

Isca College of Media Arts, Devon

All pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 are enrolled with Accelerated Reader (AR). We expect pupils to read for at least 20 minutes a day for homework and we have also committed one hour of the weekly English timetable to private reading of AR books and quizzing.

The number of books being borrowed from the library has increased dramatically; not only do pupils borrow AR books, but they also borrow from the whole range. Some Year 9 boys, who never read love the quizzes and, although they don't read at home, do read avidly in class. More pupils are reading materials from a wider range of topics and subjects, so hopefully general knowledge levels are increasing. Some subject areas encourage pupils to read during lesson and tutor time because they see the value of reading in increasing literacy levels. Pupils turn up to their weekly reading lesson with their books, which in the past was unheard of across the key stage!

All comments from the pupils themselves have been positive, they are keen to quiz and some are very competitive about reaching their targets, reading more books than friends, gaining more points and quiz rewards. We reward pupils with house points when they do quizzes, and additional points if they reach their target.

In addition to the above we have also found the following:

- We have been able to guide all pupils to reading books which are suitable to their ability with great ease.
- The school librarian has been able to suggest suitable reading books for pupils because she has a clear picture of the reading age, book level and NC level of pupils who approach her for help.
- Teaching assistants, who normally have to rely on teachers for advice on which books to encourage pupils to read, have been fully engaged in helping pupils to choose books.
- Details from STAR Reading tests and TOPS reports have been useful in dialogue with some parents who have clear, written evidence from the programme in understanding what their child can and cannot do as far as reading is concerned.

- AR has been a diagnostic and motivational tool for pupils
- We have been able to stock the school library with reading material to suit every reader at key stage 3 and this has had an impact on numbers of books borrowed and read. The library is no longer a threatening place for weaker readers because they know which colour and book level to take off the shelves as a starting point to choosing their reading book.
- More adults, teachers, teaching assistants and support staff in general are listening to pupils read.
- The reports generated by AR are paper free and accessible to all concerned through use of computers – a real boon to over loaded English teachers!
- We have been able to set reading targets for pupils and give advice to parents on how they can help their child improve literacy levels with ease because of the AR reports.
- We have had a series of visits from nearby schools that have heard of our use of AR and want to know more about what it entails. These visitors have come into school during, what we call Renlearn Reading Lessons, to see pupils engaged in the program.

Information provided by:

Mrs Sue Hadley

Head of English at Isca College