

Using Renaissance Accelerated Reader with pre-Star Reading Children



If teachers are working with very young children or with older ones who cannot take a Star Reading assessment the children can still use Accelerated Reader (AR). The teacher needs to ensure that the book level for reading practice is right for each child.

Reading practice must be at the right level of difficulty or Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in order to promote growth. Normally teachers will obtain this information when children take an initial Star Reading assessment. But if children do not have the necessary skills to take a Star Reading assessment this does not preclude them from using AR.

Emergent readers typically begin by listening to books which are read to them. In time they can read together with a more experienced reader. Eventually they begin to read independently. Reading practice utilising AR can have one, or a mix, of these three reading practice types.

Children listening to books that are read **to** them can be assessed for understanding of the content, characters and plot within the book. AR can be used to check this comprehension. Since the book was read to them, children can also have the quiz questions and alternatives read to them.

As their word attack skills develop they can read **with** others. As their skills in reading develop their comprehension skills can also be checked. The quiz can be read with them too.

The National Literacy Trust has developed an excellent guide to establishing paired reading in schools. [Click here](#) to view and download it.



In addition, to help children find books at the right level, we suggest giving them index cards which show their ZPDs. Be careful however not to just provide a range such as 1.5 to 2.4 but list every book level value within the range. It's easier for very young children to look for books within the range if they have every value listed. If your books are colour coded then use the coloured dots instead.

As children read and quiz, keep an eye on their reading practice data. When averages dip below 85% guide them to easier books or

provide them with the additional support they need. As the year goes on open up the top of the ZPD as appropriate and encourage children to shift the balance of TWI towards more independent reading.

Finally encourage your emergent readers to find books within their ZPDs that they find interesting and enjoyable. This way they will experience how rewarding and meaningful reading can be.

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