

SOLUTION SPOTLIGHT

Literacy for All

Putting Adolescent Learners
on a Path to Graduation

Lexia®
ALL FOR LITERACY

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Introduction

Even though 95% of all students CAN become successful, confident learners, only 34% of eighth-grade students are reading proficiently according to NAEP's 2019 Reading Report Card.

Literacy is fundamental to learning in all subject areas. Students in middle and high school must master not only basic but also advanced reading skills, to be able to gain new information through reading and become college and career ready.

Addressing the wide variety of literacy needs of adolescent students requires highly effective, personalized literacy instruction to accelerate learning and ensure every student achieves the goals and expectations at each grade.



Lexia® PowerUp Literacy® is a technology-based literacy program for students in grades 6–12 who are reading below grade level. With more than 30 years' experience delivering effective Structured Literacy programs, Lexia's literacy experts designed PowerUp to maximize every student's learning through a truly personalized experience.

1

Proven instruction for every student ensures equity.

There are many approaches to teaching students to read, but not all are built upon proven reading research. The body of research on reading acquisition and instruction, known as the science of reading, provides decades of evidence about how to help every student learn to read. More than just phonics, an instructional approach based in the science of reading will cover all of the reading skills needed for word recognition (decoding) as well as language comprehension. This approach is known as Structured Literacy, and it provides explicit, systematic, and cumulative instruction that is also diagnostic and responsive.

PowerUp uses a Structured Literacy approach, covering reading skills around words, grammar, and comprehension, in a way that helps students across skill levels succeed. Ensuring success in all reading areas is critical; if a student does not have adequate underlying skills in any one of the areas of reading, reading success is compromised.

PowerUp's curriculum helps educators to address inefficient word-recognition skills, insufficient syntactic knowledge, and/or a lack of adequate reading skills and strategies, as needed based on each student's starting levels and progress in the program. This enables educators to support the wide range and diverse needs of adolescent readers, in a single program that they can trust to help their students succeed.

Independent third-party validation confirms PowerUp is research-proven to accelerate learning:

- PowerUp earned a Strong rating from Evidence for ESSA
- PowerUp is up to 5x as effective as the average middle school reading intervention
- PowerUp enables students to make multiple years of growth in a single academic year

63%

**of students using
PowerUp with fidelity
covered three grade
levels of skills in a single
school year**



PowerUp Supports the Diverse Needs of Adolescent Learners

Each student comes to a secondary-level classroom with a different level of understanding, which has only been intensified by interrupted learning. PowerUp ensures educational equity for students by covering a wide range of skills, from foundational reading skills typically covered in early elementary school to more advanced grade-level concepts, and the comprehension and analytical skills taught in early high school.

PowerUp is designed to be used alongside the core curriculum. This can be in an intervention block, ELA class, resource room, at home, or wherever is most convenient, allowing educators to differentiate instruction and target skill gaps:

Student Population	PowerUp Targeted Skills
Three or more grade levels behind	Foundational activities solidify skills typically taught in early elementary school to develop decoding and automaticity, teach students how texts convey meaning, and build reading fluency.
One-two grade levels behind	Intermediate activities cover skills typically taught in upper-elementary grades to continue to build fluency and automaticity and develop an understanding of complex sentences and text structure.
Zero-one grade levels behind	Grade-level activities in grades six-eight build academic vocabulary, grammar, deep reading, and text analysis.

No matter what level of literacy proficiency students bring to secondary-level learning, the depth and breadth of PowerUp’s scope and sequence simultaneously addresses gaps in fundamental literacy skills while building higher-order analytical skills to accelerate learning.

With PowerUp’s proven science of reading-based curriculum, educators can help a broad range of students close the opportunity gap.

PowerUp covers a wide range of skills, from foundational skills typically covered in early elementary school to more advanced comprehension and analytical skills taught in early high school, enabling educators to support the wide range and diverse needs of struggling readers in ONE program.

2

Differentiated instruction is equitable instruction.

A one-size-fits-all learning approach may not benefit every reader (Haiken, 2021), and that is especially the case in diverse classrooms.

When students log in to PowerUp for the first time, they will begin Auto Placement, a series of activities that place them at the appropriate instructional level in each of the three literacy strands: Word Study, Grammar, and Comprehension. Next, students begin their journey in PowerUp in one of 180 profiles based on their specific strengths and needs. Students then progress through each strand independently, at their own pace.

PowerUp's time-efficient, differentiated instructional model bridges skill gaps while respecting students' time. If a student struggles repeatedly, the teacher is notified and provided with specific Lexia Lessons® designed for one-on-one or small-group instruction by a teacher or paraprofessional. Once students demonstrate mastery, they can quickly move through units and onto more advanced skills, allowing them to make multiple years' worth of growth in a single year.

“

When there is a great diversity among students in their preparation for learning to read...**little** variation in teaching will always result in **great** variation in student learning.

— Dr. Joseph Torgesen, 2010

”



“Finding a program like PowerUp that allows students to achieve success within their own private comfort zone is very important. In my classroom, that’s just the model for the way we do things: We meet you wherever you are, and allow you to grow. That’s where social-emotional growth happens, and that’s where academic growth happens.”

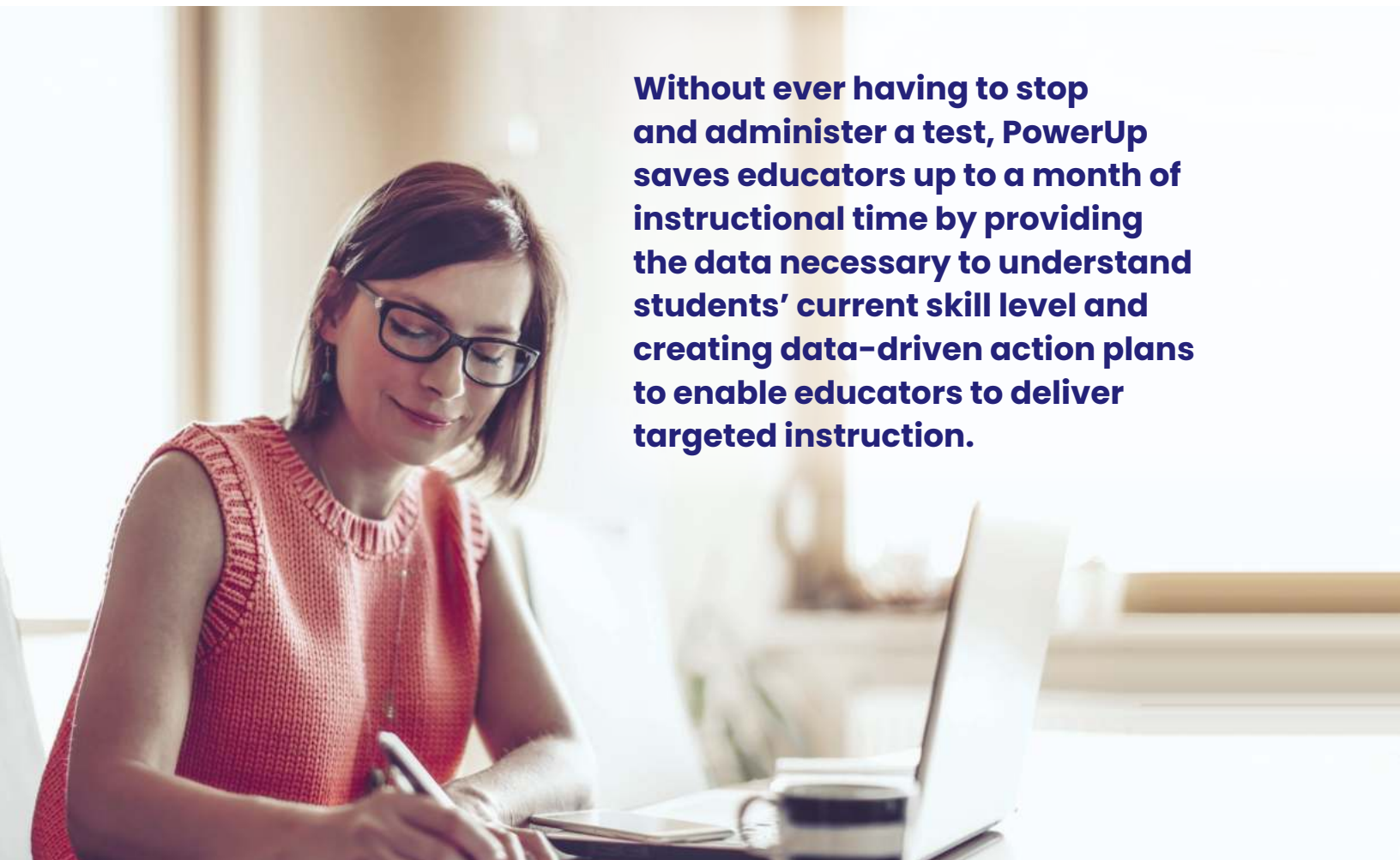
—Sydney Hartzell, English Language Arts Teacher

Empowering Educators to Reach Every Student

Research on adolescent readers has underscored the need for assessment data to explain not only which students are struggling but why (Carreker, 2017; Snow, 2002). In PowerUp, data from embedded Assessment Without Testing® provides real-time progress monitoring to empower educators to deliver instruction based on individual student needs.

Based on student performance online, the myLexia® educator platform automatically recommends additional lessons for direct, teacher-led instruction and activities for independent, student-led peer practice. With instructional routines and activities, Lexia Lessons empower educators to deliver the right instruction, no matter their background or expertise in reading.

Armed with district-, school-, class- and individual-student-level data from Lexia's Assessment Without Testing, and support from the myLexia educator platform, administrators and grade 6-12 teachers have the tools to differentiate instruction so all students can meet College- and Career-Ready Standards.



Without ever having to stop and administer a test, PowerUp saves educators up to a month of instructional time by providing the data necessary to understand students' current skill level and creating data-driven action plans to enable educators to deliver targeted instruction.

3 An asset-based approach leads to more equitable literacy instruction.

An asset-based approach to teaching is one that is grounded in what students can do rather than what they cannot do. It is an embodiment of a growth mindset in instruction and cultivates an atmosphere where all students feel like their teacher believes in their abilities.

Encouraging student agency is one way to empower secondary students. PowerUp's self-directed design gives students a sense of control and the ability to manage their own success. Learning experiences are more personal, engaging, and motivating when students have the autonomy to set goals and monitor their own progress. By building the understanding that learning is ongoing, PowerUp offers students a safe place to try, fail and retry, and learn and succeed.

In addition to encouraging student agency, any program designed for the adolescent learner should respect the student's experience. In PowerUp, all texts are age-appropriate and were chosen with culturally responsive pedagogies in mind. PowerUp combines high-interest authentic and original texts, game-based elements, self-monitoring tools, and artwork to keep students engaged as they work toward mastering grade-level skills.

An asset-based approach can be extremely beneficial for advancing educational equity. PowerUp was found to benefit all sub-populations equally; Black/African American and White/Caucasian students achieved similar gains, as did English Learners and non-English Learners, and general and special education students.

While PowerUp's adaptive blended instructional model meets students where they are, its asset-based approach embraces who they are, and motivates them to continue to grow.



Conclusion

According to the Fordham Institute, “Any discussion about ‘equity’ in education that is not first and foremost a discussion about literacy is unserious...state education officials have no more urgent business to attend to than ensuring that every child can read in every school under their control or influence” (Pondiscio, 2021).

Making literacy instruction more equitable is essential at the secondary level where students must read at grade level to succeed across their curriculum classes. Literacy is integral to academic and lifelong success. That opportunity should be available to every student.

With federal funding for education expiring in 2024, now is an opportune time for schools to address opportunity gaps. While there are many solutions to this problem, PowerUp’s approach which includes research-proven instruction, a differentiated, data-driven learning model, adolescent student interest, and tools that empower teachers, meets all the requirements of efficacy and equity for federal funding.

“Just taking the time to focus on and improve literacy skills changes students’ idea of themselves,” explains Sydney Hartzell, an English Language Arts teacher in Pennsylvania. “When that perception changes, suddenly, doors they thought were closed are slowly opening, and they see different avenues for where their lives can go.”

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Lexia is the Structured Literacy expert. For more than 30 years, the company has focused solely on literacy, and today provides a full spectrum of solutions for both students and teachers. With robust offerings for differentiated instruction, personalized learning, assessment, and professional learning, Lexia helps more learners read, write, and speak with confidence.

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