



What is Accelerated Reader ?

Accelerated Reader is an innovative computerized learning information system that provides teachers with a creative means of motivating every student to dramatically increase reading practice. The program provides the information teachers need on student progress, quickly and accurately. Teachers can use this information to connect with students and provide individual help. Teachers who use AR see higher test scores on both standardized and performance-based tests.

AR builds real-world problem solving skills by encouraging plenty of reading practice. Schools using AR record better performances in all academic areas, across all grade levels.



“The ability to read well is an essential ingredient to successful learning and living. There is a direct and vital relationship between the amount of meaningful, independent

reading a child does and that child’s educational proficiency.” In its most basic form, the theory of reading practice is simply a more formal expression of the old adage, **“Practice makes perfect.”** In other words, the more a student reads, the better he or she reads.

Besides predicting that the more one reads, the better one reads, the theory of reading practice also predicts that additional reading should cause more improvement in poor readers than average or outstanding readers. Therefore, the theory predicts students with higher reading ability will need to read more to get the same amount of improvement as a lower reading ability student. Not only should poor readers benefit more than outstanding readers from additional

amounts of reading practice, but younger readers should benefit more from additional reading practice than older, more mature readers. This is because younger readers have a smaller base of reading practice to start from. A large scale study of over 600 thousand students, *Patterns of Reading Practice*, shows that the average high school senior spends as much time reading as the average kindergarten, 3.6 minutes a day. The average amount of reading practice for all grades is 7.1 minutes a day.

The AR program sets point goals based on 60 minutes of reading practice daily. This reading practice incorporates all ages, all reading abilities, and all areas. Emerging readers, regardless of age, need to be read TO. Read WITH activities help students gain skill and confidence with more challenging literature. However, reading INDEPENDENTLY accelerates growth and should be the bulk of reading practice. **Studies have shown that when something is too easy, there is no growth and when something is too difficult, the result is frustration.**

Goal setting in the AR program is based on a student’s Zone of Proximal Development (not too easy, not too hard). Therefore, reading practice should be within this zone. In order to have the greatest reading growth, a child reads at an independent level that is comfortable. St. Joseph School utilizes a program called *STAR Reading* to determine a child’s ZPD in grades 2-8. Book quizzes taken below this range may be deleted from a child’s record.

The AR program does not take the place of teaching reading. It is meant to supplement and enrich the reading program in

your classroom. Participation in AR should be encouraged. The performance on AR tests should not be graded unless the test taken is from a book that has been read in class. The student should feel that participation in this program is his idea.

The success of the program, however, is based on teacher/parent motivation and involvement. Certificates of Achievement when a student reaches his goal; monthly certificates for top readers in each class; and the end-of-the-year party are all rewards for successfully participating in the AR program.



We want the students to succeed. The slower readers cannot succeed in the AR program reading books outside their reading zones. **When made to read grade level (not ZPD level) books independently, the result is often failure or low points on the AR tests. The student does not enjoy reading and therefore, does not want to read more.** It defeats the theory behind the AR program: **reading practice increases reading growth.**

Suggested Goals

Grade 1	45 points
Grade 2	60
Grade 3	75
Grade 4	90
Grade 5	105
Grade 6	120
Grade 7	135
Grade 8	150