

RENAISSANCE®

I AM PART OF THEIR STORY

Colne Primet Academy,
Colne, Lancashire

Colne Primet Academy is a secondary school with just over 300 pupils on roll. Having used Renaissance Accelerated Reader™ for five years, the school decided to implement Accelerated Maths™ in September 2016 with Years 7, 8 and 9. Sarah Leak, Head of Mathematics, describes how the school use it and the effect they have seen so far.



Find out more
renlearn.co.uk/partofthestory

Core maths skills

Library Use

Intervention

Motivation

Progress monitoring

Guiding intervention and reinforcing core skills with Renaissance Accelerated Maths™

When we originally implemented Accelerated Maths™, we were looking for a programme for maths intervention that did not need to be supervised by maths specialists, similar to the way Accelerated Reader™ is used in the English department. We liked the fact that we could track maths progress and achievement, and could confidently baseline students in a consistent way.

Once per fortnight all classes have a timetabled lesson in the computer room, where Accelerated Maths™ is used. We're quite strict about how these lessons are arranged – if we have a 75 minute lesson, the first 50 minutes will be spent carrying out Accelerated Maths™ exercises on the relevant topic, with the last 25 minutes used on an assigned test within the programme under test conditions. This way, even if at the start of the lesson they're struggling to achieve 75% and pass the exercises, by the end of the lesson they're in a position to pass the test, and will often tell me how they achieved 100%. The programme gives them a little frequent element of success, and that's helping to change their attitudes towards maths.

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The programme is enabling us to better address and identify problems with basic maths – because these issues are highlighted in their Accelerated Maths™ lessons they are then able to develop and build on those skills in regular lessons. Students are now understanding that they aren't able to move on from an exercise unless they score 75%, and are focussing more as a result. There are always topics that we aren't necessarily addressing at the moment, or even in the current academic year, but Accelerated Maths™ is addressing all of them, so for staff that helps to create awareness that a certain pupil needs further help with a certain topic, and enables us to better gauge students' starting points when preparing to teach a topic at a higher level.

If Accelerated Maths™ flags up that a student is behind on a certain topic, we are able to arrange intervention for them. Before an Accelerated Maths™ lesson I'm able to see that a student needs intervention with, for example, adding fractions, and can then set them an additional exercise on that topic

in Accelerated Maths to complete during the lesson. Before taking the exercise, we can then go over the topic with them, and have them complete work or watch a video on the topic outside of Accelerated Maths™. This gives them confidence when tackling areas that they struggle with, and we've found this approach is when we've seen the most progress being made.

Tracking progress quickly and easily with Renaissance Star Maths™

As of next year we'll be administering the Star Maths™ test 4 times per year – this year so far we've administered it twice, and students have felt much more confident than they have done with paper based assessments previously. Because the test is computer-adaptive, the questions match their ability – whereas with paper-based tests, if a student is struggling then there's nothing that can be done: they are going to complete the full paper as written and won't have the same confidence in approaching it.

Before Star™, we were writing our own paper based tests every half term, levelling them and marking them, which was becoming quite an onerous process, so Star™ has definitely also taken away some of that pressure as results are available immediately. We have maybe 6 students in each class who have been identified and pulled out for an intervention lesson each week, and we've seen their standardised scores improve far beyond the expected rate, which is very encouraging to see. The students are really happy that they can see a tangible numerical improvement in their scores – with a lot of assessments, a child would go up a level if they've improved, but it's not always clear to them what that means. Whereas, if I've told them that we expect their standardised score to improve by 20, and they improve by 100 that very clearly underlines the progress they've made, and they get very excited about it.

It also makes it very easy to communicate progress to parents: we use the growth report within Star™ to identify changes in standardised score over time. We tend to send grade cards home in cases of particular success, informing parents that we would expect a certain change, but their child has exceeded that.

Overall, Accelerated Maths™ is developing a lot of students' base maths skills, that need constant reinforcement. It's really changing students' attitudes towards maths by giving them frequent moments of success, which gives them confidence when tackling new or challenging topics.

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