

LEXIA TRIAL March – September 2006

Aims

- To explore the efficacy of the Lexia Phonics programme in helping raise reading levels.
- To determine the most effective way of linking phonics teaching, Lexia practice and comprehension.

Method

- Using asTTle results and teacher observations, a group of twelve boys were chosen to become part of the trial. Their asTTle results represented a large proportion of <Level 2 achievement throughout Year 9 (ie boys reading at a <11 year age level)
- They were timetabled in 3 x 15 minute slots per week (the minimum time recommended).
- I tested all boys, using the Burt Word Recognition test. This test uses words in isolation and tests word attack skills (phonics knowledge). It is the most difficult test I know of that is suited to measuring phonics knowledge.
- All were then tested, using the Lexia Quick Reading Test, which focuses on alphabet knowledge, short vowels, long vowels, progressing through to more involved reading skills.
- I decided to start all on Level 1 as none of the boys were able to demonstrate knowledge of vowel sounds, short or long and had difficulty with the Basic Sight Words required for reading at a 7 year level.

Burt Word Recognition Results

Name	March ⇒ June Raw Score Increase	Age equivalent increase
Jake G	+ 21	+ 3 years 7 months
Jesse W	+ 16	+ 2 years 7 months
Paul G	+ 14	1 year 8 months
Cameron P	+ 14	2 years 7 months
Matt V	+ 13	1 year 8 months
Liam T	+ 12	1 year 2 months
Isaac B	+ 10	1 year 2 months
Nick T	+ 10	.11
Westley C	+ 10	1 year 7 months
Dylan F	+ 10	1 year 8 months
Aylan M	+ 9	1 year 4 months
Jesse Mac	+ 5	.7
David N	+ 5	.7

- For boys to make normal progress, I would expect an increase of +2 in Raw scores, which equates to three months' progress.
- Jesse W has since increased his Burt Score by 8, for June – September and has completed the programme.

OBSERVATIONS

Boys

- "Repetition is great. Teachers do not repeat stuff. Lexia does."
- "There is no teacher bullshit. If you get it wrong, she tells you to try again and won't let you past until you get it right."
- "I can break words into syllables! I worked out Henrick van Boven. I couldn't have done that two weeks ago."
- "I can read faster."
- "Nothing has ever worked for me before."
- "I can understand all of that stuff now. I didn't know what they were talking about in primary school."
- "I'm enjoying reading for the first time."
- "I read during the holidays. My parents can't believe it."
- "I got an Achieved in my writing!"

Classroom Teachers

- Physical, emotional and attitudinal changes with students once started Lexia.
- Reading willingly.
- Eager to share contents of book.
- Not reading prior to Lexia. Now reading avidly.
- Concentration has improved.
- Reading for the first time, in class.
- Huge improvement in spelling, accuracy, content, ideas. Writing has improved tremendously.
- AsTTle results show major gains by the Lexia boys.
- Improved focus in class. The world is making sense; it's not a puzzling place.
- Independence improved greatly.

CT

- Lexia gives me greater insight into how each individual learns, and I can cater to each boys' needs.
- Boys arrive early to start on Lexia, some are here at 8.30am and at 1.05pm.
- Feedback from all students is positive.
- They love the element of competition – they compare progress with each other.
- They enjoy having the choice of which activity/activities they will work on.
- If they are tired, they can change to a different activity to regain focus.
- Wild guesses for unknown words becoming very rare.
- Receiving requests constantly from students who wish to join the Lexia group.
- They like the bar graphs which denote progress.

Barriers

- For eight hours per week, I am either in class with 10RO, or working with separate reading groups from 9TK, while the Lexia boys are working alone. This means that I am unable to monitor their work, teach them the skills if they are having difficulties or ensure that each boy has his allocated time on the computer.
- I have one 15-minute session per week when I teach the skills, revise work or monitor each Lexia student.
- One group has been fortunate in that I spend three sessions per week with them. Those boys have progressed faster and have made the most improvement.