests', each student is assigned a level based on their own unique reading ability (for example, 3.2-4.7). Teachers will then monitor how successfully the students are able to complete quizzes to gauge a suitable level of challenge in each book they read.

Quizzing

Students' progress between 'Star Reading Tests' is monitored through their use of the quiz function on Accelerated Reader. When a student finishes reading a library book, they will log on to a computer at school and complete a quiz. This quiz will test their comprehension and understanding of the book they have read. If students consistently score well at a certain level, they will be encouraged to move up and attempt a more challenging text, with the intention that students are continually progressing upwards.

How can you help?

Whilst Accelerated Reader does not currently allow students to complete quizzes outside of school, you can still support your child in making the most of this programme. This can be done by discussing what your child is reading with them, encouraging them to finish reading their library books so that they can quiz in lessons and asking them questions about what they are reading to help establish their level of comprehension.

Some prompts and ideas for these sorts of discussion can be found at the bottom of this letter.

The Importance of Reading

It is a well-established finding that students who read more achieve more in school, across all subjects. Reading helps students when they encounter different texts, helps them to express themselves, enhances and improves their vocabulary, improves their general knowledge as well as reducing stress and improving literacy. At Sackville, we place a great importance upon reading and for that reason it is important to us that you, as parents and carers, are informed of the programmes we use and the role they play your child's education.

Book Recommendations

At the bottom of this email there are also some book recommendations related to different levels of Accelerated Reader. Students can take this as a guide, but should also research books to ensure they fit with



their own interests. Many of these books are recommended by students from across Key Stage 3, so may not be suitable for all pupils.

Yours sincerely

Mr Z. Angella

Leader of Key-Stage 3 English and Whole-School Leader of Literacy

Talking about texts

Below are some examples of the sorts of questions you might use to encourage discussion around a text.

Structure and Comprehension Questions

These explore a student's understanding of the key features of the text, particularly the way it is put together.

- How did the story start?
- What is the story 'about'?
- Who is telling the story?
- Who are the important characters in the story?
- What have you learned about them so far?
- What is the main event of the story so far?
- Where does the story take place?
- What is the 'conflict' in the story?
- What 'genre' is the story?

Prediction Questions

These explore student understanding by asking them to use their knowledge of what they have read so far to predict further events in the story.

- What do you think will happen next? Why?
- How do you think the story is going to end? Why?
- What do you think will happen to the main character? Why?
- Do you think the story will have a 'happy' or 'sad' ending?

Inference Questions

These ask students to explore beneath the surface of a text.

- Why do you think the author wrote this story?
- What do you think is the message of the story?
- Why do you think the main character chose to ___?
- Why do you think the story started the way it did?

Opinion Questions

These explore the students' attitudes and opinions on the text.

- What is one thing you like about the story?
- What is one thing you would change about the story?
- Which characters do you like/dislike? Why?
- Would you read another book by this author? Why/why not?
- Did you find anything challenging about this book?

- Was there anything you didn't understand?
- Have you read any books like this before?
- Did you enjoy the opening of the story? How did it try to interest you?

Book Recommendations with AR Levels

These recommendations are largely from students across Key Stage 3, they may not be suitable for all pupils. Please research the books before taking out/purchasing.

1.0-4.0

Meet Steve Sharp, H.L. Dube
Skellig, David Almond
Cherub: Class A, Robert Muchamore
Illegal, Eoin Colfer
Under the Skin, Catherine Macphail
Tribes, Catherine Macphail

4.0-5.0

Loyal Creatures, Morris Gleitzman
Stone Cold, Robert Swindells
Wonder, R.J. Palacio
Holes, Louis Sachar
Running on the Roof of the World, Jess Butterworth
Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief, Rick Riordan
Blackout, Robert Swindells
A Monster Calls, Patrick Ness
The Midnight Gang, David Walliams
Birdsong, Katya Balen
Fear Ground, Jennifer Killick
The Girl Who Saved Christmas, Matt Haig
Welcome To Nowhere, Elizabeth Laird
Maggot Moon, Sally Gardner
Heroes Of Olympus: The Lost Hero, Rick Riordan

5.0-6.0

The Book Thief, Markus Zusak
Nation, Terry Pratchett
Stormbreaker, Anthony Horowitz
The Hunger Games, Suzanne Collins
War Horse, Michael Morpurgo
When the Sky Falls, Phil Earle
Death in the Spotlight, Robin Stevens
October, October, Katya Balen
Arctic Hero, Catherine Johnson
Artemis Fowl, Eoin Colfer
Journey to the River Sea, Eva Ibbotson
The Book of Legends, Lenny Henry
Goodnight Mister Tom, Michelle Magorian
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, John Boyne
War Horse, Michael Morpurgo
Shadow and Bone, Leigh Bardugo
Trash, Andy Mulligan

Time Travelling with a Hamster, Ross Welford

Kick, Mitch Johnson

Young Bond: Blood Fever, Charlie Higson

One, Sarah Crossan

I am Malala, Malala Yousefzai

The Creakers, Tom Fletcher

When Shadows Fall, Sita Brahmachari

6.0+

Cream Buns and Crime, Robin Stevens

Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone, J.K. Rowling

The Bane Chronicles, Cassandra Clare

The Carnivorous Carnival, Lemony Snicket

Guardian Angel, Robert Muchamore

The Children of Willesden Lane, Mona Golabek

The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, Douglas Adams