# A Parent's Guide to Accelerated Reader

**What is Accelerated Reader (AR)?**
Accelerated Reader is a supplemental program that helps teachers manage and monitor your child's independent reading practice. It operates under the simple, yet critical, philosophy that reading practice improves the skill of reading. Your child picks a book at his own level and reads it at his own pace. When finished, your child takes a short quiz on the computer. The results of that quiz immediately prints out, giving your child and his teacher feedback, which the teacher uses to help ongoing reading practice. Since your child is reading books at his reading level, he is likely to be successful, which he'll probably find satisfying. Best of all, your child's comprehension improves at his own pace.

**How will my child know his reading level?**
When a teacher decides that her students have enough reading skills to read independently, she will allow your child to take a computerized reading assessment known as **STAR**. Questions in STAR continually adjust to your child's responses. If your child's responses are correct, the difficulty level is increased. In the event your child misses a question, the difficulty level is reduced. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 10 minutes. After completing STAR, a computerized score sheet, reflecting the Zone of Proximal Development (**ZPD**) will be given to the teacher. This ZPD is your child's **independent** reading range that will challenge him without causing frustration or loss of motivation. For example, if your child's reading range is 2.3-4.1, it means your child reads independently at the third month of second grade through the first month of fourth grade. It's important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within their ZPDs. Your child's teacher, knowing that many factors influence test results, may use STAR only as a guide and adjust your child's ZPD based on his needs

**Is it all right for my child to read outside of his reading level?**
Your child may wish to read a book outside of his reading range. Teacher approval would be needed to determine whether the book's content is appropriate. If you are reading a book **to your child**, his range may increase an entire level. However, if that occurs, it is only fair to also read the quiz to your child, since quizzes are written on the same level as the corresponding book.

**How do I know which books are part of the AR program?**
Our online version gives your child access to over 110,000 quizzes and to new quizzes as they become available.  A complete listing of quizzes does not appear in the online version and, because of the paper involved, a hardcopy does not exist in our library.  If your child wants to know if a particular title has an AR quiz, there are a couple of options available.  Your child may go into AR and mirror the first steps involved in taking a quiz.  If the title of the book in question appears when he types it in, he may simply exit the program knowing that a quiz is available.  Another way to check on the availability of a quiz is to go to **arbookfind.com**.  This website, which may be accessed from an icon at school or from typing in the web address from any remote location, lists AR books by title, author, level, etc.  Finally, all of our library books that are part of the AR program are labeled with an AR tag inside the front cover and a notation made in our card catalog, Follett Destiny.  Books within the reading levels 0.9-2.9 also receive a color-coded label on their spine.  Younger students rely on this color-coded system, while older students are taught how to use Follett Destiny.

**How do I know what book titles our library owns?**
For a variety of reasons, we don't own a book for every quiz title. If you would like to see the books that your child may check out from our library, you may go to destiny.cusd80.com and click on CTA Liberty.  Please note that while you may view the titles that other libraries own, we do not participate in inter-library loans.

**How will my child's teacher help him become a confident and successful reader?**
Your child's teacher will use her class' silent sustained reading time to conduct a mini conference with your child.  During these mini conferences the teacher uses your child's reading log and quiz results to help monitor comprehension and intervene at any sign of difficulty.  Having the teacher monitoring your child's progress ensures his success and enjoyment while reading independently.

**How will I know how my child is doing?**
Parents may view their child's progress in AR, view books for which quizzes have already been taken, and help their child select new books to read at any time simply by accessing **Home Connect** from any computer with Internet access.  Home Connect also allows parents to specify the guardians or relatives who are to receive updates of your child's progress.  Recipients who accept the invitation for the notifications will automatically receive emails that contain the results of any AR quizzes your child completes.  To log in to Home Connect go to:
http://Hosted153.renlearn.com/254902/HomeConnect/Login.aspx Enter your child's user name and password that is specific to Home Connect:
Username will be S + Student#  (Ex. *S12345*)
Password will be s + student# + ! (Ex. *s12345!*)
(This user name and password are NOT the same as those your child uses to log into Accelerated Reader)
 Click **Email Setup** to sign up to receive emails showing your child's quiz results.  Click **Help** to get answers to your questions about Home Connect.

**May my child take quizzes from home?**
No. Like many subscriptions and services offered online, access is given only to the purchaser. In this case, CTA Liberty was the purchaser and, therefore, students only have access to quizzes while at school.

**What are points?**
Every AR book is given a point value based on the difficulty of the book (ATOS reading level) and the length of the book (number of words that provided reading practice time). Your child may earn points, or a portion of a book's points, depending on how well his does on the book's quiz. Points continue to accumulate during every year your child is a student at CTA Liberty. Some grade levels opt to help students set point goals for each quarter, while others focus on the number of words read.

**Is my child rewarded?**
We would love for your child to showcase his reading success. The library distributes dog tags as part of a school-wide incentive program. Students receive a blue dog tag and chain when they earn their first 10 AR points. After the initial 10 points, dog tags are earned in increments of 25, with bronze, silver or gold tags awarded for milestone achievements. To retrieve an earned dog tag, your child presents the library with a printout of his points. Your child is encouraged to wear his dog tags every Friday to showcase his success. **Like any reward, dog tags are not replaced if they are lost or stolen.** During assemblies Mrs. Torres also acknowledges students who have earned a medal at 500 points or a trophy at 1,000, 1,500 or 2,000 points. Like the dog tags, a student is responsible for communicating to Mrs. Torres whenever he has earned enough points to be recognized during an assembly. A listing of total points is kept at the check-out counter. Finally, once the student program indicates a student has read one million words during the current school year, he/she should tell the library staff in order to have his/her name displayed on the Millionaire Wall.

**A narrated presentation detailing the Accelerated Reader program is available on the library website.**