

The World of Lexica

Overview

Amplify ELA games are designed to create better readers through increased comprehension and to inspire students to read widely and independently.

Amplify ELA games support independent learning, which is important for all students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Students already devote countless hours to playing games; often with an intense level of engagement and focus. Our games build on this engagement, stirring students' imaginations and extending learning into students' free time over a prolonged period. Students who have access to these games will spend more time, alone and together, reading and developing the skills they need to succeed in these subjects academically. Moreover, our games offer meaningful and engaging learning activities for students across the academic spectrum—providing support to students with remedial or other specific learning needs (such as ELs and other bilingual students) but also opportunities for students who are ready to do advanced, even college-level, work.

Amplify's suite of ELA games consists of:

- The World of Lexica™, an immersive 3D game world.
- 12 skill-building games.
- Amplify Library with access to 600+ classic and contemporary texts.
- Secure student message boards.

The World of Lexica is a vast virtual world with enough interactive content and creative possibilities to reward extended exploration and play. The main game takes place within a virtual setting that resembles a classic British library, and the main dialogues and instructions are provided in Spanish as well as English to encourage participation from ELs and to support bilingual learning.

Lexica, by itself, is a library that provides mobile access to hundreds of books, with more being added on a regular basis. Characters and objects from the books wander out into the world and players find themselves journeying into the books as well. Characters from the game world provide reading support within each book; back in the game world, other characters engage players in discussions about the books they are currently reading. Moreover, the reading choices and reading progress of each student have meaningful consequences in the game. In this way, students discover new books and build the foundation for a lifetime of reading and enjoying texts of all types.

The core game mechanics and stories of Lexica are informed by Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck's findings about the impact of students' own theories of intelligence on their academic performance. Adolescents who believe that intelligence is malleable do better in school than those who believe intelligence is more of an unchangeable, fixed entity. Those students who believe intelligence is malleable also tend to believe that there is a connection between effort and success, and that failure is part of the learning process (rather than a risk to be avoided).

Through both storyline and game mechanics, Lexica promotes the belief that intelligence is malleable, and nurtures the positive behaviors that tend to follow from that belief. For instance, Lexica responds to students' mistakes in playful and interesting ways rather than simply punishing them or devaluing failure. Activities and experiences in Amplify ELA games build critical thinking skills, develop cognitive rigor, foster problem solving, and reinforce the notion that mistakes are nothing to be ashamed of, but rather an integral part of the learning process and the acquiring of new skills.

The World of Lexica includes a portfolio of "embedded" games, each with its own multiple levels and/or episodes, and one of which that can be experienced in either English or Spanish. By playing these embedded games, players "unlock" books, areas of the game world, and objects that can be used for various aspects of Lexica game play, including for building interactive story spaces. The embedded games are designed to help students improve their vocabulary and read and write sentences with complex structures. In order to engage students in challenging reading and build fluency, our suite of ELA games focus on enabling students to broaden vocabulary, increase their familiarity with varied grammatical organization structures, and understand how words are constructed.

Lexica also comes with safe social media tools (including "walled garden" online community spaces) where students can participate in English or in Spanish. These tools allow students to share with each other their favorites (which books they liked) and other reactions (questions, commentary, reviews) on the texts that they are reading. Once a student has posted a reaction, other students can respond. Teachers and students can also leave feedback on the commentary or reviews done by others. Through these feedback loops, students are encouraged to collaborate with and learn from each other; they also get additional opportunities to write for an audience (one of the key writing skills taught in Amplify ELA).