

## Accelerated Reader® Accessibility

Accelerated Reader is accessible to students with disabilities. It is compliant with all of the standards issued by the Access Board under section 508 and works with other widely used assistive technology tools. Students with disabilities generally experience difficulty using educational technology in two ways.

- First, students with limited or no fine motor skills have trouble using the mouse.
- Second, blind students or students with visual impairments have difficulty seeing the screen.

Accelerated Reader is accessible to students with visual and fine motor impairments through mechanisms available in the Accelerated Reader software, the computer's operating system, iPad, and other assistive technology tools.

### Using Accelerated Reader with Student with Limited Fine Motor Skills

Operating system accessibility features allow users to change settings to adjust the software controls such as the ability to execute all functions from the keyboard including the ability to: select name and class, search for books, enter information, take an Accelerated Reader quiz, and get results. To do this in the computer operating system go to:

- Microsoft Windows: Control Panel, Ease of Use, Change how your mouse works.
- Mac OS X: System Preferences, Universal Access.

### Using Accelerated Reader with Visually Impaired or Blind Students

#### Accelerated Reader Software

Recorded Voice Quizzes are available in Accelerated Reader. This format allows the question and answer choices to be read to the student. Not all Accelerated Reader Reading Practice Quizzes are available in this format, and as a general rule, Recorded Voice Quizzes are typically available for books with lower reading levels. To determine which books have Recorded Voice Quizzes, visit AR BookFinder™ at <http://www.arbookfind.com/advanced.aspx>, go to the Advanced Search Tab and sort by Recorded Voice under the Quiz Type option.

#### Operating System Tools

Accelerated Reader is accessible to students with visual impairments and blind students through accessibility options built into computer operating systems. Operating system accessibility features allow users to change settings to adjust the visual display and the software controls for the computer.

- Under "Universal Access," Mac OS X displays all on-screen elements in Accelerated Reader in black and white when the "switch to black and white" accessibility option is selected. This provides users with visual impairments a more contrasted display to read text.
- The Mac OS X also provides a "zoom in" accessibility option that allows users with visual impairments to zoom in on nearly all screens displayed throughout the Accelerated Reader application. This feature can be found under "Universal Access."
- In Windows OSs, go to the "Control Panel," select "Ease of Access Center, Optimize Visual Display." This displays nearly all screens in Accelerated Reader in contrast (usually black and white) and increases text size so users with visual impairments can more easily read text. While the actual Accelerated Reader quiz itself is not displayed in black and white, it is already displayed in a contrasted combination of yellow and black.

## iPad Tools

If using Accelerated Reader with visually impaired or blind students, and have the iOS Accelerated Reader Student App, there are accessibility options available via the iPad.

- The primary feature for visually impaired and blind users is called VoiceOver. This technology allows the user to use the application through simple swipe right/left gestures which directs the operating system to locate accessible items and then speak their label, text content, and a hint on what to do so the user can understand how to interact with the app. The Accelerated Reader iOS App has been built to work with VoiceOver so a student will be able to navigate the application including having the quiz questions and answer choices read to them, allowing them to take a quiz independent of a sighted helper.
- There is another iOS accessibility feature called Zoom. This allows the user to use a 3-finger tap gesture to zoom in/out and pan around.

## Braille

If a school wishes to turn Accelerated Reader quizzes into Braille format that is acceptable use. Options include:

- A Braille writer can work alongside the student in real time. (The writer creates a Braille version of the question that the student reads & responds to and the Braille writer then enters into Accelerated Reader.)
- The school creates a Braille version of an entire Accelerated Reader quiz and the student then takes the quiz. The customer then enters the responses.
- A teacher/aide can read the questions to the student and enter his/her responses.

Of course for any of these accommodations, keep in mind:

- Accelerated Reader is always to be used in a secure testing environment at a school.
- Teachers need to factor any testing accommodations into their interpretation of the data.
- For any accommodation involving Braille, the school cannot reproduce or distribute the quizzes and the Braille version must be destroyed after administration.