

# MULLAWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

"MAKING A QUALITY CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY"

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Mr John Dyson  
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Dear John,

I am writing to you today to share more of the impressive findings we are experiencing with Lexia Learning Systems at Mullaway PS. and the connections the staff have made between Lexia Learning Systems and the NSW Quality Teaching Framework.

At a local level, colleagues and parents of Mullaway PS continue to express their positive sentiment for the Lexia learning activities. Encouraging comments continue to accumulate and galvanise the favourable results we have already experienced from our quantitative evaluations in 2007.

Below are a few examples of their exhilaration:

- 'The Lexia program operates almost independently in my withdrawal room, allowing me to get on with teaching the rest of the class.'
- 'The improved self-esteem in my Lexia students is noteworthy. They participate more actively in class discussion, they are keen to finish homework tasks and they approach tasks with greater confidence.'
- 'The spelling results from the Lexia students are very impressive. Their improved decoding skills are obviously translating into success in our daily spelling tasks.'
- 'The intervention required to monitor results and reports for my Lexia students is nominal.'
- 'My child comes home now and grabs a book to read without my involvement'.
- 'The reports and graphs are terrific for student assessment folders and for use in interviews with parents.'
- 'Classes can be tracked, including marginalised groups, so trends are identified.'
- 'My child loves sharing her home reader with me now. Her confidence has grown enormously since using Lexia.'
- 'The instant results from each student using Lexia is terrific. I use these to individualise my teaching for the following week.'

As you can see John, the comments speak volumes for the effectiveness of Lexia Learning software. I continue to share these comments openly with staff in other schools in my region and as a result, have seen an exponential growth in the use of Lexia products in the area.

On a broader front, I would like to share with you the connectedness Lexia can have in the NSW Quality Teaching Framework. Having just returned from attending the 2008 North Coast Region Quality Teaching Conference, with several of my school colleagues, it seems imperative that I affirm with you the pivotal role Lexia Learning Systems can play in future teaching and learning. The quantitative data Mullaway PS and many other schools has gathered has provided us all with real time evidence, convincing us that Lexia does improve student outcomes in Literacy and Cognitive development. However, once again it's the breadth of the qualitative data that is often overlooked or undervalued when initially evaluating the effectiveness of Lexia software.

At the conference, Dr James Ladwig of Newcastle University presented a keynote address titled 'Systematic Implications Pedagogy and Achievement' (SIPA). Putting it simply, Dr Ladwig, who was one of the cultivators of the NSW Quality Teaching Framework(NSWQTF), presented findings from his current research into the effectiveness of the NSWQTF on learning outcomes. His presentation focused acutely on the dimensions and elements of the NSWQTF and their implications on improving student performance.

Importantly, Dr Ladwig's research results have unequivocally shown that to improve teaching and learning outcomes the dimension of 'Intellectual Quality' must have depth and rigour. He added that when 'Intellectual Quality' is strengthened student performances from marginalised student groups ie. ATSI, LSES improves significantly. Dr Ladwig also stated that from the evidence gathered, he can confidently state that 'Intellectual Quality' must be generous in depth for any of the other NSWQTF elements to contribute successfully towards improved student outcomes.

These findings reinforced to all of us the real potential Lexia has in the teaching and learning model. Both the Literacy and Cognitive software applications contain extensive depth in both knowledge and skills, and they are accessed by the learner in a clear, systematic manner. From our experience every Lexia student session requires the learner to engage in complex, key concepts and articulate the relationship between the concepts. The Lexia applications also require the students to use prior learning to manipulate or synthesize the concepts to solve problems or interpret new understandings. Our results have reflected the positive difference Lexia can have with students with disabilities or those from marginalised groups.

We also took some moments to identify how Lexia Learning Systems aligned itself coherently with the second dimension of the NSWQTF model- 'Quality Learning Environment'. This dimension emphasises the need for explicit quality criteria, high expectations and student self-direction. Again, both the Literacy and Cognitive software adhere to these principles of effective teaching and learning. As you know, the students using Lexia are guided through an explicit sequence of tasks that focus on core concepts. Students also self-regulate their tasks according to the choice of task, time spent on the task and the pace of the activity. Importantly though, students are given this freedom of self-regulation, but must continue to complete the overall content sample in logical sequence.

As you can understand John, we have returned to our school with an even greater depth of understanding of Lexia Learning Systems and its critical role in our teaching and learning programs at Mullaway PS. The significance of the NSWQTF can never be underestimated and the role Lexia can have within this model is considerable.

In conclusion, I hope these thoughts can assist you in your endeavour to radiate the enormous potential of Lexia Learning Systems to educators across NSW and beyond. I will eagerly continue to recommend Lexia to colleagues as an essential component of any teaching and learning program.

Yours faithfully,  
*David King*

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