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## Important Home-School Reading Updates for Parents/Carers – October 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. First of all, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for embracing our new reading offer with such enthusiasm. The children have been so excited by all of the wonderful changes to our school libraries, and there is a lovely reading buzz around school!

Now that we have had a few weeks to iron out the kinks in our new systems and procedures, I wanted to take the opportunity to share the reasoning behind it and what our hopes are for the future of reading at NJA. Reading is at the heart of everything that we do at our school. Fostering a love of reading amongst our pupils is our ultimate aim. Reading is the universal key that opens so many doors in life and we are passionate that our children are able to develop their reading identities and thrive. Our new system is based around children taking a leading role in their own reading journey.

At NJA, we would like reading to be a part of children's everyday lives. Reading every day as part of a routine at bedtime, for example, will encourage a genuine love of reading, and will help to create life-long readers. We ask that children read at least three times per week, but encourage children to read as much as they possibly can! Please find below a summary of the various areas that link to home reading.

### What is a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)?

We are using a system called Accelerated Reader. This software allows us to use an online test to assess the children's reading ability, giving each child a ZPD (for example 2.2 to 3.2). Our entire library of existing books has been catalogued into this system, as well as a plethora of new books that have been purchased. This means that we now have an **enormous range of books** for children to choose from.

The ZPD is the range in which children can choose their books from. Rather than having one colour band to choose from, a ZPD gives children a much wider variety of texts to read and enjoy. The children will be retested every half term to ensure that their ZPD remains accurate. Children may choose any book within their ZPD, though we might suggest that they start off at the lower end of it to build confidence. Each time a child finishes a book they will be asked to complete a quiz on that book. This quiz will indicate how well they have understood their book. The scores for these quizzes will be used to help children to choose their next book. For example, a child with a ZPD of 2.2 to 3.2, who has just read a book that was a 2.8 but struggled with their quiz, might be encouraged to try a book at perhaps a 2.4 to help them build up their confidence and understanding. Likewise, if a child does very well on a quiz, they might be encouraged to challenge themselves at the higher end of their ZPD.

This is not a banded system where children are moved up and down in levels; rather a fluid system, where data informs decisions, and children, parents and school staff can have informal and supportive conversations about how pupils can make the most of our reading offer! If a child has struggled on a quiz, this is an opportunity to ask why. Is it that they didn't enjoy the book and so struggled to engage with it? Therefore, do we need to look at a different genre? Is it that they rushed the book and we need to have discussion about pace of reading and healthy reading environments? The quizzes are a way to open up discussions about reading and a way of children, and parents, taking a leading role in reading progress and development.

### **What is myON?**

MyON is an amazing online library that the children can link to their Accelerated Reader test score. All they need to do is log on to myON and click 'connect now' on the main page. This will connect their ZPD to their online library. They can then choose from a huge variety of online texts to read and even have them read as an audio book. This can be a great way of accessing texts from high up in their ZPD. Your child's myON login can be found in their planner. To access the myON website, simply search 'myON' in your search engine and log in. If your child has any logging in issues, please see your child's Class Teacher in the first instance.

### **How do we take a quiz?**

Quizzes can be completed at home or in school as morning work. If completing quizzes at home, it is essential that this be completely independently in order to form an accurate picture of children's understanding. If children are needing support with their quiz, then that is an indication that they are choosing books that are a touch too tricky and this is great information to feedback to their class teacher! To complete a quiz about a book from the school library, children can log on to Accelerated Reader with the same details as their myON account. To log on to Accelerated Reader, you can click the link that is provided on your teams account, or alternatively use the web address below:

<https://ukhosted126.renlearn.co.uk/2250418/>

**It is important that you only use this link or the one on teams as it is specific to our school.**

If reading a book on myON, they can take the quiz there and then on the myON website and they do not need to log on to Accelerated Reader to take the quiz separately, as the two are linked.

### **Should my child be reading physical books or online books?**

MyON and our school library hold equal value. Children may read predominantly online, or may prefer physical books. This is completely their choice! We just want children to enjoy what they are reading and develop a true love of reading.

I hope that this makes clear our reading offer here at NJA. If you have any questions, please do get in touch with your class teacher and they will be more than happy to help!

Many thanks for your continued support,

*J Houghton*

*Reading Lead, Normanton Junior Academy*