December 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Griffith Public Elementary Schools are happy to announce that all students in grades 2-6 students will take part in the Accelerated Reading (AR) program. This program has been specifically designed to improve students’ reading ability and to encourage a love of reading that will continue into adulthood.

The AR program works by identifying a student’s ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development), or reading range from which a student should be selecting books for optimal growth in reading without frustration. Students read books that fall within their range. When they finish the book, they take a short quiz assessing their understanding. As a result, students get points for reading books and passing quizzes.

Each classroom has set minimum goals for points. Students will be given a grade for accomplishing this goal. Students will also be rewarded for achieving individual goals that typically go above the grade-level goals. The AR program and goals are designed to encourage a love of reading for all students.

Students will be given class time to read and take the quizzes while at school. Of course, students are strongly encouraged to read at home as well. You can help by encouraging your child to read daily and asking them about their AR book. The attached FAQ has a list of questions that you can ask your child about her/his book.

If you have any questions about the AR program, please do not hesitate to contact your child’s teacher.

Sincerely,
Griffith Public Schools
Why Accelerated Reader?
Accelerated Reader’s (AR) goal is to motivate students to increase their reading comprehension and improve literacy skills. The students read books on the AR list and take quizzes on a computer at school.

Where does my child take an AR quiz?
Your child will take his/her A.R. tests at school. AR tests cannot be taken at home.

What is the ZPD?
Each student is assigned a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is his or her reading range. This set of numbers show the lowest reading level and the highest reading level appropriate for each student. Students should choose books on or in between these numbers to help make sure they read books that are not too easy or difficult. Students may go outside of the range to read a book of high interest, but this should not be a common practice.

How does my child earn points?
Your child will earn a score and AR points for each quiz he/she takes. Typically, the longer the book, the more points it is worth. Each quarter your child will be working toward his/her individual and grade-level AR point goal.

What are the AR quarterly grade-level goals?
- 2nd Grade 9 Points
- 3rd Grade 11 Points
- 4th Grade 15 Points
- 5th Grade 18 Points
- 6th Grade 23 Points

How will I know how my child is doing on the AR program?
You can sign up for Renaissance Home Connect by cutting and pasting the following link to your browser https://Hosted122.renlearn.com/118441/HomeConnect. Attached to this page is a specific username and password along with directions with how to receive automatic updates on your child’s quiz results. Set up just takes a minute or two!

Where can I get AR books for my child?
Almost every book in our school and classroom library is an AR book. You can check to see what a book’s level is by logging onto www.arbookfind.com. It is also possible to search by interest level to insure your child chooses an age-appropriate book.

How many times should my child read his/her AR book?
Your child does not need to read an AR book a certain number of times. However, your child should read the book as many times as it takes to understand what the entire story is about. He/she should be able to correctly answer questions about the book’s content.
How do I know if my child is ready for his/her AR test?
Your child should be able to correctly answer questions about the story. Give your child a little “quiz” at home by asking a few questions about the story. Students are not allowed to look back in the book for answers during the test, so be sure your child has a firm understanding of the book’s content.

I’d like to help my child read. Am I allowed to read the book TO my child or does he/she need to read it to me?
The goal of AR is to help develop children into independent readers and masters of comprehension. It is very important your child chooses books on his/her level. Books should be a “good fit,” meaning your child should know and be able to read most of the words in the book. If your child cannot read the book he/she brought home or checked out, your child probably needs to go down a level or two.

What is the test format?
AR tests are multiple-choice tests, usually consisting of 5 or 10 questions.

Questions to ask your child about an AR book.
• Where did the story take place?
• How did one of the characters change in the story?
• Which of the characters did you like best? Why?
• What were some of the problems or situations the characters encountered?
• Tell about a part that you liked or disliked and tell why?
• What was the main theme or idea?
• Why is the title a good title for the book/story? If you had to give it a different title, what would be another good title for it?
• If there was a problem, did it get solved? How did the character try to solve the problem?
• What happened because of the problem?
• Did any of the characters change through the story? Who changed, and how did they change?
• Why do you think the author wrote this?
• What is the most important point that the author is trying to make in his/her writing?
• What was your favorite part? Why?
• Can you retell the story in sequence order (use your fingers and sequence words: first, second, then, next, etc.)
• Is there a character in the story that reminds you of someone you know? If so, who are they like, and why do you think that?
• Does this book remind you of another book you know? Does it remind you of something you’ve experienced in real life?

AR Parents Guide
To learn more about Accelerated Reader, click and paste the below link in your browser.
http://www.renaissance.com/Resources/Parents