

RENAISSANCE®

I AM PART OF THEIR STORY

Oasis Academy Wintringham,
Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire

Oasis Academy Wintringham is a Secondary School with over 800 students on roll. It is part of the Oasis Community Learning Trust. Rachel Revell, Assistant Principal, and Frances Kingston, Accelerated Reader Coordinator, discuss the ways in which Accelerated Reader has enabled them to celebrate the reading accomplishments of their students.



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Motivation

Library Use

Celebration

Reading for Pleasure

Reading Culture

Celebrating Reading Accomplishments with Renaissance Accelerated Reader

Accelerated Reader has revolutionised the reading culture at our school. Every student in the school, from Year 7 to Year 11, carries a book, even though we only use Accelerated Reader with Years 7-9. There has been a real shift in their cultural attitude to reading: they're keen to read, books are coming in and out of the library (while we used to see students with the same books for weeks), and they are really engaged with reading, from our students who find it challenging to our most gifted students. To see a Carnegie display in our library, and to be able to target our most able readers and expect them to read those books, is something we never expected to see, and of course it makes us very happy.

The school routinely celebrates reading achievement, in a range of creative ways. Last year we held a tea party, for the classes of our most vulnerable students, with the lowest results on entry. The idea really captures their imagination, and even the older students, who don't use Accelerated Reader, are asking why they didn't get cake, it's really creating a buzz around it, which is really important when you are focused on tackling

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disadvantage in the way that we are. It's easy to take for granted things like having a cake and a cup of tea, but when you sit down with the students they view this as a real treat and get so much from spending time with adults in conversation. To celebrate their success with tea and cake with myself and our librarian is so simple and yet the impact is far greater than we could have imagined. To be honest, we were quite shocked that they wanted to do it, as it tends to take place in primary school, but they love it!

We also made sure to make the most of World Book Day celebrations this year. There was a feeling around the entire school that people had taken the whole day on board. We had a theme of heroes and villains, and it was really encouraging that other departments took part as well: they based the start of their lessons around a character from a book, there was a yellow brick road going down the corridor, and they put a hero or villain on the door of the classroom, ready to greet you, so you didn't even have to enter the room to get a sense of everything. I was just overwhelmed by the response from staff and students; there was a feeling that the day didn't just end there as well, which I think was a really important message.

Additionally, we recognise reading achievement with our yearly 'Oscars' ceremony, complete with red carpet, held in June. There are lots of awards for lots of different achievements, it's a real recognition of talent in different areas. We have a 'champagne reception', with champagne flutes full of lemonade, lots of snacks and students bring their parents along. Reading has changed a lot this year – last year we gave a 'millionaire award' to the student who read the most words. Last year students across the school had read approximately 15.5 million words by the end of the academic year, and this year they are on 51.5 million already! We have one student who is approaching 5 million words. This year we want to give the award to the student who has shown the most passion for reading, and the most development. I think the students are most excited about having nibbles and dressing up! We have also decided to issue the signed John Boyne first edition we won to the student who receives the Oscar. We won this prize through an Accelerated Reader competition and are thrilled to have such a wonderful and unique prize.

On top of these events, we also make use of displays in our library, with a nautical theme throughout. For example, we've set up a net, and the classes are each represented by a fish, and that fish moves up the net depending on the average percentage of questions they answer correctly in their Accelerated Reader quizzes. We make use of social media as a school, as a way to share success. We try to share the most startling things, and the students then go on to talk about them. We've also created an email signature that shares what you are reading, for each member of staff. It's really captured the students' imagination; we update it every half term, and the selection is so diverse that I think the students are starting to realise that that is the nature of reading – totally unique and individual. The more pride you put into these displays and celebrations, the more the students will get on board with it, and if the students can associate positively with the people involved then they start to think of reading that way as well.



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