

Northmead's Reading Newsletter September 2021

Welcome to the first addition of our reading newsletter of this new academic year.

Through this newsletter you can find out what we're doing to promote reading across the school and what you can do as parents and guardians to support your child with their reading.

How do teachers choose the book colour band for my child?

Children will have taken their star reader tests in school over the past couple of weeks. This is a computer based test that measures a student's reading ability through a series of 34 questions. Every test for every child is different, and the computer selects different questions for each child dependent on how well they answer the previous questions. Essentially the computer adapts the test to suit your child.

This is not just a test of word reading, it is also a test of comprehension and understanding.

Once the star reader tests have been completed teachers are provided with an individual report for each child in the class. Part of this report records the ZPD for your child. The ZPD is the information which tells the teacher which colour reading band would best suit your child. The children are free to choose a book from their coloured section.

| | | | |
|---|------------|---|----------|
|  | 0.0 to 0.9 |  | 5 to 5.9 |
|  | 1 to 1.9 |  | 6 to 6.9 |
|  | 2 to 2.9 |  | 7 to 7.9 |
|  | 3 to 3.9 |  | 8 to 8.9 |
|  | 4 to 4.9 | | |

Unlike last year, children have now been given a physical reading record. The colour your child is choosing is located in the front of their reading record, where you will also see a record of their current reading age.

The reading age is an estimate of a child's reading ability, in reference to an average age at which a comparable ability is found. E.g. if your child has a reading age of 13 years, this means they have the reading ability of an average 13 year old. Reading age does not always correlate with a child's actual age.

You may feel your child has been given a book which is below that which you would expect. This normally occurs when the child's understanding of the text does not match to their word reading ability. Ideas for improving comprehension will be discussed in our next newsletter.

I would suggest those children on higher levels such as red, silver or gold also choose from the purple/light blue range so they do not miss out on the selection of really super books which are often in this range. Many new releases are levelled as purple or light blue and it would be a shame to miss reading these.

Where does my child get their books and how often are they changed

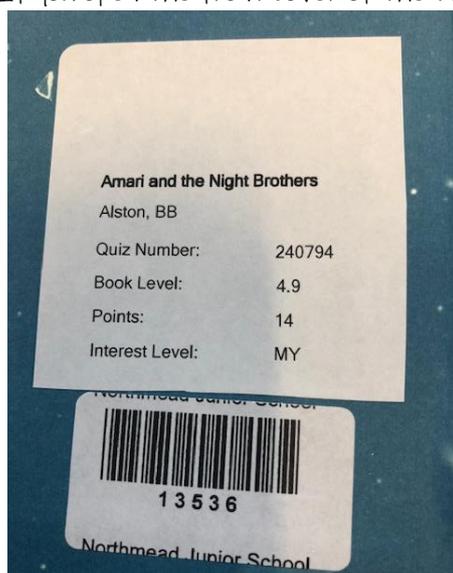


We are pleased to announce the library is open this year. It has been reorganised so children can more easily locate books and have space to enjoy reading for pleasure. Books are scanned out on the library system. All children's reading books are found in the library.

Classes have a weekly timetabled session to visit the library and it is also open from 8.30-8.50 every morning for children to select books.



If you open the front cover of the book you will see a sticker like this one



Book Title

Author

Quiz number which the children will use to take their quiz after finishing the book. See below.

Book level relates to the ZPD as shown on the chart above

Points- We do not use this system at Northmead, some schools use points to track and target children's reading

Interest level- The interest level attached to the book indicates age group appropriateness. Interest level is based on a book's content including theme, characterisation, and plot. The interest levels are based on the recommendations of the publisher and/or literary book reviews by professional organisations. To help you choose the books most appropriate for your children, Accelerated Reader books are divided into three interest levels:

- LY (Lower Years, Ages 5-8)
- MY (Middle Years, Ages 9-13)
- UY (Upper Years, Ages 14 and above)

In most cases, a book's interest level coordinates with its book level. Many books however, have a low book level but are appropriate for Upper Years and vice versa. For example, *Oscar, Cat About Town* by James Herriot and *Noughts and Crosses* by Malorie Blackman have a Book Level of 4.0 since both have short sentences and vocabulary that is simple. *Noughts and Crosses*, is intended for older pupils therefore it is tagged as Upper Years while *Oscar, Cat About Town* is tagged as Lower Years.

The bar code on the sticker is the individual code to scan out the book from the library.

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for changing their reading book when they need to. If your child is reading short phonic based books it is appropriate to read these more than once before returning them to the library. They will probably need to visit the library more than once a week. However, children reading longer chapter books may not need to change their books for a number of weeks.

What happens when my child finishes a book?

When a child finishes their book they will have the opportunity in school to take a quiz about it. Quizzes are taken on the computer by logging in to the accelerated reader website. Children are only able to take these quizzes in school. Children will find the quiz number in the front of the books. Quizzes test the understanding of what has been read. For every quiz passed, children receive a raffle ticket and are entered in to a prize draw at the end of the term.

Children can then return their books to the library and get out something new to read. It is important that children return books as there is a limit on the number of books a child can get out at one time on the library system.

What is the accelerated reader word count?

When a child takes a quiz the computer calculates how many words were in the book they have read. This number is added to the child's personal word count. Over the year we have a number of children who reach a million words read. This is celebrated in assembly and they receive a gold badge and certificate. The words read also contributes to the class word count and there is a display in the library indicating how many words each class has read.



We will be running a book fair again this term. The book fair will arrive on October 12th and stay with us for a week. All children will have a chance to visit the fair and then if they wish to purchase any books these can be paid for online.

Look out for more details coming soon.



Miss Lewis, our reading lead, will be holding a zoom online reading workshop on Monday 11 October at 7pm. This is an opportunity to hear more about how the accelerated reader system works and what you can do as a parent to support reading at home.

