

# Tersia King Learning Academy

## Case Study



### Background

The Tersia King Learning Academy operates as a combined Nursery-, Primary- and Secondary School. The Tersia King Learning Academy is owned by the Tersia King Trust and is located in Tembisa North, South East of Pretoria.

During September 2012, Dr Tersia King, founder of the Tersia King Trust approached *Stimulus Maksima!*® to become involved in their literacy improvement project.

It was decided that *Stimulus Maksima!*® would be appointed as a service provider for the pre-school preparation, reading literacy skills development and improvement project at the school.

During January 2013, the school enrolled for *Stimulus Maksima!*'s reading preparation program, Beginner's Booster, as well as the reading improvement program, Reading Rocket.

### Methodology

*Stimulus Maksima!*'s successful and educational sound approach to accurately determine the reading age of each individual learner was performed. As a result of a previous reading program that was used for several years, a surprising 175 learners out of the 922 learners (19%) tested in February 2013, achieved the reading levels required for their grade. The average in our country is approximately 5%. Nevertheless, a lot of room for improvement was identified at the Tersia King Learning Academy.

Based on the initial results' analyses, an approach to build a literacy foundation to embark upon was taken. The first layer of this fundamental phase was to establish a basic vocabulary and spelling skill according to the expectation for each grade.

The ongoing process (weekly classes) involves the mastering of following components

- Linguistic terminology;
- Construction of words and sentences;
- Reading comprehension, in other words, the understanding of content read;
- Proper spelling skills and applying spelling rules;
- Fluent reading techniques, aiming to achieve mature reading habits.

By October 2013, the consistent effort from the dedicated Reading Rocket educators in the computer-based literacy centre, started bearing fruit. An amazing 47% of learners performed equal to their grade. The steady improvement in performance levels from the beginning to the end of the year in 2014 as graphically illustrated on the back side. A remarkable 72% of learners constantly perform according to the requirements of their grade.

### End goal

Literacy development, with the end goal of at least 85% of the learners in the school on par with the international reading standards for their grade, including reading speed, is an ongoing process. Taking into account the major gap, caused by a variety of factors, this is a long term initiative. Every year's increasingly difficult learning material sets new challenges and new learners enter the school/institution every year.

A consistent approach with Reading Rocket's computer-based reading development and monitoring system molds the perfect sustainable solution to turn individuals into empowered members of their community who can contribute to the social and economic development of our country.

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**The road ahead**

- *Stimulus Maksima!*'s continuous professional support to Beginner's Booster and Reading Rocket educators;
- Constant development of *Stimulus Maksima!*® educators;
- Regular upgraded systems;
- Intensify analyses to identify learners needing special support to:
  - Ensure that every Grade R learner is fully equipped with the fundamental skills making reading and learning possible;
  - Facilitate implementing of extra support mechanisms for learners needing more support;
  - Ensure that 85% of learners are improve to be on par with their required reading age (level, comprehension and speed) year after year;
  - Intensify integration with language and class teachers;
  - Enable principals to use our accurate monitoring system as a powerful directive.

**Testimony**

**School Principal – Conrad Maritz**

“*Stimulus Maksima!*® is not only investment wise a tool, it is also an investment in the whole process of learning in South Africa. *Stimulus Maksima!*® addresses a lot of problems that we experience with no solutions.”

**Results**

