

****NEWS RELEASE**NEWS RELEASE****

Counting the cost of raising literacy standards

Dedicated to raising the standards of literacy and numeracy in UK schools, Renaissance Learning welcomes the results achieved by the 3-year Every Child a Reader pilot scheme published today.

It has long been known that getting children, particularly those that are disadvantaged, interested in reading from an early age is vital to developing the life skills required for success in later life, and the intervention provided by this programme has proven to be very effective. However, this valuable work should not stop after such a short period of time, and daily reading practice needs to continue to help children develop a life-long love of reading. Renaissance Learning's acclaimed **Accelerated Reader**¹ (AR) program, which is currently being successfully used by over 200,000 children in the UK and by 73,000 schools worldwide, further develops and builds upon the results achieved by the pilot with impressive results – and is available for a fraction of the £10m Every Child a Reader expenditure, with an average of cost of just £4 per child.

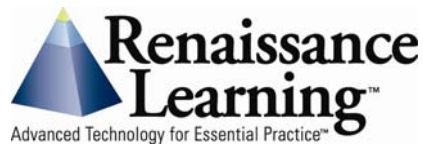
Offering continuous, high-quality assessment, AR focuses not only on comprehension quizzes of the UK's 14,000 most popular children's books, but also on vocabulary practice and higher order thinking skills – and is the subject of an in-depth study soon to be published by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. In this study pupils increased their reading age by over 3 years in only 6 months of using AR. This remarkable growth can be achieved by any age of under-achieving readers – not just 6-year olds – at both primary and secondary school level.

Dirk Foch, Managing Director of Renaissance Learning UK Ltd, comments: *"Everyone at Renaissance Learning welcomes the success of Every Child a Reader, but we strongly believe that continued daily reading practice, as proven by the PIRLS² Study, is the key to success. Not only is Accelerated Reader highly motivational – applauded by pupils and teachers alike – it offers continued assessment at a sustainable cost, and is proven to ensure that the success achieved by Every Child a Reader can continue from primary into secondary school."*

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For more information please contact Nicki Walker, Tel: 020 7184 4071, email nwalker@renlearn.co.uk, or Gareth Andrews, Tel: 020 7184 4074, email gandrews@renlearn.co.uk, website: www.renlearn.co.uk.

Notes to Editors

1. Currently used in over 2,000 UK schools, Accelerated Reader is an accurate and continuous progress-monitoring system that measures both the quantity and quality of individual book reading.
2. Inaugurated in 2001 and conducted every 5 years, PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies) is IEA's (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) assessment of students' reading achievement at fourth grade, implemented in 40 countries worldwide. (www.pirls.org)

About Renaissance Learning UK Limited

Renaissance Learning UK Limited is a subsidiary of Renaissance Learning Inc, a company founded in Wisconsin (USA) in 1986. Renaissance Learning UK Ltd is a leading provider of educational solutions to primary and secondary schools across the United Kingdom.

Adopted by more than 73,000 schools, Renaissance Learning's advanced technology makes the practice component of a school's reading, maths and writing curriculum more personalised and effective than ever before. The company's hosted and web-delivered Accelerated Reader Advantage and Accelerated Maths Advantage programs are used successfully by well over 200,000 children in the UK every day to help them improve their results and achieve a life-long love of reading.

Renaissance Learning produces software that provides teachers and pupils with immediate access to information on academic performance. This information technology provides timely and reliable feedback that enhances individualised instruction, creating a better learning environment for more motivated pupils.

Renaissance works closely with the National Literacy Trust and Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, and is supported by best-selling authors for children, such as Jacqueline Wilson, Malorie Blackman, Peter J Murray and GP Taylor.