
Purpose: Read to calm is a way to help decrease stress, anxiety and in kennel reactivity in sheltered dogs.

Procedure: Open to any dog walking level. Any reading material is okay to read. Additional reading material can be found in the Read to Calm pendaflex file.

1. **Choosing a dog:** In the pink Enrichment Binder under "Read to Calm" there is a list of dogs that behavior has identified as dogs that could benefit from being read to.
 - a. Note: All of the same walking restrictions apply. Make sure that you only get into a blue dot kennel if you are a blue dot walker. If you are not a blue dot walker and you're reading to a blue dot dog, just sitting outside the kennel is fine.
 - b. You may choose to read to any dog in the adoptable area, however, keep in mind that the dogs that benefit most from being read to are in the Enrichment Binder. Please make these dogs a first priority.
2. **Setting up:** You can close the guillotine so the dog is inside the entire reading session or you can leave it open to allow access to both parts of the kennel. If weather permits, you can also do this outside, leaving the guillotine **OPEN**. ** Be sure to check with staff before opening/closing doors.
 - a. If working with a fearful dog: go into the kennel, sit on the floor (stools are also available in dog walker station), sit near a corner, away from the dog.
 - b. If working with hyperactive dog: place chair outside of dogs kennel, facing either into the dogs kennel or down the hallway with your side against the kennel
3. **Begin to read** aloud (quietly or at regular volume is okay).
4. Do not pet the dog, look at the dog or address the dog in any way, even if they come over to lay next to you while reading. The idea for these dogs is that we teach them they can safely explore their environment, come be by people and take risks without consequence. This is especially important for the fearful dogs. If we do not give them attention when they ask for it, we have no way to set them back. They are learning they can be bold and come be by people without the pressure of being pet and being talked to (which we do almost every other time we enter their kennel). For the hyperactive dogs, it teaches them that barking, pacing and panting does not affect the persons actions.
 - a. Keep in mind for the hyperactive dogs that they often times experiment to see what can get your attention off of your book and onto them. They'll often continuously bark, pace and pick up toys. Try to just keep reading at a steady pace and allow them to calm down. By ignoring those behaviors and continuing to read, we teach the dog that calm and relaxed is what we want

from them and it feels better than being hyper. If the dog calms down enough and is either laying relaxed or sleeping, you can try to get into the kennel but remember we can't say anything to them or address them in any way.

Sometimes this means that we end up spending a lot of time standing and reading because they are too excited when we try to sit down. If you have any hesitations, you can stay outside of the kennel.

5. You can spend 10 to 30 minutes per dog, whatever your time allows.
6. You can give them a few pets and treats once you're done reading to them, if desired but only if they are calm and relaxed.
7. Note your session and any comments in the Walker Comment binder observation sheet for that dog.

Guidelines

1. Place a barrier between you and the floor/wall when sitting. This can be a towel, chair or stepping stool.
2. Blue dot guidelines and other guidelines apply to each dog.
3. Do not speak, or sing to the dog. Only reading please.
4. Do not touch the dog.
5. Read continuously, slowly and steadily to relax and calm the dog.