

CASE STUDY

# Right Solution, Right Time: Helping Emergent Bilingual Students Thrive from Anywhere

Henderson Hammock Charter School,  
Tampa, Florida

Lexia®



## “We Were Lacking”

ESOL resource teacher Rhaiza Sarkan-Del Toro was unhappy with the ESOL curriculum at Henderson Hammock Charter School in Tampa, Florida. “We felt like we were lacking in terms of giving our students the support they need,” she explained.

Having tried other solutions without success, Sarkan-Del Toro wanted to find a program that was specially designed for K–6 ESOL students and could be used at both school and home. She noted that with the inadequate products used in the past, “Many of our younger students were using a reading program without really comprehending what they were seeing.”

Language and literacy education comprehension are crucial for Emergent Bilingual students learning English, and Henderson Hammock has the largest population of Emergent Bilinguals in the Tampa area. Approximately 500 of the school’s total enrollment of 1200 students are Emergent Bilinguals, and this population grows by 15–20 students each year.

Sarkan-Del Toro and her team looked for a program that not only met language and academic needs, but would engage students. “If students don’t like a program, they’re not going to learn. They’re just going to click through it and not really take it in. We needed a fun, engaging program geared specifically to our younger ESOL students.”

The school chose to implement Lexia® English Language Development™ because it addressed the language learning and academic needs of

Henderson Hammock’s youngest ESOL students. It was also designed to be culturally responsive, with personalized, interactive learning paths for each student. Sarkan-Del Toro completed training on March 13, 2020—and then school shut down due to the pandemic.

## Language Acquisition During the Pandemic

When Henderson Hammock transitioned to remote learning, “we really worried about reaching our ESOL students,” said Sarkan-Del Toro. Teaching young Emergent Bilinguals from a distance was an entirely new situation, but Lexia English made it easier. Her students and parents loved it, and routinely asked for more levels and lessons. She was able to monitor her students’ progress on-demand with the myLexia® Educator Platform and identify any students in need of extra support.

Although they were teaching and learning during an unusual time, both students and educators benefited from Lexia’s offline lessons in addition to its online lessons. Sarkan-Del Toro used and built on these lessons for one-on-one and small-group Zoom classes to better engage students.

Providing opportunities for students to have lots of speaking practice in a safe, nonjudgmental environment was important to Sarkan-Del Toro. It boosted students’ confidence, increased their participation in Zoom lessons, and facilitated their academic conversations, including the embedded grammar lessons that are essential for English language acquisition.

Sarkan-Del Toro also appreciated the diverse characters in the program because they made learning more fun for her students. With 17 bilingual characters, each with an authentic accent, Lexia English respects students' heritage language and incorporates a culturally sustaining approach to language learning. Students feel recognized and are more engaged while they're learning.

### **"It Really Saved the Day"**

One of the reasons the school chose Lexia English was that it is aligned with the WIDA language development standards for teaching multilingual learners. These standards help educators integrate language development and content learning for each grade level. Henderson Hammock gives the WIDA test every year, so "finding a program that was aligned with that was an A-plus for us," according to Sarkan-Del Toro.

To ensure success for every student, Lexia English equally supports educators by enabling them to track use and performance data to identify where students need help. This allowed Sarkan-Del Toro and her team to monitor student progress throughout the remote learning period, then provide personalized, explicit instruction for the students that needed it. This functionality also provides educators with a way to keep administrators up to date on student progress through myLexia.

Leaders at Henderson Hammock were so happy with their remote learning experience that they planned to continue engaging their Emergent Bilinguals with Lexia English when students transitioned back to the school for in-person learning. According to Sarkan-Del Toro, "Lexia English was our primary learning tool for ESOL students during the period of fully remote learning. It really saved the day for us and will be a big part of our program next year."



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**—Rhaiza Sarkan-Del Toro, ESOL Resource Teacher,  
Henderson Hammock Charter School, Tampa, Florida**

## Why Lexia English?



### ASSESSMENT WITHOUT TESTING

- Ongoing progress-monitoring data
- Reporting at the student, class, grade, school, and district levels



### ALIGNED WITH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STANDARDS

- WIDA, CA ELD, TX ELPS, ELPA 21, and NY ESL
- Rigorous academic content
- Supports language acquisition for students at all proficiency bands



### ADAPTIVE BLENDED LEARNING MODEL

- Individualized learning paths
- Independent, student-driven learning
- Resources for in-classroom applications
- Teacher-led, small-group instruction and practice



### CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

- Views learners' heritage languages as an asset
- Celebrates student achievements
- 17 Emergent Bilingual characters support and engage learners



### AUTO-PLACEMENT

- Determines correct entry point into the program
- Assesses both receptive and productive language skills
- Places students based on knowledge and use of English



### SPEECH RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY

- Immediate, guided, corrective feedback
- Safe, nonjudgmental environment
- Helps students build linguistic confidence in academic English



For more information about Lexia English, visit [lexialearning.com/lexia-english](https://lexialearning.com/lexia-english)

# Lexia®

Lexia is the Structured Literacy expert. For more than 35 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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