

# **Lexia Trial Report**

## **Derinya Primary School**

### **Lexia Software Trial 2009**

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## INTRODUCTION

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Derinya is a large, well-regarded school committed to continually improving the academic standards and achievements of its students. The school has a strong focus on literacy and numeracy as core subjects and these are supported with quality teaching and learning inquiry units to enhance the outcomes of all students. Internet based student learning programs, eg: Lexia Learning System, support and further strengthen the core learning. Team planning is a key component to improved teaching and learning and we have extremely stable, talented staff committed to developing student potential.

Many co-curricular programs widen and enhance the learning of students engaging them in a diverse range of activities both within and beyond the classroom. A focus on information technology and inquiry also enhances student engagement, and these combine to provide excellent learning opportunities.

We are proud of our achievements in student health, wellbeing and engagement and have worked diligently over the years to develop a respectful caring culture in which everyone has responsibilities. Derinya is one of few 5 star sustainable schools in Victoria and this is a credit to the school.

In 2009 Derinya was fortunate enough to be given the status as a Lighthouse School for Lexia in Victoria. Jayne Potts, a Lexia Consultant convened the Lexia trial at Derinya during 2009. Jayne's work has been invaluable to our school and we are very pleased to show many other schools the enormous capacity of Lexia in developing a student's learning potential.

A small team of interested staff developed the trial groups and plans were quickly implemented as the school was very excited about the prospects Lexia raised in promoting the literacy development of a great number of its young learners. Testing was conducted through the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority using its On Demand Testing – an on line web based testing program in reading for Grades 3 – 6. BURT word tests of sight vocabulary were also used and children's Victorian Reading Benchmark Data followed during the trial. The SWST spelling test was also used by one cohort.

The reading which follows describes our journey and findings. We will be conducting more rigorous trials in 2010 to further verify our data. We are forever learning and fine tuning our practice. We are very excited about the potential of Lexia at Derinya and wish to support as many other schools who may implement this amazing software.

As Principal of Derinya for 9 years and working in teaching and learning for more than 35 years I can honestly say that I have never seen any program so thorough and rigorous whilst engaging all students 100% of the time. It does what I could never have done as a teacher and nor could I expect my staff to have the differentiated capacity of this program. It is a significant teaching and learning tool which exponentially increases all children's life opportunity and realising their learning potential for a very small investment of time. We are delighted to be a Lexia light house school and welcome any schools wishing to take the same journey to join us in this excellent pursuit. The children of our future are the winners.

The following discussion is a representation of the data we have worked with in 2009 followed by honest comment. We trust you will find this interesting and at times amazing.

## YEAR 1 LEXIA TRIAL RESULTS: RESULTS IN VICTORIAN READING BENCHMARK LEVELS

One class was placed on as a trial for a term as a whole class. The teacher was a former reading recovery teacher and a current leading teacher who wanted to determine the level of influence Lexia had on her students' literacy development after hearing from other teachers. Victorian Reading Benchmark data was used as a measure of growth.

State normed Benchmark Reading levels where:

Level 1 – 5 is Prep

Level 10 – Grade 1 benchmark

Level 15 – Grade 2 benchmark

	Gender	PRE TEST	POST TEST	GROWTH
		START TERM THREE	END TERM THREE	
Student				
1	F	22	24	2
2	M	14	16	2
3	F	22	24	2
4	M	22	24	2
5	M	14	16	2
6	M	End yr 6		
7	F	11	12	1
8	M	10	15	5
9	M	15	20	5
10	F	11	13	2
11	M	Reading Recovery		
12	F	11	13	2
13	F	10	12	2
14	F	15	18	3
15	F	11	13	2
16	M	22	24	2
17	F	12	14	2
18	M	15	20	5
19	M	22	24	2

### **Results Discussion Points:**

- All children improved over the ten week period by at least two reading levels
- Three male students achieved a growth of 5 reading levels in one school term.
- The teacher was impressed by the children's continued enthusiasm to continue the program.
- Excellent for teacher to monitor and support students development when whole class is working on Lexia in ICT lab.

## YEAR 2 LEXIA TRIAL RESULTS

The Derinya year 2 team committed to taking on Lexia as a means to improve literacy development in their students. In 2009 they worked in teaching teams mainly of streamed ability and for this reason their cohort was interesting to study. The VCAA General Year 3 reading test was used as a measure of progress and scores were processed in teaching groups and also in gender groups. A year 2 test would have been more suitable however these were unavailable. The trial took place over terms 2 And 3 in 2009.

Results are as follows:

Group	Student Number	Female		Student Number	Male	
		Growth	End VELS Level		Growth	End VELS Level
Highest performing group	1	0.4	3.3	1	1.8	3.3
	2	0.2	3.5	2	0.2	3.3
	3	0.5	2.8	3	0.3	3.2
	4	0.9	2.7	4	0.8	2.9
	5	0.5	3.1	5	0.8	2.8
	6	0.6	2.5	6	1.7	3.3
	7	0.3	3.0	7	1.4	2.9
	8	1.1	3.0	8	0.7	2.3
	9	1.5	2.3	9	0.8	3.1
					10	0.4
Mean Growth		0.66			0.89	
Second highest performing group	10	0.7	2.5	11	0.5	2.1
	11	0.7	2.1	12	0.2	2.7
	12	0.3	2.1	13	0.6	1.9
	13	0.7	2.3	14	0.4	2.4
	14	0.7	3.3	15	1.0	3.7
	15	0.4	2.3	16	1.0	2.2
	16	0	1.4	17	1.1	2.7
	17	1.1	2.8	18	1.6	3.3
	18	0.8	2.9	19		
	19	1.4	3.6			
	20	0.8	3.0			
	21	1.0	3.0			
Mean Growth		1.01			0.8	
Second weakest group	22	1.0	2.7	20	0.8	2.0
	23	0.8	2.1	21	1.2	2.5
	24	0.6	2.4	22	0.6	1.9
	25	0.8	2.0	23	0.8	1.9
	26	0.6	1.9	24	1.4	2.6

	27	0.4	1.8	25	1.4	2.5
	28	0.6	1.9	26	1.0	3.2
				27	0.6	1.9
Mean Growth		0.68			0.98	
Weakest Group						
	29	0.5	1.7	28	0.4	1.4
	30	0	1.3	29	0.3	2.0
	31	0.2	1.4	30	0.2	1.8
	32	0	1.4	31	0.4	1.9
	33	0.4	1.6	32	0	1.3
	34	0.1	1.5	33	0.2	1.6
				34	0.5	2.1
				35	0.4	1.9
				36	0.4	1.9
Mean Growth		0.2			0.31	
		0.64			0.75	

### **Results Discussion Points:**

- All children with the exception of three students in the lowest group improved. This may have been due to the level of difficulty of the test and other measures could have been utilised.
- On average the boys improved 0.75 VELS levels. This is equivalent to one and a half years growth in six months.
- The boys mean improvement was greater than the girls.
- All children should reach grade 2 standard by the end of the year.
- Some students in the second weakest group have outperformed students in the group above them.
- More than half of the weakest group demonstrated a growth of almost one VELS year in 6 months. This is significant as educational research informs us that the as children develop, the gap gets wider. The maintenance of growth for females is similar in both the higher and lower end groups.

## YEAR 3 LEXIA TRIAL RESULTS

A group of Year 3 students were selected due to their lower scores in reading and participated in four sessions per week in the ICT lab supported by teacher aides for a period of 15 weeks at four sessions per week. Pre and Post tests using the VCAA Grade 3 Adaptive Reading Tests were administered to measure growth.

Date Given		MAY	SEPTEMBER	Growth
Test Number		2085	2085	2085
Test Name	Gender	Gr 3 Adaptive Reading	Gr 3 Adaptive Reading	Gr 3 Adaptive Reading
Student				
1	M	1.2	2.4	1.2
2	M	2.4	2.8	.4
3	F	1.9	2.3	.4
4	F	2.6	3.1	.5
5	M	2.0	3.1	1.1
6	F	1.6	2.1	.5
7	M	1.2	1.5	.3
8	F	1.8	2.2	.4
9	F	1.8	2.9	1.1
10	F	3.2	4.2	1.0
11	F	1.6	2.1	.5
12	M	1.7	3.4	1.7
13	F	1.9	2.5	.6
14	F	2.8	2.8	0
15	F	2.0	2.2	.2
16	F	3.0	3.1	.1
17	M	2.8	3.7	.9

### **Results Discussion Points:**

- Average Growth in 15 weeks = 0.64 VELs levels. (The normal growth we would expect in one year is a 0.5 VELs levels.
- There were 6 males in the group and they achieved a mean growth of 0.93 whereas the females achieved an average growth of 0.48 VELs Levels.
- Students had to come to the lab independently and meet the aides there. In time all students attended regularly and participated eagerly.

## YEAR 4 LEXIA TRIAL RESULTS

Several students having difficulties with literacy from our year 4 cohort were selected to participate in the trial working in the ICT lab supervised by student support staff for three sessions per week. Four indicators of progress were used including the following:

- 2301 – VCAA Year 4 Reading Progress Test which measures progress at the expected level. It is expected that Year 4 students at state level would be performing at 2.5 – 2.75 VELs levels at this time of the year. This is our least performing cohort and in hindsight we should have used the adaptive test to show greater range in growth. Once pre tests were conducted they had to be followed by the same test for consistency. The grade 4 test was also too hard for them and in hindsight, the grade three test would have been more suitable for their reading skills.
- PM Benchmark Test – State standardised test of reading level ability and comprehension
- BURT Test: This is a reading test of sight vocabulary
- SWST is the standardised single word spelling test used for students aged 6–14 years of age. It is used to identify gaps in spelling skills, track progress over time and provide teachers with information for effective planning of spelling instruction. It consists of a set of nine standardised spelling tests each containing between 30 and 50 words presented orally, individually and within a sentence.

DATE GIVEN	Sex	May 09	Sept 09	+	PM	PM	+	Burt	Burt	+	SW ST	SW ST	+
TEST NUMBER		2301	2301 Post Test Results										
TEST NAME													
1	F	2.75	2.5		25	27	2	31	35	4	10	16	6
2	M	2.5	2.75	.25	27	28	1	43	53	10	16	21	5
3	M	2.75	3.0	.25	27	29	2	41	49	8	7	12	5
4	M	2.75	2.75		27	29	2	46	55	9	Abs	14	A
5	M	Absent	2.5		12	17	5	23	29	6	0	Abs	A
6	M	2.75	3.0	.25	28	30	2	45	72	27	23	26	3
7	M	3.0	3.0		26	29	3	45	49	4	7	7	-
8	F	2.5	2.0		26	28	2	36	48	12	Abs	11	A
9	F	2.5	2.75	.25	25	28	3	30	68	38	2	8	6
10	M	2.5	2.5		27	28	1	36	47	11	16	19	3
11	M	2.75	2.75		26	27	1	34	49	15	16	19	3
12	M	2.0	2.5	.5	26	27	1	44	53	9		5	PSD
13	F	2.5	2.75	.25	24	25	1	43	48	5	15	17	2
14	M	2.75	2.75		27	28	1	57	66	9	17	19	2
15	M	2.75	3.0	.25	27	28	1	50	63	13	17	31	14
16	F	2.75	2.75		27	28	1	50	58	8	21	24	3
17	M	2.5	2.75	.25	26	28	2	60	60	-	23	28	5
18	F	3.0	3.0		26	28	2	37	53	16	15	18	3
19	M	2.5	2.75	.25	28	29	1	54	60	6	32	32	-

20	M	2.5	2.75	.25	26	30	4	53	-	-	20	27	7
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**Results Discussion Points:**

- All students improved in reading ability
- Student 9 is an ESL student – English as a second language. Her improvement is excellent and in particular her gains made in BURT score of word recognition. This has been demonstrated by other ESL: students also.
- The most significant growth occurred in results from the BURT word recognition with an average growth of 11.6 over the trial period.
- Student Number 5 who received reading recovery in Grade 1 – 2006 gained 5 reading levels

## YEAR 5 LEXIA TRIAL RESULTS

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The year 5 trial results are not reliable. Due to an error in test administration the incorrect test was administered at the end of the trial. We will comment on one significant year 5 student's result in the findings as follows.

- A year 5 boy has had significant learning difficulties throughout all of his schooling. His learning and self esteem have suffered significantly due to his inability to read. He is a wonderful person and is making up for these deficits in other ways. Lexia has identified that he is stuck on certain areas of phonemic awareness and whilst he can complete some aspects with ease he is having great difficulty with others, eg: long vowels, letter/sound recognition. He has had the usual battery of assessments and classroom support over the years and I believe the a school has done as much as they can for him within our capacity. Now using Lexia he had been given a new hope for his future learning. I have been working on aspects one on one with him and have seen good growth. He is also proud of his achievements and I can monitor his progress from my office computer and go and help him when he is stuck!! I can also ensure he is having the time needed on the program to improve based on the report which shows usage. He is in our radar for year 6 Lexia!!

## YEAR 6 LEXIA TRIAL RESULTS

A grade 6 teacher requested to use Lexia for his entire class. He was timetabled into the ICT lab for three 15 minute sessions per week together with cross trainer sessions when available. Progress was measured using the VCAA Grade 6 Adaptive Reading Tests. It is expected for students in year 6 to be reading at VELS level 4.0 by the end of the year 6 year. The test ceases to measure when a student reaches 5.9 VELS level. Any score over 5.0 is very high for end of year 6. (VCAA adaptive test scores tend to be marked higher than progress tests)

Results are as follows:

DATE GIVEN	Gender	MAY 2009	SEPTEMBER 2009	GROWTH
TEST NUMBER		2094	2094	
TEST NAME		GR 6 ADAPTIVE READING	GR6 ADAPTIVE READING	
Student				
1	F	5.3	5.3	-
2	F	4.0	Absent	ABS
3	F	4.9	Above 5.9	1.0+
4	M	4.7	4.7	-
5	F	5.8	5.8	-
6	F	5.1	5.8	.7
7	M	4.3	5.3	1.0
8	F	4.0	5.0	1.0
9	F	2.4	2.9	.5
10	F	3.4	4.4	1.0
11	F	4.4	5.2	.8
12	M	Above 5.9	Above 5.9	-
13	M	4.9	5.0	.1
14	M	3.2	4.8	1.6
15	M	5.2	5.9	.7
16	F	4.4	4.9	.5
17	M	3.6	3.9	.3
18	F	4.1	5.1	1.0
19	F	Above 5.9	Absent	ABS
20	F	3.9	4.5	.6
21	M	5.0	5.2	.2
22	F	3.6	4.7	.7
23	M	5.6	Above 5.9	.3+

### Results Discussion Points:

- Mean score for students who have shown improvement is 0.7 VELS growth. This is equivalent to one and a half years growth.
- 5 students with a pre test score in the 3.0 to 4.0 range all achieved in excess of 4.0 which is above state level for the end of the year.

## **LEXIA – READING RECOVERY TRIAL**

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Our Reading Recovery Teacher does a terrific job working half time with 4 students for daily half hour reading recovery session over 20 weeks. This is a significant investment in money and time and this trial was conducted to identify if we could use the time better by having the teacher work with a small group on Lexia rather than individually. We were also interested to hear of the opinion of the Reading Recovery Teachers with regards to Lexia.

At the start of the year we asked the Reading Recovery teacher to nominate the children most likely to need Reading Recovery in the second semester. In consultation with the teachers, she nominated eight children. These children were placed on Lexia. By the start of the second semester, only three of these children were still eligible for Reading Recovery. These three had high concentration issues, as well as other learning issues.

The Reading Recovery teacher put the students she was working with onto Lexia daily as she found it reinforced her teaching with them. She also kept them going on the program after they had completed the program, to keep them moving forward rather than them getting lost back in the classroom system which can happen.

### **Results are as follows:**

Trial Group	Increase in PM reading levels	Increase on BURT
Reading Recovery (4 students)	Average of 14.75 reading levels	17.5 words
Lexia – Control Reading Recovery Students (4 students)	Average of 9 reading levels	19 words
Lexia support /class support	Average of 6.5 reading levels	11.7 words
Normal classroom instruction	Average of 7 reading levels	9.5 words

### **Results Comments:**

- Reading recovery students who were to go on the program later in the year improved better than the control group.
- Three out of the four students who were to go on to Reading Recovery were deemed ineligible as their reading levels were too high.
- One ESL student in the second group – Lexia – control reading grew by 17 levels. He had recently arrived from Germany and started school on level 1 just before the trial commenced. He finished the trial at Level 18.
- Lexia significantly increases sight vocabulary as identified by the BURT test results.
- Students who come off reading recovery have been tracked over time and their reading levels diminish once they go back into main stream classes. The Reading Recovery teacher has noted that keeping those children on Lexia can greatly enhance their chances at maintained success in reading and thus in all other areas of learning.

## **OBSERVATIONS MADE BY STAFF INVOLVED IN THE TRIAL**

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Please take the time to read significant comments made by classroom teachers and parents about their experiences with Lexia learning.

- Our Prep teachers have heard of the progress of other students and have started their classes on the program three times per week. At times it is difficult to get use of the ICT Lab and thus we have rostered each of our 5 Prep classes to come into the Lab one morning per week before school to use Lexia with parents observing. This has been a significant development. Some of our Prep teachers have commented that they didn't realise that the students were so capable and were amazed at the individual attention the program provides. They are also amazed by the tracking and recording of progress.
- Prep Parents also have commented that they didn't believe their children were so capable.
- One of our Grade 1 teachers – also reading recovery trained requested that her class have access to Lexia. Since conducting regular sessions with her whole class she is amazed at their progress and also at the impact it is having on their other learning. She believes it is the practise that provides great strength in the program.
- A parent of a year 3 boy asked the teacher “what she had done to her son?” He had read three books over the weekend and had never done that before in his life. She was amazed that he could now read so well and so willingly. The teacher smiled and commented: “That is because he can now read!!”
- At the start of the year my grade 1 class of 20 students had 6 student who were at risk and 4 who needed monitoring. Now I only have one student at risk, with specific learning needs. Even so she has progressed from 0-4 in PM Benchmarks and her phonemic awareness has improved significantly. The Lexia program was particularly successful with MM, a student from Austria who could speak German and Swedish quite fluently, but had difficulty adjusting to English speech patterns and vowels. Her success has been phenomenal, with MM progressing 3 levels in LEXIA this year. Another student is finding the cross-trainer quite difficult. Interestingly enough he has struggled with fine motor skills all year. He has only just gone on to the program as he was part of the Lexia control group. I expect LEXIA will help FS with his phonemic skills as well as fine motor. I've also noticed that students with difficulties hearing find LEXIA a huge challenge. This is a good diagnostic tool for teachers. If they are not able to hear the LEXIA instructions, and the sound on the computer is adequate teachers have another piece of vital evidence to request an audiologist consultation. Children who have been easily distracted in class like LEXIA. It has their hearing and vision covered. And they can see themselves progress so they always ask if they can work on LEXIA, particularly cross-trainer. One of our new students who arrived at the beginning of Term 4 has been on LEXIA for 3 weeks. Already his phonemic awareness is improving. His accuracy in spelling and his willingness to share his knowledge is improving daily. I'm very glad we are a lighthouse school for this program.
- A grade three student for whom we have attempted to receive PSD funding for over the last 2 – 3 years has been on Lexia in her classroom over the last 5 months. 5 months ago she was reading at PM Benchmark Level 13 which is very low for a grade 3 student. Her latest running record shows that she is now working at Level 27. This is an amazing recovery for this student and she now reads fluently and with confidence. The teacher is amazed at her progress in every way.
- A young graduate year 6 teacher is using Lexia to support his program. He was extremely excited to read the results of their VCAA testing at the end of the trial and believes it supports his teaching so well as he can monitor every child's progress even from home. He feels that he is

now able to do the best he can in giving such a core component of learning being treated so individually. He has commented that all of the students love their Lexia time and whilst there is no competition there is an excited air of “I can beat my last work and better myself!”

- A Reading Recovery Teacher from another school has followed our trial eagerly and tested her ex reading recovery students right up to year 6 level. She identified that most of them hadn't progressed since coming off the Reading Recovery program and were still significantly lower than their matched cohort with the gap widening as the years go by. She maintained that this rendered the Reading Recovery Program good whilst the children were engaged in the program however its value was diminished over time due to lack of reinforcement of the basics. The school has now spent its whole English Budget on Lexia for 2010.

## CONCLUSION

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### General Findings Based On Our Experience

- Lexia is extremely well researched and supported by highly regarded educational professionals..
- Lexia is particularly engaging for boys
- Lexia practises children in the basic literacy skills – something we as classroom teachers no longer have time to do with the ever crowded and expanding curriculum
- In general, significant gains were made in sight vocabulary as identified by the BURT word test.
- For some children the implementation of Lexia has been life changing by finding the areas never previously identified and working through these in a systematic gap free manner
- It does not replace the teacher however it does reinforce the learning taking place in the classroom
- Lexia supports the classroom program of literacy instruction.
- Lexia does not allow students to fall through the gap.
- Lexia has the capacity to support the literacy learning of all students.
- Lexia takes a very small amount of time required from the daily classroom program
- Consistent use of Lexia assists lower achieving students to maintain their relative level of ability within the cohort rather than diminishing over time and the gap getting wider.'
- Consistent use of Lexia assists many students to rise well above their expected level.
- Lexia is quick to administer
- Lexia provides excellent comprehensive, easy to understand support for the classroom teacher.
- The children enjoy the positive feedback that they get via the coloured bars.
- The provision of homework support for students is excellent.
- The provision of support for classroom teachers is also excellent and not yet see in Australia.

I can only highly commend this program to you and as Principal of a school of over 600 students i am excited about implementing this program whole school in 2010. I look forward to creative time tabling of our ICT Labs and human resources.

Sincerely

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