



The Reading Goal

By Chelsea Mortensen
(Based on a true story)

This story happened in the USA.

Anders listened to his sister read during family scripture study. He tried to follow along on his tablet. But it was hard to focus on the words.

Anders always had a hard time reading. Last year, he found out he had dyslexia. Dyslexia was a learning disability that made reading hard. His brain mixed up words and letters, and his eyes jumped across the page when he tried to read.

His sister finished reading her verse, and his brother read the next one. But Anders didn't read. He didn't like to read out loud. Making the words big on his tablet helped a little. But he hated how slow

and awkward his reading was. He made so many mistakes! He had to work so hard for something that seemed easy for everyone else.

When they finished reading, Anders's family watched a video. It was about the Children and Youth program.

"Set personal goals that challenge and stretch you," Elder Gong said in the video. "Discover new talents, interests, and skills."*

Anders thought about the goals he could set. Maybe he could learn how to bake cookies. Or play soccer better!

Then he looked at the Book of Mormon on the

table. Getting better at reading didn't sound like a very fun goal. But he wanted to be able to read scriptures with his family.

"I know what I want my goal to be," he told Dad.

"What is it?" Dad asked.

Anders picked up the Book of Mormon. "I want to read a verse of the Book of Mormon out loud every day."

"That sounds like a great goal," Dad said. "When do you want to start?"

"Right now!"

Anders went to his room and closed the door. He didn't want anyone to hear him. Then he opened his Book of Mormon. He mixed up some of the words, but it only took him a minute to finish the first verse. *That wasn't too bad*, he thought.

Anders read a scripture each day. It was hard! He didn't feel like he was getting any better. But he kept trying.

Then one day at school, his teacher said, "Wow! I can't believe how fast you are learning."

Anders looked up from his homework. "Really?"

She nodded. "You're improving so much."

Anders looked down at the words on his paper. They were way easier to read than they had been before. His goal to practice reading the scriptures was even helping him learn at school.

When he came home, he ran upstairs to read his scriptures. The words still spun around on the page. But it was easier to figure out what they said.

Anders was excited for family scripture study that night.

"Hey, Dad," he said. "Can I help read today?"

Dad grinned. "I'd love that!"

Anders followed along carefully as his brothers and sisters each read a verse. When it was his turn, he read the verse slowly to make sure he got every word right. After he finished reading, he looked up. Everyone had big smiles on their faces.

Even though he wasn't a perfect reader, Anders felt proud of himself. He knew that when he worked hard, Heavenly Father would always help him. ●



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KELLY SMITH

*Face to Face with Elder Gerrit W. Gong (worldwide broadcast, Nov. 17, 2019), Gospel Library.