

“Nothing ever worked before. Finally, things are making sense to me!”

BACKGROUND

Raymond was a student at Concord-Carlisle High School. He entered the Concord Schools in the first grade, and had reading and language difficulties from the beginning. Because English is his second language, he was serviced by an ESL teacher and his problems were attributed to his struggle to acquire a second language.

When he entered the regional high school, his word attack skills were at an extremely low level, and his comprehension and vocabulary scores were “also well below grade level,” according to Speech/Language Pathologist Hattie Thurman, to whom he was referred. A reevaluation of his language difficulties strongly indicated that Raymond had learning disabilities, specifically with auditory discrimination. He was placed in Special Education, and was serviced by a special educator in addition to a speech pathologist.

REMEDIATION

Ms. Thurman began using the Lindamood-Bell Phonemesequencing Program with Raymond. This program employs colored blocks to teach the segmentation of sounds and syllables to help students with auditory difficulties. Raymond continued to struggle. In September, she introduced **Lexia Learning Systems Reading S.O.S.** to augment and support the teacher-directed Lindamood-Bell.

RESULTS

“Lexia reinforces discrimination between sounds. For example, I would teach open and closed vowel sounds, or-ir-er sounds, and then Lexia would reinforce the lessons with excellent drill exercises that Raymond loves. He literally begs to use the program and comes during study hall, as well as during his regular period with me. For about a month, he used the Lexia program for two hours every school day. He finished level one in that time. Later, whenever he had free time during his classes, he took the disc and a headset and went to work. He completed levels two, three, and four before the end of March while sharing the program with other students in his alternative classes.”

“At first, my friends said it was too easy. So I let them try to do it themselves. They saw that it was hard work but lots of fun. Now they want to use it, too,” says Raymond.

Ms Thurman confirms his claim. Lexia Systems provides the drill her students need, using exercises that are appropriate and challenging for secondary students. She has used the program with six other students and all have benefited. Raymond's success, however, has been the most dramatic. His classroom teachers report that not only can he now read multi-syllabic words, but he reads with more fluency, and has better comprehension. More importantly, he reads with confidence, volunteering to read aloud in his regular classes and to answer questions. He recognizes his progress and is motivated to keep working. He knows that he is capable of becoming a skillful reader.

OTHER STUDENTS

As a speech pathologist, Hattie Thurman "keeps up" with what is going on in her field, and she "has a sense of what will help." Experience has shown her that students with weak auditory skills and/or ESL students who cannot distinguish between English sounds easily, need to have an auditory processing piece that includes lots of practice, incorporated into their education plan. She also knows that students enjoy computers and dislike worksheets. Lexia Reading S.O.S. provides varied and challenging drills, effective closure exercises, and positive reinforcement – all of which serve to motivate students. Ms Thurman enthusiastically endorses Lexia Systems for ESL students, students in a regular classroom who need extra drill time to learn, and for learning disabled students like Raymond.