

“We are enjoying tremendous success with Accelerated Reader.”

Woodside High School

North East London

Woodside High School is a mixed comprehensive school situated in Wood Green. The school has a large percentage of EAL students and students on free school meals.

Waheeda Simjee is the second in department for English and Literacy Lead across the school. She explains how the Renaissance School Partnership (RSP) has greatly increased the success the school has had with Accelerated Reader™ (AR™).

- EAL
- Library use
- Motivation
- Parents



“Students have become extremely competitive in the bid to attain a place on the wall of fame in our creatively designed Reading Room.”

Literacy has been a major focus over the last few years and the Accelerated Reader programme has been at the heart of it. The programme was first implemented three years ago and was delivered by the English department. Reading became fully embedded in the curriculum; this had a massive impact on students’ ability to concentrate in lessons, especially when reading extended texts. The idea was not only to improve students’ reading ages but to also create a culture of reading at Woodside High.

The Library, together with a very enthusiastic Librarian, has played an intrinsic role in inculcating excellent reading habits. AR has successfully inspired a new generation of readers, from having a few students infrequently use the Library to having queues at lunch times and after school. The Library is now a hive of activity with students demanding far more books to choose from.

Due to the success of AR at Woodside High School, we decided to move up a gear by joining the RSP programme. The RSP team has been very supportive with training and online help whenever we have needed it to help us move forward with our implementation of AR.

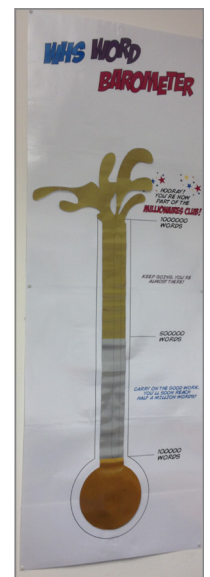
We currently have all our KS3 classes involved with the programme and tutors have also embraced the reading drive. Regular participation in the programme has increased to 99%. Students are constantly reminded of their achievements by being awarded with medals, by the Heads of Year, for the best engaged reading time and percentage correct. As a result, our engaged time has increased by 138% this year and students have passed 104% more quizzes.

These initiatives have motivated students to become extremely competitive in the bid to attain a place on the wall of fame in our creatively designed Reading Room. The word barometer impressively reflects our first entrant into our Millionaires’ Club – an exclusive group of those who have read over a million words. This student has been speaking English for just over a year and has already read 1,300,000 words.

Data from the STAR Reading™ reports shows that our students made an average of 8 months progress in their reading ages in the first term of the year. Many have made at least a year of progress, and some have made four to five years of progress in the first term.

It is amazing to see students chasing down their teachers while excitedly waving their TOPS report, hoping to share the results from their quiz. The joy of watching them read for pleasure and ask questions about words or complex ideas is incredibly gratifying. This has had a huge impact on students’ ability to access the curriculum not just in English but across every subject area. We also have a reading intervention group, led by our AR champion, to encourage our struggling readers further to learn the joy of reading.

At the moment, students are reading at least four books each. Our EAL teacher has commented on how effective the AR programme has been. Her students, who are beginners in English, are acquiring skills in six weeks that would otherwise take her three months to embed. Students are more comfortable with sentence structure and acquiring new vocabulary. This is a very positive experience for students who would



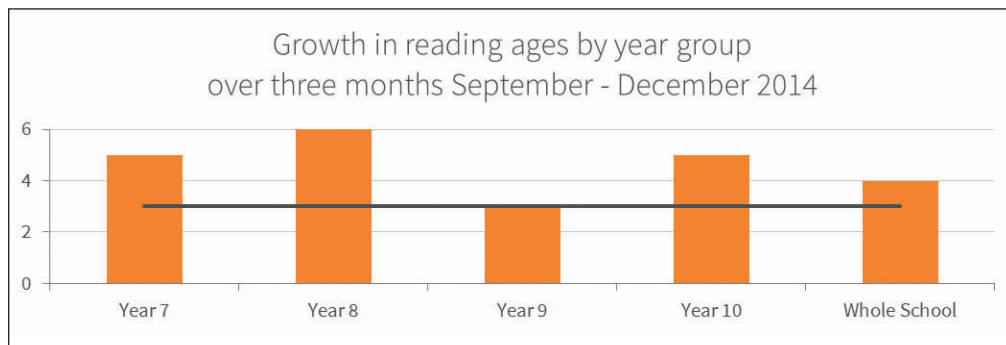
The word barometer impressively reflects our first entrant into our Millionaires’ Club.

generally struggle with basic literacy needs. The STAR Early Literacy™ programme has also been crucial in eradicating issues with phonemic and grapheme awareness and many other skills that we take for granted.

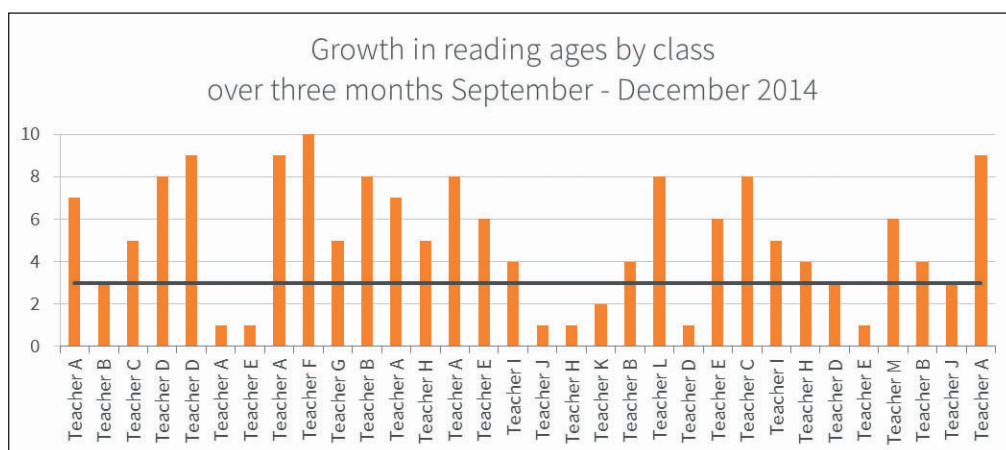
We use the data generated by the reports during Progress Evenings to have very productive conversations about children’s reading at home. We remind parents to read with their children and sign students’ bookmarks so they can track their children’s reading ages and quiz results. We consider it vital to have parents’ support in continuing to develop healthy reading habits in their children. It

is really touching to note that in some instances parents are using their children’s AR book to improve their English as well, and other parents wanted their child to share their new skills with them.

We are enjoying tremendous success with AR. This is helped in large part by the way the team works so well together. Our SLT with our Associate Head drive the programme forward, supported by tutor teams with strong heads of year and a phenomenal English department where nothing is daunting. Reading is flourishing because we are lucky to have a forward thinking Headteacher who believes in giving every child an opportunity to achieve success.



In the three months September to December 2014, every year group at Woodside High School has made at least expected progress with reading. Growth has been as much as twice the expected level.



Most classes at Woodside High School have made above expected progress with reading in the three months September to December 2014. Some classes have achieved as much as three times the growth expected.

Renaissance Learning opens the Renaissance School Partnership (RSP) programme to applications each academic year, carefully selecting a small number of schools to work with over the course of the year. Amongst other benefits, RSP schools have a dedicated Programme Manager who works directly with the school’s leadership and AR teams, and an extensive training programme tailored specifically to the school’s needs, including unlimited access to remote training. Read more at: renlearn.co.uk/rsp

Read more stories of success at: renlearn.co.uk/success