

Weekly R.E.A.D.®

Reading Education Assistance Dogs®

Volume 3 Issue 4 – September 12, 2012

Does your dog REALLY like to R.E.A.D.?

We all want to feel that our R.E.A.D. animal partner is enjoying the R.E.A.D. experience as much as we are. But how do you know? How aware are you of what your animal is telling you? Since the vast majority of our R.E.A.D. partners are canine, let's talk about canine body language.

The title of this Weekly R.E.A.D. was adapted from a great blog post and video titled, "Does Your Dog REALLY Want to be Petted?" The author, 'eileenanddogs,' does a great job showing two different dogs' reactions to petting. In her blog post she describes in further detail the signs that a dog does or doesn't like petting, and signals that could go either way.

To watch the video and read the blog go here:

<http://eileenanddogs.com/2012/08/29/does-your-dog-really-want-to-be-petted/>



LEARNING TO "SPEAK DOG": a canine behavior blog series by PHOTO LAB PET PHOTOGRAPHY



Another great blog post is "Learning to Speak Dog" from Tails from the Lab. The authors, 'Nat and Bill,' pulled together a great collection of graphics and resources for helping to understand canine body language. Read that blog here: <http://www.tailsfromthelab.com/2012/08/29/learning-to-speak-dog-part-4-reading-a-dogs-body/>

As a registered therapy team, you have demonstrated an understanding of your dog and built a relationship with him. Your relationship with your dog needs to continue to grow and deepen as you learn more about understanding him in every situation you find yourselves in.



The environment on the R.E.A.D. blanket is one of the most intimate and potentially rewarding positions for a therapy team and young reader. It requires you, the animal handler to be continually aware of everything going on around your dog and what your dog is telling you. As your dog ages – or even on a particular day, with a particular reader, a particular facility, etc – his needs may change, and it is your job to tune in to him in order to ensure a safe and rewarding reading experience.

Sometimes an outside party can help you recognize signals you may not be seeing. The dog at left was about to go into the library for his R.E.A.D. session. How many signals can you see that indicate he may not want to go?

We encourage you to learn as much as you can about dog language and about your dog's signals in particular. —Nancy Brooks, National R.E.A.D. Education Manager



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