

Tips for independent reading:

- Appropriate text selection
 - Middle school students are still emerging as readers and developing literary taste. Students should explore what they like and enjoy what they are reading.
 - Local bookstores and libraries have staff dedicated to teen readers.
 - SPL and SPS have a partnership. All students already have a library account available through Clever. This is a free resource and is a great source for audiobooks. SPL also has dedicated teen service librarians and hours.
 - In Sacajawea's boundary area are Auntie's and Wishing Tree Books each have both large selections and highly knowledgeable staff dedicated to middle and young adult readers.
 - Awards including the Newberry, National Book Award, Coretta Scott King Award, Printz, and ALA's YALSA awards tend to be excellent recommendations
 - One word of caution about brand new books! Newer books tend to not be supported in AR yet, it takes time for the quizzes to be developed.
 - Most of the award list websites have a 'past winners and finalists' section that is more likely to feature books in AR, in the library, and in paperback. www.arbookfinder.com will indicate if a quiz/points are available for a given title and works on mobile.
- Reading sessions should be 20 minutes or (ideally) longer
 - Frequent starting and stopping will lead to slower reading, less comprehension, and less immersion in the story.
- Reading Journal
 - At the end of a reading session, write a 2-3 sentence summary of what you read. List key events, changes, and conflicts.
 - This will help you with comprehension in the moment, and it can be a great review tool right before you take an AR quiz.
- Reading buddy
 - Read the same book with a friend or family member.
 - You can hold each other accountable for the reading and have conversations about what you read and understood (this can be a big deal for comprehension).
- Audio books and reading aloud
 - Audio books can be a powerful *support* to reading- but are not an effective replacement
 - Students who *read along with* an audiobook tend to do well on AR
 - Students who *listen only* often struggle with AR and are not developing their reading skills.
 - Young readers vary widely in their reading speed, but a typical 7th grade read rate is in the 150-160 words per minute range. Most audiobooks go at about 150 words per minute.
 - Slower readers may find that audiobooks are helpful to both their pace of reading and understanding of the text.
 - Advanced readers often read in the 200-400 word per minute range and can find that audiobooks are too slow and do not provide much academic benefit (even if they enjoy a good audiobook).
 - Research says that reading aloud does increase comprehension
 - Similar trade-offs exist for reading aloud as audiobooks, most student readers will read below the pace of a professional narrator.