
KS2 Reading Guidance for Families

Supporting reading at home in Years 3 to 6 — daily habits, VIPERS prompts and how our reading systems work.

 A guide for parents and carers



Why Reading Every Day Matters

As children move through Years 3-6 they meet longer, more complex texts and build the comprehension skills they need across the whole curriculum.

Regular reading at home makes a significant difference to confidence, fluency and enjoyment.

15-20 minutes

of reading every day – independently, shared, or aloud to an adult. Daily reading with parental support is the strongest indicator of long-term academic success.



Fitting Reading Into Busy Family Life

Reading doesn't always need to happen at a desk or on the sofa. These small moments add up and build fluency, confidence and enjoyment.

In the car on the way to school or activities

To an older sibling

To a younger sibling

While you are preparing dinner

While waiting for clubs, appointments or pickups



Signing the Reading Diary

Please sign your child's reading diary each day to acknowledge that they have read. Your engagement sends a powerful message that reading matters.



Monitor

reading habits across the week



Celebrate

the effort children are putting in



Support

where a child needs extra help



VIPERS: Six Skills to Talk About Any Book



Vocabulary

“What does this word mean?”



Inference

“How do you know they feel that way?”



Prediction

“What might happen next? Why?”



Explanation

“Why has the author chosen this word?”



Retrieval

“Can you find the sentence that tells us...?”



Summary

“Can you summarise this chapter in three sentences?”

Use these prompts with any book, magazine or text to build deeper comprehension.

Our Two Reading Systems

Two complementary systems help children choose books that are enjoyable, accessible and appropriately challenging.

Colour-Coded Book Bands

KS1 and Lower KS2

- Early decoding skills
- Phonics knowledge
- Fluency
- Confidence with shorter texts

Accelerated Reader (AR)

Mainly KS2

- Supports longer, more complex texts
- Helps pupils choose books at the right level
- Checks understanding with short quizzes
- Builds comprehension, stamina and independence

How Accelerated Reader Works

1

STAR Reading Test

An online test gives a ZPD range (e.g. 3.4-4.6) – the levels that best support progress.

2

Choosing Books

Every AR book shows a book level. Children choose within their ZPD: challenging but manageable.

3

Short Quizzes

A short online quiz after each book checks vocabulary, inference and retrieval.

4

Tracking Progress

Teachers monitor comprehension, reading frequency, book choices and ZPD progress.

AR data helps us support pupils individually and celebrate their achievements.

What Accelerated Reader Doesn't Do

It doesn't replace reading for pleasure.

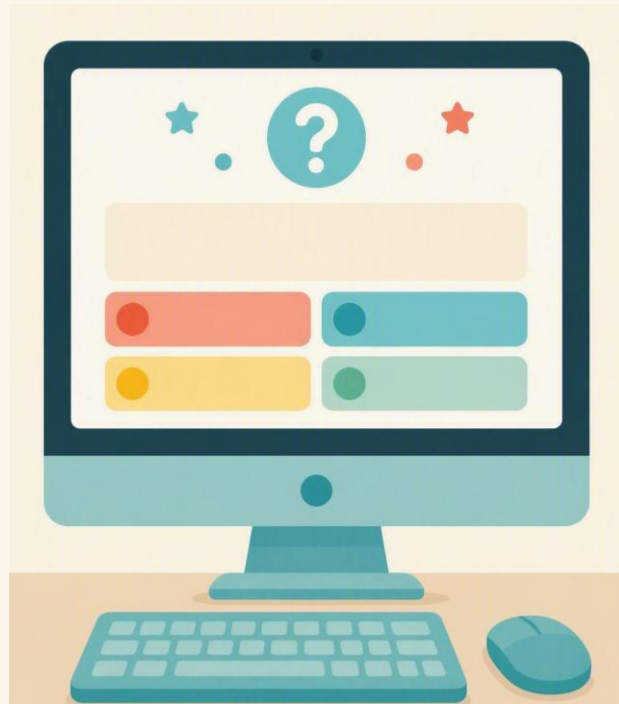
Children should still read whatever they love.

It doesn't limit book choice.

Fiction, non-fiction, poetry and graphic novels are all included.

It doesn't assess reading speed.

The focus is entirely on understanding.



Top Tips for Reading at Home

-  Aim for 15-20 minutes of reading daily.
-  Sign the reading diary each day.
-  Talk about the book using VIPERS prompts.
-  Let your child choose books that interest them.
-  Encourage AR quizzes soon after finishing a book – these happen in school.
-  Celebrate progress: a finished chapter, a new genre, a step through the ZPD range.
-  Use your local library for free books and recommendations.

Thank you for reading with your child every day.

Reading at Home: A Handout for Families

Keep this to hand – everything you need to support your child's reading in Years 3 to 6.

Every Day

- Read for 15-20 minutes daily
- Independent, shared or read aloud
- Sign the reading diary each day
- Read in the car, to a sibling, or while dinner cooks
- Let your child choose books they enjoy

Talk About It: VIPERS

- **Vocabulary** – “What does this word mean?”
- **Inference** – “How do you know they feel that way?”
- **Prediction** – “What might happen next? Why?”
- **Explanation** – “Why did the author choose this word?”
- **Retrieval** – “Can you find the sentence that tells us...?”
- **Summary** – “Can you summarise this chapter?”

Choosing Books

- Colour bands build early decoding and fluency
- Accelerated Reader gives a ZPD range from the STAR test
- Book levels are printed on every AR label
- A short quiz in school follows each finished book
- Fiction, non-fiction, poetry and graphic novels all count as well as books from home and the library

Celebrate every step – a finished chapter, a new genre, a move through the ZPD range. Your local library is free and a great place to browse and choose books.