



**N E L S O N  
C O L L E G E**

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**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**

<b>Name</b>	<b>March ⇨ June Raw Score Increase</b>	<b>Age equivalent increase</b>
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.

### **Recommendations**

- That I be timetabled to teach Lexia full-time.

### **Conclusion**

Lexia "Strategies for Older Students" is an invaluable teaching support tool and is beneficial, not only to struggling readers, but, to proficient readers who could benefit from some extension work.

The record keeping facility is outstanding and provides a detailed picture of every Lexia session.

Lexia challenges both students and teachers. It is demanding, innovative, controlled, sequential and fun to use and is the best phonics based computer programme I have ever seen.

Students learn!!!

Colleen Croft  
TEACHER

September 2006