

# Accelerated Reader

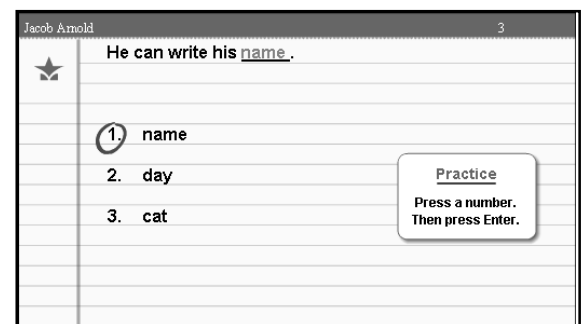
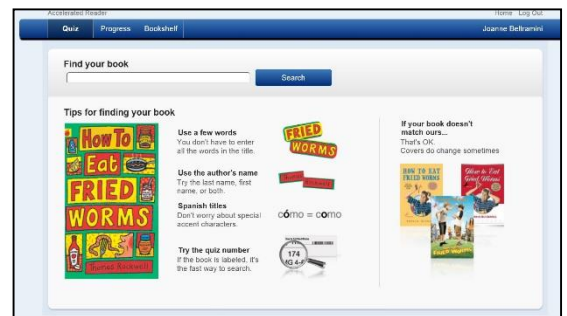
## Best Practices within Regina Catholic Schools



Accelerated Reader (AR) and STAR Reading are two online resources utilized in twenty-one Regina Catholic elementary schools. This document identifies the purpose of the two Renaissance Learning programs, generally identified under the umbrella term of AR, and provides guidance in their effective use with students.

### What is it?

- **Accelerated Reader**
  - An online tool for teachers that is used to motivate, monitor and manage student independent reading practice. It is not curriculum; however, student data may be used to inform instruction.
  - Consists of three quiz types: Reading Practice Quiz, Vocabulary Practice Quiz and Literacy Skills Quiz
- **STAR Reading**
  - An online standardized, computer-adaptive assessment that utilizes a combination of the cloze method and traditional reading comprehension passages to assess a student's overall reading achievement.
  - Primary use is to determine a student's ZPD (zone of proximal development) reading range, also called the "just right" reading range. The ZPD is used to identify books with Reading Practice Quizzes.



## Recommendations—AR and STAR Reading

Reading Practice Quizzes	STAR Reading Test
<p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A student may begin independent quizzing once 100 sight words have been acquired. Until this point, <u>no independent quizzing</u> will be permitted with the exception of reading nights.</li> </ul>	<p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A STAR Reading test may be administered once a student has acquired 100 sight words—not before.</li> <li>▪ STAR Reading diagnostic information should be considered as just one more piece of assessment data. It may reinforce information from other assessments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Grade 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No instructional time will be used for reading practice quizzing.</li> <li>▪ The only time that a grade 1 student may take an independent reading practice quiz is during a school-hosted reading night.</li> <li>▪ The teacher may choose to use a selection as a read aloud and use his/her own student AR login to allow for whole class quizzing and discussion.</li> </ul>	<p><b>STAR Testing Schedule</b></p> <p><b>Option 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is recommended that the STAR Reading test be administered three times a year (September/October; January/February; June). Without sufficient monitoring and adjustments, there is danger that a student could become trapped in a ZPD range that is not reflective of reading growth.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In instances where the STAR Reading test is administered twice a year, it is recommended that the first assessment be given in November/December and again in June. The June results would be used to determine the fall ZPD. The classroom teacher may use diagnostic data to adjust the ZPD to reflect student reading growth in between the STAR assessments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kindergarten</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No instructional time to be used for AR.</li> <li>▪ Kindergarten students may access reading practice quizzes for school-hosting reading nights only; no other quizzing even with 100 sight words.</li> <li>▪ Teachers are encouraged to explore other literacy engagement opportunities for students and families. The Kindergarten consultant will work with teachers to develop a plan for alternate activities.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Pre-Kindergarten</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pre-K will not have access to AR and reading practice quizzes even if a child has 100 sight words.</li> </ul>	

## Best Practices in the Management of AR

### 1. Classroom Subject Scheduling

- a. Regina Catholic Schools follows a balanced literacy scheduling model for English Language Arts minutes – [www.rcsd.ca/learn](http://www.rcsd.ca/learn). If AR is used during instructional time, it is best scheduled within the Reader’s Workshop blocked minutes which includes three components: direct instruction, independent reading/teacher conferencing, and sharing. The independent reading time may or may not be an AR book.
- b. It is important that reading, quizzing, and the desire to earn points does not take precedence over the curriculum.

### 2. School Wide Posting of Reading Results

- a. Before posting individual student results on a public bulletin board, consideration should be given for struggling readers who may feel “demotivated” by lack of points. School-wide recognition may be visually displayed in a variety of ways:
  - Display classroom accomplishments rather than individual student results.
  - Display individual student results that are tied to goal setting and goal attainment. Every student can be successful if reading goals are tailored to fit the individual student. Possible recognition points—25%, 50%, 75% and 100%.

### 3. Quizzing & Testing—Access to Electronic Devices

- a. The primary use for electronic devices should be curriculum-related: guided reading/literacy centres, student research, inquiry learning, etc. Access for reading practice quizzing and STAR testing is secondary. Teachers need to work together to share devices between classrooms.

### 4. Book Selection

- a. Students should be encouraged to read for enjoyment whether the book has an AR Reading Practice Quiz or not. A student may read a non-AR book.
- b. Students are allowed to read throughout their ZPDs and are not limited to a specific colour dot. Students may also read below or above their ZPDs with monitoring, provided it is not a consistent habit.

- c. Teachers are attentive to the interest level of the book selection and not just the book/reading level. Interest level is based on the sophistication and the maturity level of the book’s themes and content, and it indicates the suggested age group for which a book is appropriate.

Note: Except for UG books, there is no grade restriction to the remaining interest levels.

Interest Level	Grade Appropriateness
<b>LG</b>	Lower Grades – K to 3
<b>MG</b>	Middle Grades – 4 to 8
<b>MG+</b>	Middle Grades Plus – 6 and up
<b>UG</b>	Upper Grades – 9 to 12  In Regina Catholic Schools, selected UG titles are permitted for Grade 7 and 8 student reading.

## **5. Guided Reading Collections and AR**

- a. A great deal of funding has gone towards the purchase of guided reading resources. To ensure that these instructional books remain as a set, new resources purchased for the library guided reading collections will no longer be labelled with AR information.

## **6. STAR Reading Diagnostic Information**

- a. STAR data is not placed in the student cumulative file. It is kept with the teacher.
  - If you STAR test three times a year, destroy the data at the end of June.
  - If you STAR test twice a year, keep the data for the fall.
- b. Following the STAR Reading test, the teacher should generate the *Screening, Progress Monitoring and Intervention Report* (located under the STAR Reading tab). The teacher should monitor students identified in the red and yellows groups (students requiring urgent intervention and intervention) and plan appropriate literacy interventions. Students identified in the blue group (on watch) should be monitored to ensure that they do not fall into the yellow and red groups. [See Appendix A]
  - Consideration should be given to benchmark students identified as “red” or “yellow” to confirm the data and develop a plan for support. Contact Sherry Chase for benchmarking support; contact Joanne Beltramini for assistance in accessing the *Screening, Progress Monitoring and Intervention Report*.

## **7. Celebrations**

- a. Consideration should be given to shifting celebrations from point accumulation to successes realized through student goal setting.
- b. Extrinsic incentives should be kept small(er). Consider linking rewards to the love of reading (e.g., Chapters visit).
- c. Vary the criteria for draw-related incentives: student must have achieved 100% to enter; 85% to enter; book must be within ZPD range, etc.

## **8. Literacy/Reading Nights (community and parent engagement)**

- a. Literacy nights are encouraged and may or may not be tied to AR quizzing.
- b. These evenings are a shared staff responsibility, not the sole responsibility of the teacher-librarian.

## Roles and Responsibilities

School-based Administrators	Classroom Teachers	Teacher-Librarian
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is the responsibility of SBAs to monitor instructional minutes used for independent reading practice.</li> <li>▪ SBAs are encouraged to monitor individual classroom <i>Screening, Progress Monitoring and Intervention Reports</i> to ensure that intervention plans are taking place for students who are identified as at risk. Selecting another book for independent reading practice will not help these students.</li> </ul> <p><b>Library Scheduling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is the responsibility of SBAs to examine the impact of library scheduling where the library is open for AR book exchange. Items for considerations include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is backed on to this open AR book exchange within the classroom?</li> <li>○ What are students missing if they are going to the library to exchange their books? Missing instruction?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Celebrations &amp; Literacy Nights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is a shared responsibility—school-based administrators, teachers, teacher-librarian—to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Determine appropriate celebrations that acknowledge student reading successes.</li> <li>○ Manage and organize the celebrations within the school environment.</li> <li>○ Facilitate reading/literacy nights.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Diagnostic Information and Planned Intervention</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to monitor and act upon the <i>Diagnostic Reading Practice Report</i> (snapshot of the entire classroom) and the individual <i>Student Record Report</i>. If inconsistencies are identified (i.e. number of quizzes taken far exceeds the number of quizzes passed), the <i>Student Record Report</i> should be examined for further information.</li> <li>▪ It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to use the diagnostic information in conjunction with regular classroom assessments to plan interventions for those students who are experiencing reading difficulties (i.e. targeted skills instruction).</li> </ul> <p><b>Conferencing/Status of the Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to conference regularly (weekly) with students about their independent reading practice. This could occur while students are reading. Topics for discussion might include the TOPS Reports, student reading log, successes/challenges, and next steps.</li> <li>▪ Teacher conferencing with individual students/small groups may include strategy instruction.</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Setting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers are encouraged to set reading goals with individual students. Refer to the document—Accelerated Reader Progress Monitoring Guidelines—for further information. [Appendix B]</li> </ul> <p><b>Celebrations &amp; Literacy Nights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See school-based administrators</li> </ul>	<p><b>Administrative Responsibilities for AR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is the responsibility of the teacher-librarian to enter students and staff into the software program, assign courseware, create and load classes, set passwords, and provide teacher/student support.</li> <li>▪ It is the responsibility of the teacher-librarian to manage resources. This includes selecting books, searching Book Guide to determine if a book has an AR Reading Practice Quiz, printing labels and colour dotting new books with an AR designation, monitoring books with UG interest levels, and keeping on top of circulation and shelving.</li> <li>▪ It is the responsibility of the teacher-librarian to work with school-based administrators to determine the library schedule and the impact of open AR book exchange periods.</li> </ul> <p><b>Celebrations &amp; Literacy Nights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See school-based administrators</li> </ul>

## Appendix A

### Screening, Progress Monitoring and Intervention

*STAR Reading* provides another useful format for viewing student results called *Screening*. By utilizing the Screening feature, students are sorted into four categories. It makes it easy to identify those students who require reading literacy triage! It shows you the students who are doing okay (*At/Above Benchmark*) and those who are not doing okay (students *On Watch*, students requiring *Intervention*, and those requiring *Urgent Intervention*).

### Screening Dates

Before you can generate this report, students have to have taken the *STAR Reading* test. In order to include all students in your classroom on the report, the testing must take place during one of the preset screening dates. These dates are determined by the entire staff and are set up by the teacher-librarian. All testing for an individual classroom must be completed within a 30-day period. If a student is tested outside one of the screening dates, the student will not appear on the report.

Common screening dates occur are: Fall (September/October), Winter (January/February) and Spring (May/June). Note: Screening dates may not overlap but may span two different months (e. g., May 15 to June 14).

### Understanding the Screening Data

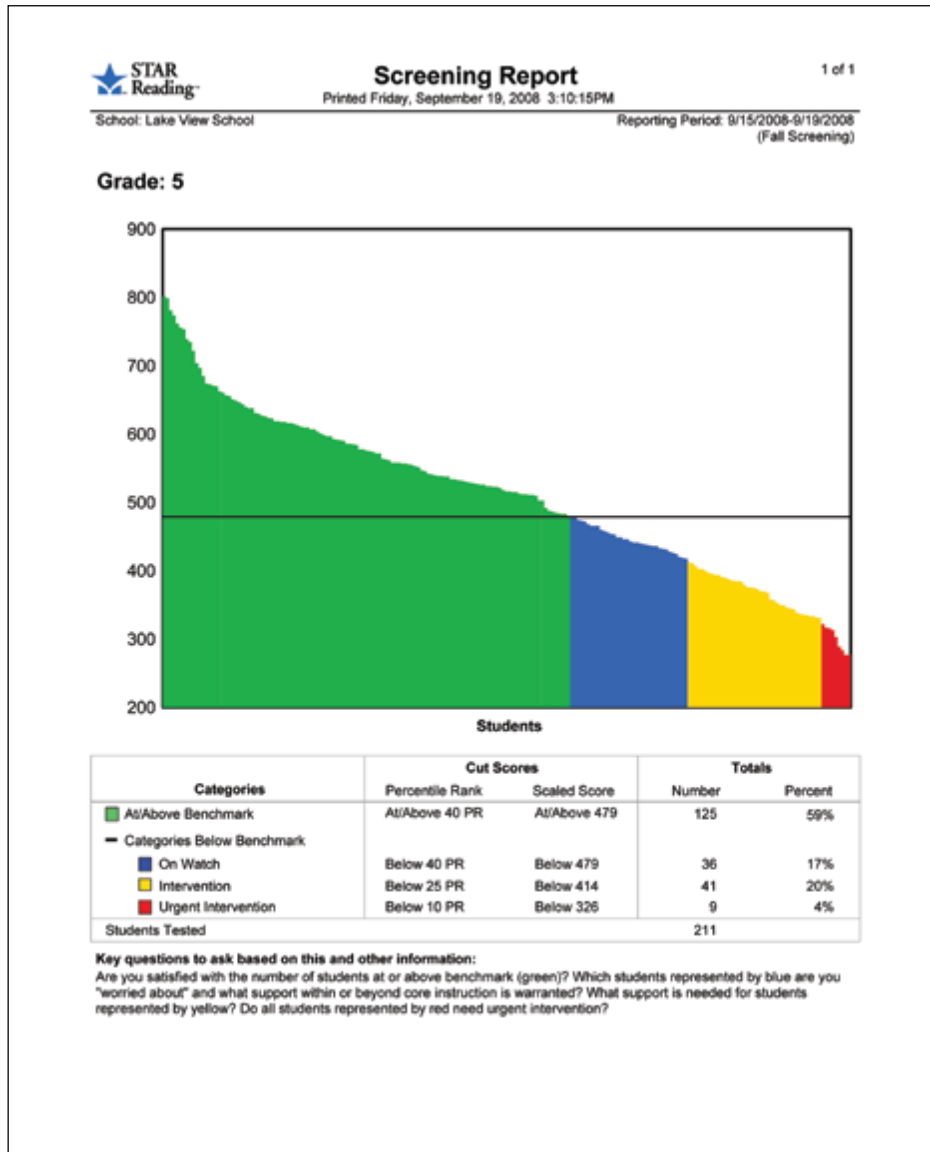
The first page of the report is a visual colour-coded graph showing the percentage of students in each of the four categories. A benchmark line extends horizontally across the graph. A **benchmark** is the lowest level of performance that is considered acceptable. In *STAR Reading*, the default benchmark is the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile. Students at the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile perform better than 40% of the students in the national sample in that grade at that time of year. Based on research, the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile is considered to mean “working at grade level” or “proficient.” Ideally, 80% of students will be *at or above* the benchmark.

Students are placed into the categories based on cut scores. **Cut scores** are a set of numbers intended to help identify students you may need to be concerned about. The cut scores are scaled scores that correspond to percentiles.

- At/Above Benchmark (shown in green): defaults to At/Above 40<sup>th</sup> percentile
- On Watch (blue): Below 40<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Intervention (yellow): Below 25<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Urgent Intervention (red): Below 10<sup>th</sup> percentile

The table below the graph shows the number and percentage of students who fall into each of the categories. Only 59% of the students are at or above benchmark.

If the percentage of students in green was a flat line just above the benchmark line, that would tell you that students are barely making it over the benchmark line.



If the block of blue was close to the benchmark line and fairly flat, you know that those students have the potential to reach the benchmark.

Students in the yellow and red require additional interventions usually beyond what is traditionally occurring with the entire class. Having these students select another AR book to read and quiz on will not help. These students require extra attention and the explicit teaching/reinforcement of reading literacy skills.

STAR Reading  
 Screening Report  
 Printed Friday, September 19, 2008 3:25 01PM  
 School: Lake View School  
 Reporting Period: 9/15/2008-9/19/2008 (Fall Screening) 2 of 2

**Grade: 5**

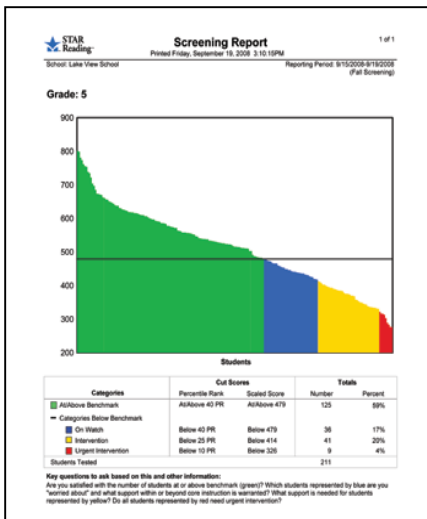
**Urgent Intervention**

Student	Class	Teacher	Test Date	SS	OP	PR	OE	Est. ORF*	ZPD
Jenks, Derrick	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/17/2008	277	5.05	5	2.4		2.2-3.2
Kubi, Linda	05 (Coleman)	Coleman, Y.	09/16/2008	277	5.05	5	2.4		2.2-3.2
Flum, Kurts	05 (Patel)	Patel, M.	09/17/2008	284	5.05	6	2.5		2.3-3.3
Edge, Beth	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/16/2008	289	5.05	6	2.5		2.3-3.3
Beafin, Brian	05 (Patel)	Patel, M.	09/17/2008	303	5.05	7	2.6		2.4-3.4
Haggerty, Donald	05 (Denvers)	Denvers, E.	09/16/2008	313	5.05	8	2.6		2.4-3.4
Yang, Jianhua	05 (Denvers)	Denvers, E.	09/16/2008	316	5.05	8	2.7		2.4-3.4
Schissel, Kathy	05 (Sanderson)	Sanderson, D.	09/16/2008	317	5.05	8	2.7		2.4-3.4
Walker, Elena	05 (Denvers)	Denvers, E.	09/17/2008	322	5.05	8	2.7		2.4-3.4

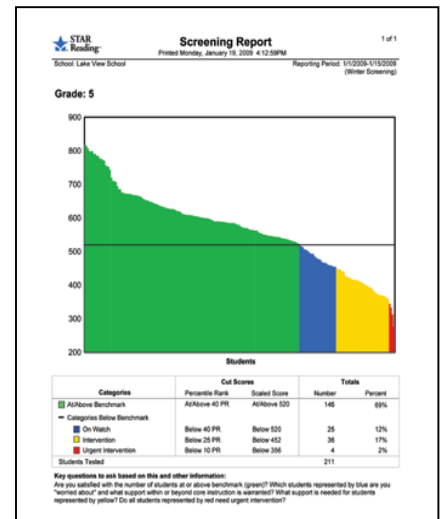
**Intervention**

Student	Class	Teacher	Test Date	SS	OP	PR	OE	Est. ORF*	ZPD
Xiang, Sha	05 (Denvers)	Denvers, E.	09/16/2008	328	5.05	10	2.7		2.4-3.4
Seaman, Jon	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/17/2008	340	5.05	11	2.8		2.5-3.5
Grant, Jessica	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/16/2008	341	5.05	12	2.8		2.5-3.5
Walling, Karen	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/16/2008	342	5.05	12	2.8		2.5-3.5
Taylor, Mia	05 (Coleman)	Coleman, Y.	09/17/2008	344	5.05	12	2.9		2.5-3.5
Alagot, Ogothun	05 (Patel)	Patel, M.	09/17/2008	352	5.05	13	3.0		2.6-3.6
Benavidez, Trevor	05 (Patel)	Patel, M.	09/16/2008	366	5.05	16	3.2		2.7-3.8
Fennell, Alice	05 (Denvers)	Denvers, E.	09/17/2008	369	5.05	16	3.2		2.7-3.8
Wilcox, Judith	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/16/2008	370	5.05	17	3.2		2.7-3.8
Quast, Laura	05 (Coleman)	Coleman, Y.	09/16/2008	370	5.05	17	3.2		2.7-3.8
Hernandez, Luciano	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/17/2008	376	5.05	18	3.3		2.7-3.8
Choi, Sangho	05 (Coleman)	Coleman, Y.	09/16/2008	388	5.05	20	3.4		2.8-3.9
Phillips, Cecelia	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/17/2008	388	5.05	20	3.4		2.8-3.9
Gambino, Fernando	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/16/2008	392	5.05	21	3.4		2.8-3.9
Raeese, Paul	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/16/2008	396	5.05	22	3.5		2.8-4.0
Shaw, Emma	05 (Denvers)	Denvers, E.	09/16/2008	404	5.05	23	3.5		2.8-4.0
Vega, Enrique	05 (Coleman)	Coleman, Y.	09/16/2008	406	5.05	23	3.5		2.8-4.0
Krause, Julie	05 (Randolph)	Randolph, T.	09/17/2008	412	5.05	24	3.6		2.8-4.1
Cobb, Drew	05 (Coleman)	Coleman, Y.	09/16/2008	412	5.05	24	3.6		2.8-4.1

The second page of the report provides the names of the students and their scores sorted into the four categories.



After the Winter Screening, print the screening report and compare it to the Fall report. Scan the distribution of students by looking at the blocks of colour, and then review the totals below the graph. Have the *Intervention* and *Urgent Intervention* categories grown smaller? Have students in the *On Watch* category moved closer to the benchmark? Has the *At/Above Benchmark* category expanded?



## Groups

Students may be screened based on special groupings. For example, you may want to view all of the EAL students in your school on one report rather than having to look at reports for each classroom. Similarly, the LRT may want to create a group for his/her students. If you are interested in this component, please contact Information and Library Services.



## Appendix B

### Accelerated Reader: Progress Monitoring Guidelines

#### English Language Arts and Accelerated Reader

Reading is a skill and, as with every skill, it requires not just instruction, but practice. The Saskatchewan English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum clearly identifies the outcomes and indicators that support optimal reading growth, the development of comprehension, and the construction of meaning. This occurs through direct and indirect teacher-led instruction, guided inquiry, and meaningful learning experiences.

Accelerated Reader (AR) is a tool to help the classroom teacher monitor student reading practice. It was not designed to assess student achievement. The ELA curricula are instructional in nature, but AR is not necessarily instructional. For these reasons, the use of AR to determine a student's "Reading" mark is not recommended.

#### Progress Monitoring and AR

When utilized appropriately, AR may play a role in helping students "Comprehend and Respond" to text as well as "Assess and Reflect" upon their own learning. In these instances, AR may be recognized as a progress monitoring "task" or assignment that is factored into the larger reading assessment picture.

- Grades 1 to 3: AR may not be used as a reading task.
- Grades 4 to 8: AR may comprise no more than 5% of the total reading assessment.

#### Acceptable AR Task Guidelines

**The incorporation of AR into a progress monitoring task shall only occur if the classroom teacher actively monitors student AR reading through goal setting.**

- *Do* base a student's assessment on the amount of progress made towards personal AR goals.
- *Don't* assess students unless you are actively monitoring their work. Students who are scoring low on quizzes or accumulating few points usually need teacher guidance. Intervene first and be sure students know what to do to be successful before evaluating their efforts.
- *Do* conduct weekly *Status of the Class* with each student. When students are engaged in reading, use this time for brief, one-on-one conversations. Dialogue about their reading success and challenges, monitor their reading logs, and guide their reading practice.
- *Do* view reports and "act" upon the data (e.g., Reading Practice Diagnostic Report, Student Record Report, TOPS Report, STAR Reading Summary Report, etc.).

### **Achievement Criteria: Grades 4 & 5**

<b>AR Task Criteria</b>	<b>Progress Monitoring Report</b>
I have exceeded my goal(s).	Excels at Outcomes
I have achieved my goal(s).	Meeting Outcomes
I am beginning to meet my goal(s).	Beginning to Meet Outcomes
I have not yet met my goal(s).	Not Yet Meeting Outcomes

### **Achievement Criteria: Grades 6 to 8**

<b>AR Task Criteria</b>	<b>Progress Monitoring Report</b>
I have exceeded my goal(s).	A = 85% and higher
I have achieved my goal(s).	B = 70 – 84%
I am beginning to meet my goal(s).	C = 60 – 69%
I have not yet met my goal(s).	D = 50 – 59%

### **Additional Information**

Refer to the *Accelerated Reader Teacher Binder* for further information regarding *Goal Setting* and *Status of the Class* and/or contact Joanne Beltramini, Coordinator, Information and Library Services.

## Accelerated Reader—Student Reading Plan

<b>Student:</b>	<b>Grade:</b>	<b>Teacher:</b>	
<b>School Year:</b>	<b>Beginning ZPD:</b>	<b>Adjusted ZPD</b>	<b>Adjusted ZPD:</b>

### 1. Minimum Average % Correct

Marking Period	Goal	Actual
1		
2		
3		

### 2. Points

Marking Period	Goal	Actual
1		
2		
3		

### 3. Minimum Average Book Level

Marking Period	Goal	Actual
1		
2		
3		

### 4. Additional Goals

Marking Period	Goal	Actual
1		
2		
3		

### 5. Commitment to Goals

Marking Period	Student Signature/Date	Teacher Signature/Date
1		
2		
3		

Achievement Criteria: Grades 4 & 5	
AR Task Criteria	Progress Monitoring Report
I have exceeded my goal(s).	Excels at Outcomes
I have achieved my goal(s).	Meeting Outcomes
I am beginning to meet my goal(s).	Beginning to Meet Outcomes
I have not yet met my goal(s).	Not Yet Meeting Outcomes

Achievement Criteria: Grades 6 to 8	
AR Task Criteria	Progress Monitoring Report
I have exceeded my goal(s).	A = 85% and higher
I have achieved my goal(s).	B = 70 – 84%
I am beginning to meet my goal(s).	C = 60 – 69%
I have not yet met my goal(s).	D = 50 – 59%

## Accelerated Reader: Sample Student Reading Plan

<b>Student:</b> Jane Smith	<b>Grade:</b> 7	<b>Teacher:</b> Ms. Reader	
<b>School Year:</b> 2010-2011	<b>Beginning ZPD:</b> 4.3 to 7.2	<b>Adjusted ZPD:</b>	<b>Adjusted ZPD:</b>

### 1. Minimum Average % Correct

Marking Period	Goal	Actual
1	85%	80%
2	85%	83%
3	85%	

### 2. Points

Marking Period	Goal	Actual
1	25	32.4
2	30	38.8
3		

### 3. Minimum Average Book Level

Marking Period	Goal	Actual
1	4.3	4.8
2	4.3	4.2
3		

### 4. Additional Goals

Marking Period	Goal	Actual
1		
2	Read and quiz on 1 informational book at low end of ZPD	Read/quizzed on 1 informational books
3		

### 5. Commitment to Goals

Marking Period	Student Signature/Date	Teacher Signature/Date
1	Jane Smith, Sept 9	Ms. Reader, Sept. 9
2	Jane Smith, Dec. 1	Ms. Reader, Dec. 1
3		

### Achievement Criteria: Grades 4 & 5

AR Task Criteria	Progress Monitoring Report
I have exceeded my goal(s).	Excels at Outcomes
I have achieved my goal(s).	Meeting Outcomes
I am beginning to meet my goal(s).	Beginning to Meet Outcomes
I have not yet met my goal(s).	Not Yet Meeting Outcomes

AR Task Criteria	Progress Monitoring Report
I have exceeded my goal(s).	A = 85% and higher
I have achieved my goal(s).	B = 70 – 84%
I am beginning to meet my goal(s).	C = 60 – 69%
I have not yet met my goal(s).	D = 50 – 59%