



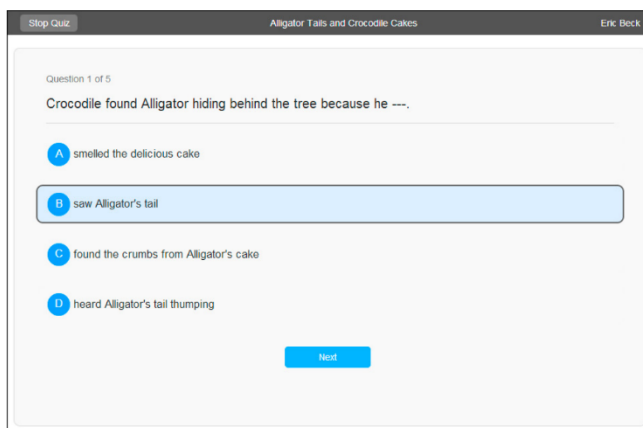
Parent's Guide to  
**Accelerated Reader®**  
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**RENAISSANCE®**  
[www.renaissance.com.au](http://www.renaissance.com.au)

Your child will be participating in the Accelerated Reader™ (AR™) program. This guide is designed to answer your questions about AR. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or visit the Accelerated Reader website at [www.renaissance.com.au](http://www.renaissance.com.au).

### 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 their own level and reads it at their own pace. When finished, your child takes a short quiz on the computer. (Passing the quiz is an indication that your child understood what was read.) AR gives both children and teachers feedback based on the quiz results, which the teacher then uses to help your child set targets and direct ongoing reading practice.



*A sample quiz question*

Children using AR choose their own books to read, rather than having one assigned to them. This makes reading a much more enjoyable experience as they can choose books that they are interested in. Teachers and librarians help your child choose books at an appropriate reading level that are challenging without being frustrating, ensuring that your child can pass the quiz and experience success.

If your child does not do well on a quiz, the teacher may help them:

- Choose another book that is more appropriate.
- Ask more probing questions as your child reads and before taking a quiz.
- Pair your child with another student, or even have the book read to your child.

In most cases, children really enjoy taking the quizzes. Since they are reading books at their reading and interest levels, they are more likely to be successful. This is satisfying for most children. Best of all, they learn and grow at their own pace.

### How much will my child read during the school day?

According to research, children who read at least 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate (average percentage correct) on AR quizzes see the greatest gains. Therefore, the aim is to have children read for at least 20 minutes a day.

### How can I help my child 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, letting your child see you reading and discussing books that each of you have read. When reading with your child, stop and ask questions to be sure your child is comprehending what is read.

## How does the school determine my child's reading level?

Teachers determine your child's reading level using a Star Reading™ assessment, which gives a reading age estimation.

## What is a Star Reading™ assessment?

Star Reading is a computerised reading assessment that uses computer-adaptive technology. Questions continually adjust to your child's responses. If the child's response to a question is correct, the difficulty level of the next question is increased. If the child misses a question, the difficulty level of the next question is reduced. The assessment uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 20 minutes.

## What is an ATOS™ book level?

Book levels are reported using the ATOS™ readability formula and represent the difficulty of the text. For example, an ATOS book level of 4.5 means that the text could likely be read by a student whose reading skills are at the level of a typical year five student.

## What is a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)?

In independent literature-based reading, ZPD is the range of books that will challenge a child without causing frustration or loss of motivation. Your child will receive a ZPD range after taking a Star Reading assessment. It is important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within their ZPDs. ZPDs will be adjusted based on the needs of your child as they continue through the program and are assessed each term with Star Reading.

## What are points?

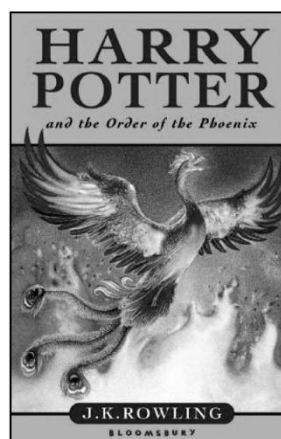
Every book that has an AR Reading Practice Quiz is given a point value. AR points are computed based on the difficulty of the books (ATOS readability level) and the length of the book (number of words).

Children earn points, or a portion of a book's points, depending on how well they do on the Reading Practice Quiz. For example, a child who reads a book worth 5 points and takes a 10-question quiz will earn 5 points for 10 correct answers (100%), 4.5 points for 9 correct answers (90%), etc. 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.

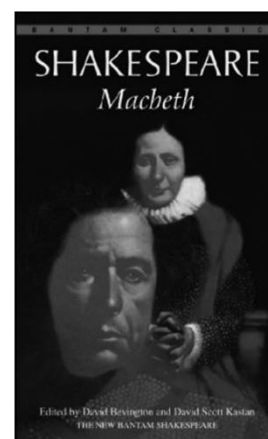
You may notice that some popular books have more points assigned to them than some classic pieces of literature. J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, for example, is a 44-point book while Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is a 4-point book. Keep in mind that this does not mean we think *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* is a better book or more worthwhile to read than *Macbeth*, only that – at 257,154 words versus 19,048 words – it is much longer and provides more reading practice time.

## How are Accelerated Reader point targets set?

Based on extensive research, we can provide guidelines for the approximate number of AR points children should be able to earn depending on how much time they read and their reading level. Monitoring AR points earned by children and comparing them to the guideline values enables your child's teacher to determine how well your child is using the time provided for reading practice. Students' scores will be accessible in Accelerated Reader, making it easier for teachers to set point targets for students.



44 pt. (257,154 words)



4 pt. (19,048 words)

## How many Accelerated Reader quizzes are there?

There are over 40,000 AR quizzes available, with more being written every month.

## What kinds of quizzes are there?

Accelerated Reader includes several types of quizzes designed to support the development of several reading skills. Quiz types include:

- **Reading Practice Quizzes** are the most common type of assessment in AR. The purpose of these quizzes is to determine whether your child has read a book, to measure your child's literal comprehension of the book and to provide immediate feedback. Each Reading Practice Quiz consists of 3, 5, 10 or 20 multiple-choice questions depending on book level and length.
- **Vocabulary Practice Quizzes** measure a child's command of vocabulary words encountered while reading. They are designed to reinforce vocabulary acquisition, assist with individualising vocabulary instruction and generate your child's interest in words through authentic, in-context literature experiences. Quizzes include 5, 10 or 15 words from a particular book as well as review words from previously read books.
- **Literacy Skills Quizzes** are designed to give your child's teacher information on specific reading skills. Questions are randomly generated from a 36 or 60 item bank resulting in 12 or 24 quiz questions. Due to item-bank technology, Literacy Skills Quizzes can be taken up to three times. Quiz questions are based on 24 specific, higher-order reading comprehension skills.

## How will I know if a book has an Accelerated Reader quiz?

To know which quizzes your school has available, contact your child's teacher or librarian. You can also visit the Accelerated Reader BookFinder™ at [www.arbookfind.com.au](http://www.arbookfind.com.au) to conduct a search of all available books with AR quizzes.

The screenshot shows the Renaissance Accelerated Reader Bookfinder website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Suggest Quizzes' and 'Help' links. Below this, the main header includes the 'RENAISSANCE' logo, the 'Accelerated Reader Bookfinder' title, and a map of Australia. The interface features a 'Parent' tab and three search options: 'Quick Search', 'Advanced Search', and 'Collections'. A large search input field is present, with a 'Search' button to its right. Below the search field, there is a section for 'Enter Keycode' with a 'Go' button. A small text box explains that a keycode is not needed for a basic search but is required for an advanced search based on criteria like book level, topic, and interest level.

## How can I help my child find books that are interesting to him/her?

Visit [www.arbookfind.com.au](http://www.arbookfind.com.au) and click **Advanced Search**. By conducting an advanced search, you can generate book lists that contain titles based on the criteria you enter such as book level, topic, interest level, fiction/non-fiction, etc.

## My child's teacher put a book list on the web. How do I access it?

Log onto Accelerated Read BookFinder at [www.arbookfind.com.au](http://www.arbookfind.com.au). Enter the keycode that the teacher provided your child and click **Go** to access the Teacher List created by your child's teacher.



### Is it OK for my child to read outside of their reading level?

Just because a child can read the words in a book does not mean the content is appropriate. The interest level of the material must be considered. Interest level is based on content – a book's themes and ideas – and indicates for which age group a book is appropriate. The chart below shows which ages fall into each interest level.

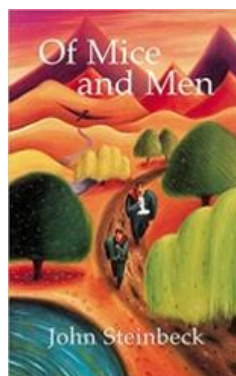
Interest Level	Year Level
LY – Lower Years	Ages 5 – 8
MY – Middle Years	Ages 9 – 13
UY – Upper Years	Ages 14 and above

*These are recommendations. It is the responsibility of teachers, librarians and parents to use their best judgement when guiding children to appropriate books.*

In many cases, a book's interest level coordinates with its book level. Many books, however, have a low book level but are appropriate for upper years and vice versa. For example, *Little Miss Sunshine* and *Of Mice and Men* have similar book levels because they both have short sentences and simple vocabulary. *Of Mice and Men* is intended for older students; therefore, it is tagged as Upper Years, while *Little Miss Sunshine* is tagged as Lower Years.



Book Level: 4.6  
Interest Level: LY



Book Level: 4.5  
Interest Level: UY

### My child already does well in school. Why does he/she need this?

Even if a child is gifted at playing a musical instrument, the child has to practice to develop his or her talent. Bright children, like all children, need to be challenged. Teachers using Accelerated Reader software in their classrooms find it easy to guide each student to books that give the child both challenge and success, regardless of the child's level.

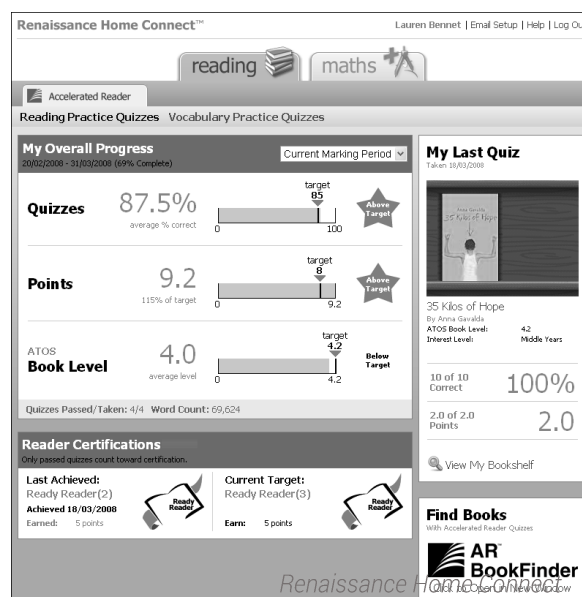
### My child is not a strong reader. Can he/she still use Accelerated Reader?

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

## How will I know how my child is doing?

A TOPS Report is available after a child takes a quiz for feedback on your child's understanding of the book and shows cumulative data for the marking period and school year.

You can access your child's Accelerated Reader information in Renaissance Home Connect™ from a computer with web access. You must first gain access to the program from the school. Once in the program, you can view your child's progress towards targets, points and books read to monitor your child's success. You can also access AR BookFinder to search for titles of interest. You can only access information about your child.



## What if I have more than one child using Accelerated Reader?

If you have more than one child in your home using AR Advantage, the information contained in the reports is only for the child you choose to view. You must request the information for each of your children.

## What if I have questions about using Renaissance Home Connect?

After logging in, click **Help** in the upper right-hand corner or contact your child's school.