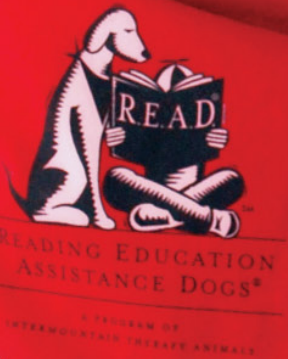




# READ. DOGS



by Meish Goldish

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# R.E.A.D. Dogs



**by Meish Goldish**

**Consultant: Kathy Klotz, Executive Director  
Intermountain Therapy Animals/  
Reading Education Assistance Dogs® (R.E.A.D.®)**

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# A Furry Helper

When twelve-year-old Hannah Castine was in first grade, she hated to read. "I was not a very good reader," she explains. "I really couldn't read at all." Hannah has **dyslexia**. A few years ago, it was very difficult for her to recognize letters and words on a page. She also had trouble **pronouncing** words. As a result, Hannah refused to read aloud in front of her classmates.

Some people with dyslexia see letters backwards or upside down. Others see letters that look bunched together or out of order. For some, words seem to move around on the page.



The word *dyslexia* shown on top is upside down. This is how some readers with dyslexia see words on a page.





Luckily, Hannah soon met someone at school who helped her improve her reading skills. Hannah's partner was Kaila—a Shetland sheepdog! Dogs can't read. So how was the **canine** able to help Hannah?

Over the years, Kaila has helped many kids become better readers.



# The Perfect Partner

Kaila the sheepdog helped Hannah read better simply by being a good listener. Every week, Hannah spent 15 minutes in a quiet area of her school reading aloud to Kaila. The dog snuggled with the young girl as she read. Hannah was happy. She remembers thinking, “Wow, someone understands and cares about what I’m reading.”



**Kaila looks at a book as a young student reads to her.**



While reading to Kaila, Hannah felt relaxed, even when she mispronounced a word. She wasn't nervous or embarrassed, as she was with her classmates. When Hannah read aloud to Kaila, the dog's owner, Barbara Babikian, sat with them. She helped Hannah pronounce hard words and explained their meanings. After many months, Hannah was reading faster and with greater **confidence**. She says, "Kaila helped me a lot. She made reading a lot more fun and easier."



**Kaila with  
her owner,  
Barbara  
Babikian**

Many teachers think dogs are the perfect partners for struggling readers. The animals never laugh at children or make fun of them for not knowing a word or saying it wrong.

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## About the Author

Meish Goldish has written more than 200 books for children. His book *Disabled Dogs* was a Junior Library Guild Selection in 2013. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

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# R.E.A.D. DOGS

Six-year-old Hannah was having trouble in school. The young girl had dyslexia, and it was difficult for her to recognize letters on a page and pronounce words. As a result, Hannah hated to read—until a Shetland sheepdog named Kaila came along. Kaila was part of the Reading Education Assistance Dogs (R.E.A.D.) program. The dog was trained to sit quietly and snuggle with Hannah as she read aloud. Over time, Hannah felt more relaxed and became a better reader. Look inside to learn more about R.E.A.D. dogs like Kaila and their owners and handlers, who are special heroes to the kids whose lives they change.

Baghdad Pups  
Balto's Story  
Bomb-Sniffing Dogs  
Brave Hearts  
Combat-Wounded Dogs  
Comfort Dogs  
Disabled Dogs  
Disaster Search Dogs  
Dog Scouts of America  
Eco Dogs  
Fire Dogs  
Ground Zero Dogs  
Guide Dogs  
Hollywood Dogs  
Lifeguard Dogs  
Medical Detective Dogs  
Military Dogs  
Pest-Sniffing Dogs  
Police Dogs  
Prison Puppies  
**R.E.A.D. Dogs**

Science Dogs  
Security Dogs  
Seizure-Alert Dogs  
Service Dogs  
Shelter Dogs  
Skydiving Dogs  
Sled Dogs  
Snow Search Dogs  
Soldiers' Dogs  
Surf Dog Miracles  
Therapy Dogs  
Water Rescue Dogs  
Wilderness Search Dogs

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