

****SAMPLE****



**American Sign Language
Lessons & Workbook**

LEVEL 1

****SAMPLE****

Federico A. Quintana, M.Ed.

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Table of Content

Preface	5
Book User Guide	6
Lesson #1 – An Introduction to A.S.L.	8
a. Fingerspelling	
b. Sign Space	
c. Cardinal Numbers #1-10	
d. Sign Handshape Representations	
e. Modes of Communication	
Lesson #2 – The Basics	18
a. Cardinal Numbers #11-30	
b. A.S.L. Glossing Convention	
c. Cultural Appropriation: Voice-Off	
Lesson #3 – The Clarifications	26
a. Dominant Hand	
b. Self-correction	
Lesson #4 – The Conversations	31
Turn-taking and Closing Signals	
Lesson #5 – The Questionnaire	36
a. WH-Question	
b. Y/N Question Markers	
Lesson #6 – Identification	41
Pronoun and Possessive Handshapes	
Lesson #7 – Contradictions	46
a. Facial Expressions & Non-Manual Signals	
b. Negation	
Lesson #8 – Direction of Actions	51
Verb Directionality	
Lesson #9 – Locations	56
Rhetorical Questions	
Lesson #10 – The Sign Roots	61
Five Parameters	
Lesson #11 – Everyday Discourses	66
a. Topic Comment	
b. Word Orders	
Lesson #12 – Colors & Shapes	71
a. Iconic Signs	
b. Basic Classifier Handshapes	
Lesson #13 – A Calendar	79
a. Loan Signs for Months and Days of Week	
b. Numerical Incorporation	
c. Rules of 9	

Table of Content

<u>Lesson #14 – A Timeline</u>	86
Tense Marker & Time Indicator	
<u>Lesson #15 – Number Works</u>	91
Quantifier	
<u>Lesson #16 – Study Skills & Topics</u>	96
Initialization Signs	
<u>Lesson #17 – The Campus</u>	102
Interruptions and Attention-Getter	
<u>Lesson # 18 – Class Subjects</u>	108
Agent Markers	
<u>Lesson #19 – After School</u>	113
Arbitrary Signs	
<u>Lesson #20 – Classroom items</u>	118
Visual Gesture Communication	
<u>Lesson #21 – The School Life</u>	124
Spatial Agreement	
<u>Lesson #22 – Family Members</u>	130
Listing Order Technique	
<u>Lesson #23 – Relatives</u>	136
Gender Distinctions	
<u>Lesson #24 – Relationships</u>	141
Compounded Signs	
<u>Lesson #25 – Personality Traits</u>	146
The Deaf Etiquette	
<u>Lesson #26 – The Descriptions</u>	152
Descriptive Classifiers	
<u>Lesson #27 – Feelings & Emotions</u>	157
Eye-Gazing & Maintaining Eye Contact	
<u>Lesson #28 – Physical Features</u>	162
Role Shifts	
<u>Lesson #29 – Hairstyles</u>	167
Numerical Incorporation: Time Spot	
<u>Lesson #30 – The Faces</u>	172
Contrastive Structures	
<u>A.S.L. Vocabulary Index Pages</u>	178—182

PREFACE

Welcome to the world of American Sign Language (A.S.L.) ! Within these pages, you will embark on a journey through the vibrant and expressive language of the Deaf community, guided by a passionate educator and advocate for Deaf culture.

My name is Federico Quintana, and I was born Deaf in the lively city of Miami, Florida. From an early age, I embraced my Deaf identity and culture. Growing up as a Deaf person, I encountered various challenges. However, my unwavering determination to pursue a career in education led me to Gallaudet University, where I earned my bachelor's degree in American Sign Language.

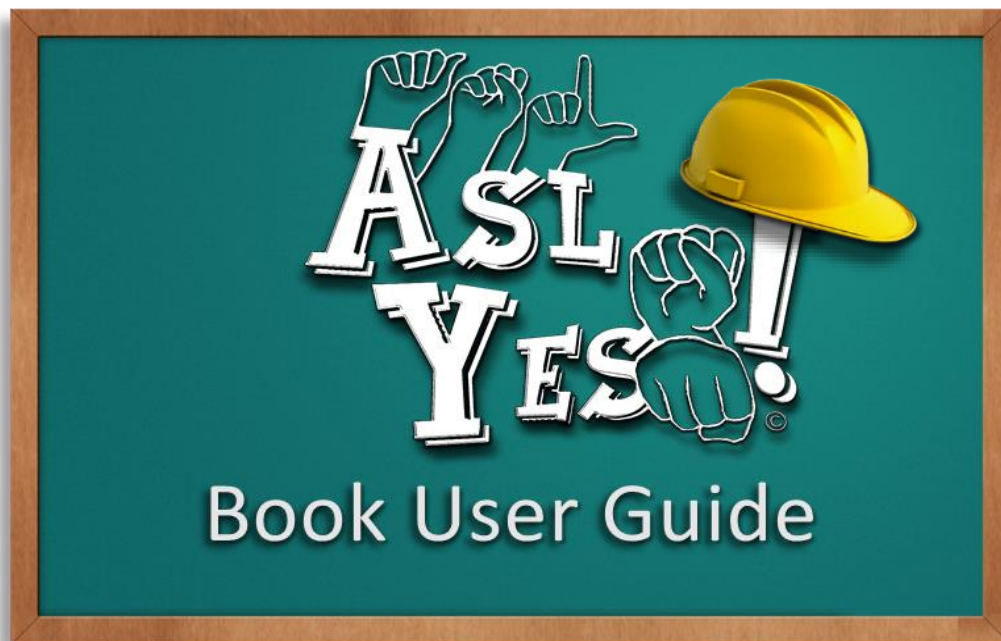
For over a decade, I have taught A.S.L. and Deaf Culture courses at the high school and college levels. This experience has allowed me to share my knowledge and experiences with eager learners and exposed me to the scarcity of comprehensive and up-to-date A.S.L. curriculums. Recognizing the importance of engaging resources, I took it upon myself to fill this void by creating teaching materials tailored to meet the needs of my students.

Motivated by my passions for art and pedagogy, I embarked on an ambitious endeavor to develop the ASL Yes! Curriculum textbooks. I wanted to ensure my students could immerse themselves in engaging, relevant, and culturally authentic learning materials. I took on the roles of an author and artist to create textbooks from scratch. These textbooks culminate over **ten** years of dedication, sacrifice, and tireless efforts to create a comprehensive and user-friendly resource for A.S.L. learners.

I am incredibly proud to present these textbooks to you, the culmination of countless hours of research, writing, and artistic expression. The *ASL Yes!* are not just textbooks; they reflect my love for my culture and my commitment to fostering a deeper appreciation of American Sign Language. Through these pages, I aim to instill in you the joy and significance of A.S.L., empowering you to communicate visually, effectively, and confidently.



100% Deaf-Made



Book User Guide

This guide will help you maximize your learning experience and get the most out of this resource. Learning American Sign Language is a skill that requires practice and repetition. Here are the best practices to help you get the most out of your A.S.L. lessons:

1. **Practice Regularly:** Consistent practice is critical to developing your signing skills. Set aside time each day to review and practice what you have learned.
2. **Live Demonstrations:** The textbook contains picture illustrations of sign vocabulary and phrases as visual graphic organizers or mnemonic devices. Watching live demonstrations is the most effective way to study A.S.L. and look for opportunities to observe skilled signers, such as your teacher, in person, or online. Currently, the A.S.L. Yes! online video lessons and dictionary is under construction, and check for ongoing updates at www.Deafcompanyllc.com or www.ASLYES.com.
3. **Study Buddy:** Find someone else who is also learning A.S.L. and practice together. You can practice signing with each other, asking questions, and providing feedback.
4. **Take Advantage of Supplemental Materials:** Besides the textbook, you may have access to supplemental materials such as recommended internet sites and digital videos. These materials enhance your learning experience and provide additional opportunities to practice your signing skills. Check out the free ASL on-line video lessons at www.Deafcompanyllc.com or www.ASLYES.com.

Using the Book

The “ASL Yes! Level 1” contains thirty topic chapters, each covering a different aspect of A.S.L. features. Each chapter begins with an introduction to the topic, followed by grammar features, vocabulary words, phrases, interactive practice exercises, and reading topics. The picture illustrations of sign vocabulary and phrases serve as *visual graphic organizers or mnemonic devices* to help you remember the signs. However, it is best to watch live demonstrations to learn the signs.



In my other roles as an author in this book, I am also a Deaf artist who has personally drawn thousands of high-quality sign illustrations. The character in my illustrations is my reflection as a real-life A.S.L. teacher demonstrating the signs. To study the sign illustrations, follow the picture of handshapes and arrows included, which represent distinct types of movements and are readable by the average person. Most sign illustration words are “Google-able” for animated videos for further visual reference, making it easier for learners to understand and practice.

When learning any other foreign language, we do not only learn the language by reading solely books. As a real-life A.S.L. instructor, I must emphasize that learning and practicing A.S.L. is best through real-time motion, including live interaction with others through physical or video settings, since A.S.L. is a lively, highly visual, and actionable language primarily learned through watching and mimicking others who use the language. Animated videos featuring a live person can demonstrate the proper signing technique, changes in sign movements or direction, facial expressions, and body language, which are crucial elements of A.S.L.

Learning American Sign Language can be a challenging but rewarding experience. By following best practices for studying A.S.L. and taking advantage of supplemental materials, you will gain a solid foundation in the language and be able to communicate with members of the Deaf and hard-of-hearing communities.

Remember to practice regularly, watch live demonstrations, find a study buddy, and use supplemental materials. You must familiarize yourself and memorize the basic handshape of fingerspelled alphabet letters and the cardinal numbers one through ten to get a head start with learning the basic sign vocabulary lessons.



LESSON

1

An Introduction

to



Learning Objectives

1. **Fingerspelling:** Students will learn the basics of fingerspelling in A.S.L. They will practice recognizing and producing individual letters to spell words and names accurately.
2. **Sign Space:** Students will learn how to use sign space and different areas around their bodies to convey specific meanings and spatial relationships in signing.
3. **Cardinal Numbers:** Students will learn to recognize and produce cardinal numbers from one to ten in A.S.L. They will practice using appropriate handshapes and movements to represent these numbers accurately.

Fingerspelling is a way of spelling out words using handshapes that correspond to the letters of the alphabet. It is used in A.S.L. to spell proper nouns (e.g., names of people, places, titles, brands, and organizations) and technical terms that do not have specific signs.



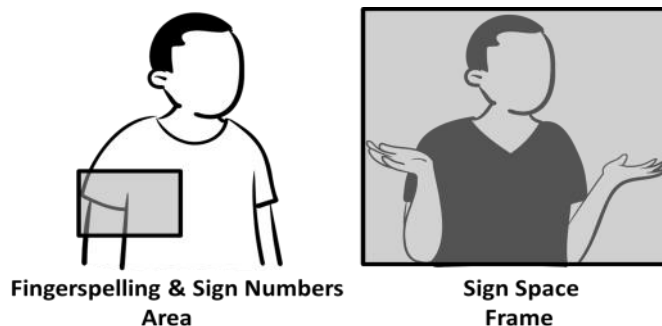
There are a few general rules to follow when fingerspelling

1. Use one hand for fingerspelling and do not alternative hands back and forth.
2. Use the dominant hand: Usually the right hand for right-handed people and the left hand for left-handed people for fingerspelling.
3. Start in the fingerspelling area: The fingerspelling area is a designated signing space region typically located in front of the body, just above the waist. When fingerspelling, the hand should start in this area and move through it as each letter is signed.
4. Use a consistent handshape for each letter: Each letter of the alphabet has specific handshapes when fingerspelling. Using the correct handshape for each letter is essential to ensure that the spelling word is correct.
5. Use sign receptive: Observe a fingerspelled word at the same flow as reading a word and pay attention to the handshape pattern and movements of an entire word rather than focusing on each letter.

1.b

Sign Space

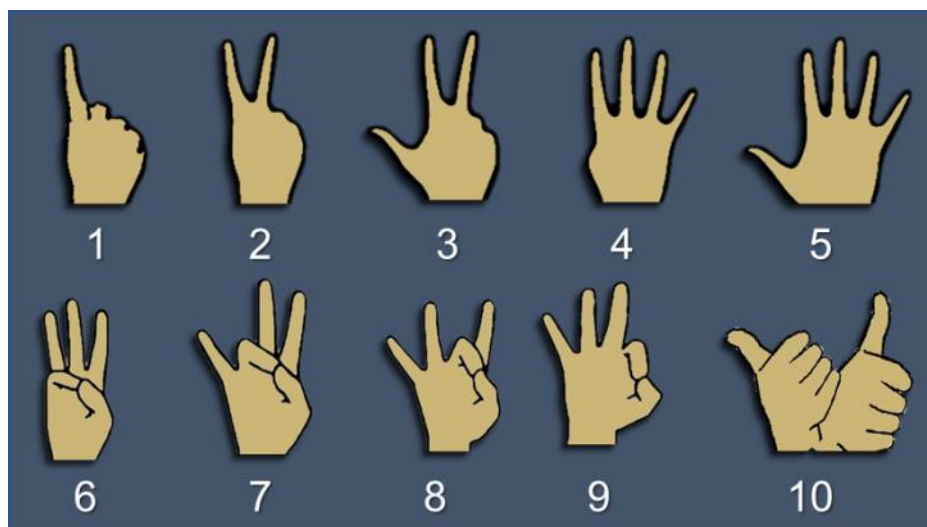
The sign space refers to the physical area surrounding the body used when signing in American Sign Language (A.S.L.). In A.S.L., the signing space conveys spatial relationships, spatial aspects of actions, and the location of objects to the signer. The signing space has several different regions, including the front of the body, left and right, and above and rarely below the body.



The fingerspelling area is a designated region of the signing space used for fingerspelling words. In A.S.L., the fingerspelling area generally locates in front of the body, at about chest height. When fingerspelling, the signer will typically move their hand through the fingerspelling area as they spell out each letter, using handshapes that correspond to the letters of the alphabet.

1.c

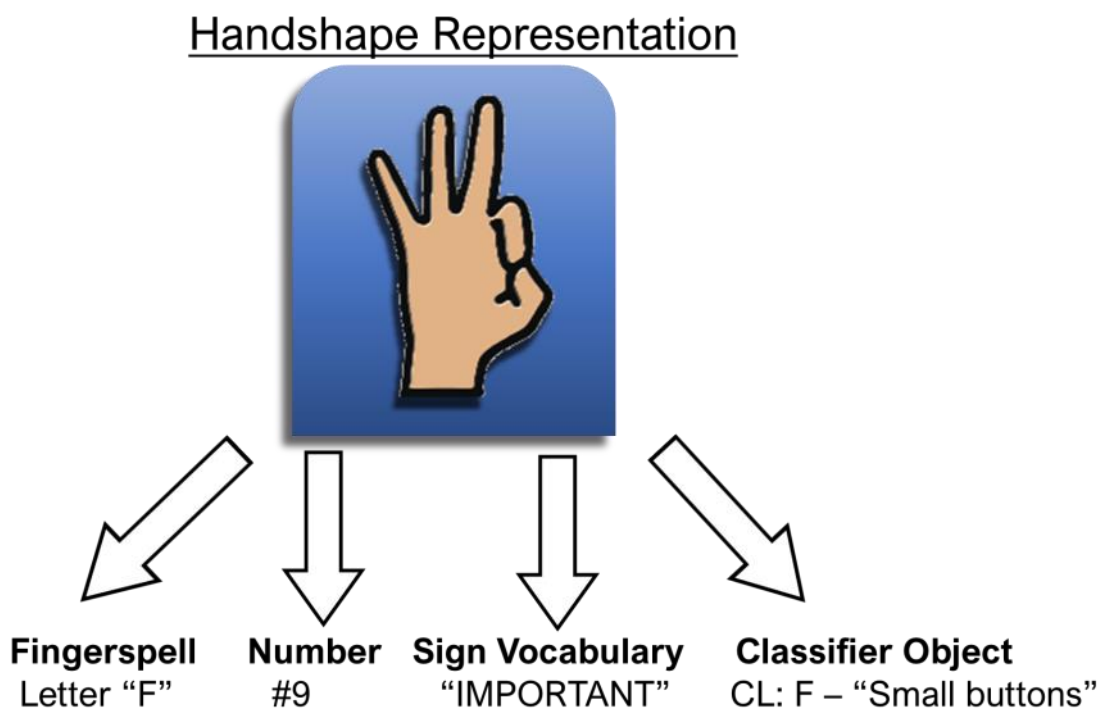
Cardinal Numbers 1– 10



Some rules for the A.S.L. cardinal numbers from one to five are signed with the palm in and out. For instance, cardinal numbers one through five; your palm is in, facing you. Numbers six through nine, the palm is out — facing outward from your perspective. Please note that some grammatical rules don't apply to other contexts, such as incorporated numerical signs (e.g., Time-spot, age-spot).

There are over fifty (50) identified handshapes in A.S.L., which is more lexicon than English, with only twenty-six (26) alphabet letters and ten digits of numbers. You may notice that several handshapes for fingerspelling and cardinal numbers are similar, which can be very confusing as, for example, "F" and "9" are identical.

As the picture of the handshape below, the handshape for fingerspelling represents the letter "F", the cardinal number "9", and two other functions.



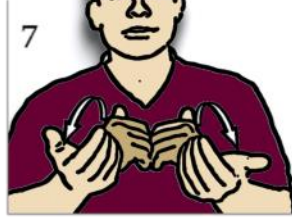
Handshapes in A.S.L. serve multiple functions, including fingerspelling, numbering, sign vocabulary, and classifier objects. While the handshapes for "F" and "9" share similarities, learners should pay attention to slight differences, like the bend of the thumb in the number "9" handshape. A.S.L. students can effectively communicate in various contexts by understanding these handshapes and their functions.

List two other handshapes that share the same characteristics for fingerspell letters and cardinal numbers.

F.S. Letter & Cardinal Number

1. _____
2. _____

1 Vocabulary



- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. HELLO | 7. HOW | 13. YOU | 19. ME |
| 2. CHILL | 8. HEY | 14. NAME | 20. NOT-UNDERSTAND |
| 3. YES | 9. NO | 15. ASK/REQUEST | 21. ASK-TO |
| 4. CLASS | 10. BELL RING | 16. HOME | 22. ALLRIGHT |
| 5. DEAF (Downward) | 11. HEARING | 17. DEAF (Upward) | 23. AGAIN |
| 6. UNDERSTAND | 12. GOOD | 18. HELP | 24. STOP |



Fill in the *letters* for the handshapes #1-10.



Fill in the *numbers* for the handshapes #11-20.





Fill in a word for each sign and determine which handshapes it uses. Pay attention to possible handshape changes from the start to the end of the sign. Another example is the sign that employs two handshapes, put a dash symbol to represent using two hands.

Example
 Word: "DEAF"
 Handshape: 1



1.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

6.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

2.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

7.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

3.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

8.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

4.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

9.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

5.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

10.  Word: _____
 HS: _____

Gloss the A.S.L. phrases and translate each phrase into English.



(Example) ASL: HOW YOU? ME GOOD



ASL: _____



ASL: _____



ASL: _____



ASL: _____

English Translation Phrases

- 1) How are you? I am doing good.
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____



Communication is vital to human interaction, allowing us to express ourselves, share information, and connect. However, different people communicate in different ways, and the modes of communication (M.C.) can significantly affect how effectively we can convey our message. M.C. refers to the method or means of exchanging information between individuals or groups. It includes different forms of communication, such as auditory and visual, speaking, signing, writing, and hearing or receptive skills. The modes of communication can vary depending on the form of language and the needs and abilities of the communicators. We will compare the modes of communication in A.S.L. with spoken languages, focusing on the differences between auditory and visual communication, speaking, and signing.

Auditory vs. Visual Communication

A.S.L. is a visual language that relies on hand gestures, facial expressions, and body language to convey meaning. In contrast, spoken languages rely on an ability to listen to sounds, producing words using vocal cords and the mouth. A.S.L. users can communicate effectively without a sound even in noisy environments, while spoken language users may struggle to communicate in such settings.

Speaking vs. Signing

The mode of producing language is also different between A.S.L. and spoken languages. In A.S.L., signers use their hands, facial expressions, and body language to produce meaningful information, while in spoken languages, users rely on their vocal cords to produce sounds. Additionally, A.S.L. signers may use non-manual signals, such as eyebrow movements, to convey additional grammatical information, while spoken language users rely more on intonation, tone of voice, and other vocal cues.

Listening vs. Receptive

There is also a difference in how A.S.L. signers and spoken language users receive information. A.S.L. signers rely on visual information through hand movements and facial expressions, while spoken language users rely on auditory information, such as sound and tone of voice. Sign reception accesses through visual perception similar to reading text to receive information, in other words, reading the hands and body movements instead of printed text. Moreover, A.S.L. signers may have more developed receptive skills, as they constantly interpret visual information, while spoken language users may have varying degrees of receptive abilities, depending on factors such as hearing loss.

Written Systems

A.S.L. is not a written system, unlike English texts. In contrast, written English combines letters and punctuation to represent spoken words and sentences. A.S.L. differs from spoken languages in several ways, including the mode of communication, the mode of production, and receptive skills. Lastly, A.S.L. is a strictly visual language that relies on hand productions and facial expressions to deliver messages. Understanding the unique modes of communication can help us appreciate and communicate better with members of the Deaf community. Time to switch off the “English-Speaking” mindset, stretch your hands, and start signing!



Comprehension Questions

1

1. What is American Sign Language (A.S.L.), and how does it differ from English?
2. A.S.L. rely on visual perception and which does English rely on?
3. What are some unique features of A.S.L. grammar and sentence structure?
4. How does the cultural context of A.S.L. differ from that of English?
5. Why is A.S.L. integral part of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community?
6. How does A.S.L. compare to other sign languages used around the world?
7. What challenges do Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals face when communicating with hearing individuals?
8. How can hearing individuals learn to communicate more effectively with those who use A.S.L.?
9. What are some common misconceptions about A.S.L. and Deaf culture?
10. How might technology be used to improve communication between those who use A.S.L. and English?



LESSON

2

The Basics



Learning Objectives

1. **Cardinal Numbers:** Building upon the previous lesson, students will expand their knowledge of cardinal numbers in A.S.L. by learning numbers from 11 to 30. They will practice signing and understanding these numbers in various contexts.
2. **A.S.L. Glossing Convention:** Students will learn to represent A.S.L. signs and structures using written glosses, enhancing their understanding and analysis of A.S.L. linguistic features.

2.a

Cardinal Numbers 11- 30

Signs for eleven through fifteen, your palm go inward to your face. The palm is out for the 16-20 numbers except for the number 21. 20 through 29 have different handshapes from the number two. Use the "L" handshape for 23 to 29, e.g. L-4 as "24". Like fingerspelling in alphabetical letters, signers do not bounce each letter with a few exceptions, except for flicking 11. The bouncing movement uses for double numbers such as 22, 33, 44, and up to 99.



2.b

A.S.L. Glossing Convention

A.S.L. glossing convention is a way of writing down and transcribing signs and sentences that can be read and understood by people familiar with the language. The glossing convention is a standardized system for representing A.S.L. signs and sentences in writing, using a combination of English words, symbols, and numbers. The glossing is not a translation method but transcribing what was signed. Glossing is used by linguists and researchers studying A.S.L., as well as by interpreters and other professionals working with Deaf individuals. Glossing can be a helpful tool for helping to clarify and explain the meaning of A.S.L. signs and sentences in written form. Here is an example of transcribing an A.S.L. sentence using the A.S.L. glossing convention:

English: "I am going to the store." **A.S.L. gloss:** "GO STORE I" or "STORE I GO"

In this example, the A.S.L. signs represent English words in all capital letters, and hyphens separate the words. The A.S.L. glossing convention also includes symbols and numbers to represent specific hand shapes, hand movements, and facial expressions. "GO" is the gloss for the A.S.L. sign for "go to." The word order in the gloss transcription reflects the word order in the A.S.L. sentence, with the verb "GO" coming before the subject "I" and the object "STORE".

A.S.L. glossing convention does not replace written English as it does not serve as a written system for A.S.L. It is primarily for academic study and note-taking purposes. It is important to note that there are no standardized rules for writing A.S.L. glossing, but conventions ensure consistency and clarity in transcribing A.S.L.

Here is a list of tips for writing the ASL glossing convention:

1. Write or type ALL CAPS letters for each English word representing a sign.
2. Avoid using punctuation marks like periods, commas, and exclamation points.
3. Write signs as they appear in the present tense, even if the meaning is past tense.
4. Place WH-Questions (who, what, where, when, why, how) at the end of the sentence.
5. Avoid using "-ed" for past tense. Instead, write the verb in the present tense.
6. Hyphenate between the letters when fingerspelling. For example, "B-O-B."
7. Use the hashtag symbol (#) before lexicalized or loan fingerspelling. For example, "#BUS" for the fingerspelled sign of "bus."
8. When using classifiers, indicate the classifier abbreviation followed by a colon (CL:).
9. Add the letter or letters representing the handshape of the classifier.
10. Include one or more words of description after the handshape representation to provide more information. For example, "CL: V-person walking" and "CL: 3-car moving."
11. Avoid using articles like "a," "an," or "the."
12. Omit helping verbs like "is," "am," "was," "were," or "be" in glossing.

2 Vocabulary



- | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1. SIGN | 7. RESTROOM | 13. WATER | 19. PLEASE |
| 2. THANK-YOU | 8. WELCOME | 14. TEACHER | 20. STUDENT |
| 3. UNCLEAR | 9. TIME | 15. STAND | 21. CHAIR |
| 4. NEW | 10. WHAT'S UP | 16. NOTHING | (Repeat) |
| 5. SICK | 11. NURSE | 17. NOT | 22. NOT-MUCH |
| 6. SEE | 12. MAKE-UP | 18. SIT (One Motion) | |

Fill in a *word* for each of the signs #1-10.

1. <input type="text"/>	2. <input type="text"/>	3. <input type="text"/>	4. <input type="text"/>	5. <input type="text"/>
6. <input type="text"/>	7. <input type="text"/>	8. <input type="text"/>	9. <input type="text"/>	10. <input type="text"/>

Fill in the *letters* for the handshapes #11-15 and *numbers* for the handshapes #16-20.

11) _____	16) _____
12) _____	17) _____
13) _____	18) _____
14) _____	19) _____
15) _____	20) _____

Gloss the A.S.L. phrases and translate each phrase into English.



ASL:



ASL:



ASL:



ASL:



ASL:

English Translation Phrases

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____



Cultural Appropriation is a significant issue in various fields, including language learning. As an ASL student, Cultural Appropriation refers to adopting aspects of a culture that do not belong to you without respect or understanding of its origin and significance.

In simpler terms, it means using parts of another culture as a fashion or style statement without knowing or respecting the culture it comes from. In A.S.L. classrooms or during the course, students must understand the importance of respecting Deaf culture and avoiding appropriation.

One way to do this is by fostering an immersive Deaf culture experience, which involves refraining from using voices during the course. Not only does this help A.S.L. students respect Deaf culture, but it also benefits their signing skills. Therefore, A.S.L. students must understand that A.S.L. is more than just a language; it is a cultural experience.

When A.S.L. students use their voices while learning A.S.L., they take away from the immersive experience critical for understanding Deaf culture. By using their voices, A.S.L. students rely on their hearing ability instead of fully engaging in the visual experience that A.S.L. provides. Relying solely on visual cues and gestures will allow A.S.L. students to understand the importance of non-verbal communication in Deaf culture. This immersive experience also gives A.S.L. students a better understanding of the unique experiences and perspectives of Deaf individuals.

Turning off voices while learning A.S.L. will benefit your signs receptive skills, understanding others' signs, and improve muscle memory for fluency. Acknowledgment of Cultural Appropriation and not using voices will help you become a more effective signer and respectful member of the Deaf community.



Comprehension Questions

2

1. What is the issue of cultural appropriation, and why is it a significant problem in language learning?
2. How does refraining from using their voices in A.S.L. classrooms help students understand Deaf culture?
3. Why is A.S.L. considered more than just a language but a cultural experience?
4. How does using their voices in A.S.L. classrooms reinforce the idea of hearing as the norm?
5. How does the immersive experience of refraining from using voices help students understand the unique experiences and perspectives of Deaf individuals?
6. What famous Deaf individuals should A.S.L. students learn about to understand Deaf culture and history better?
7. How does turning off their voices in A.S.L. class help students improve their signing skills?
8. What are receptive skills, and why are they essential to A.S.L. students?
9. How do muscle memory and fluency improve with the immersive experience of turning off voices in A.S.L. class?
10. How does fostering an immersive Deaf culture experience benefit A.S.L. students?

A.S.L. Vocabulary Index Pages



A.S.L. Vocabulary Index

<p>A</p> <p>ABS-BELLY, 164 ABSENT, 104 ADDITION, 93 ADOPT, 138 ADULT, 138 AFRAID, 159 AFRO, 169 AFTER/CROSS, 58 AFTER/NEXT, 58 AFTERNOON, 33 AFTERNOON, 82 AGAIN, 12 AGAIN/REPEAT, 110 AGAINST, 48 AGE, 138 AHEAD-OF, 58 ALARM/BELL, 120 ALL-MORNING, 82 ALLOW, 126 ALLRIGHT, 12 ALLRIGHT, 159 ALMOST, 93 ALONE, 143 A-LOT, 98 ALSO/SAME, 33 AMAZE, 148 AMAZE, 148 ANCHOR BEARD, 174 AND, 28 ANGRY, 159 ANNOUNCE, 126 ANNOY, 148 ANXIETY, 159 ANY, 43 APPEARANCE, 132 AREA, 104 ARGUE, 138 ART, 110 ASK/REQUEST, 12 ASK-TO, 12 ASSIST/AIDE, 126 ATTITUDE, 148 AUDIENCE, 126 AUNT, 132 AVERAGE-HEIGHT, 164 AWAKE, 82 AWESOME, 68 AWKWARD, 148</p>	<p>B</p> <p>BACK & FORTH, 58 BACK, 58 BACKPACK, 120 BAD, 169 BATTERY, 120 BEANIE, 174 BEARD, 174 BEFORE, 88 BEHAVE, 120 BELITTLE, 159 BELL RING, 12 BELLY-SHAPE, 164 BEST, 174 BESTFRIEND, 143 BETTER, 174 BETWEEN, 138 BIG-BELLY, 164 BIOLOGY, 110 BLACK, 74 BLOCK, 48 BLUE, 74 BODY-BUILDER, 164 BOOK, 120 BOREDOM, 159 BORN, 43 BORROW, 120 BOTH, 43 BOTH-OF-US, 43 BOTH-OF-YOU, 43 BOTTLE, 74 BOY, 132 BRAID-HAIR, 169 BRIGHT, 74 BROTHER, 132 BROWN, 74 BULLY, 148 BUSY, 138 BUT, 28 BUZZ-CUT, 169</p>	<p>C</p> <p>CAFETERIA, 104 CALCUATTOR, 93 CALENDAR, 82 CAN, 63 CAN'T, 48 CAP/HAT, 174 CARD, 93 CARRY/BRING, 58 CATCH, 126 CERTIFICATION, 110 CHAIR, 21 CHANGE, 120 CHAT (2), 28 CHAT, 28 CHATTER, 148 CHEAT (2), 93 CHEAT, 93 CHEMICAL, 110 CHILD, 138 CHILDREN, 132 CHILL, 12 CHOOSE, 58 CL: 4 (LEAKING), 74 CL: B-B (LARGE), 74 CL: B—B (SMALL), 74 CLARIFY, 28 CLASS, 12 CLASS, 98 CLOSE-CALL, 115 CLOWN, 148 COACH, 115 COLLEGE, 110 COLOR, 74 COME, 38 COMMUNICATION, 28 CONFIDENT, 148 CONFUSE, 28 CONNECT, 143 CONTROL, 126 COOL/AWESOME, 63 COOPERATIVE, 148 COPY, 93 COPY-ME, 126 CORNROW-BRAID, 169 COUNSEL, 120 COUNSELOR, 126 COUNT, 63 COUNTRY, 110 COUSIN (F), 132 COUSIN, 132</p>	<p>CRAYON, 120 CRAZY, 164 CREATIVE, 154 CRUEL, 154 CURL-IRON, 169 CURLY (2) , 169 CURLY, 169 CUTE (2) , 164 CUTE, 164 CUT-HAIR, 169</p> <p>D</p> <p>DARK, 74 DAUGHTHER, 132 DAY, 82 DEAF (Downward), 12 DEAF (Upward), 12 DECREASE, 93 DEGREE, 110 DENY, 48 DEPRESS, 159 DEVELOP, 93 DEVELOPMENT, 93 DIFFCULT, 63 DIFFERENT, 132 DIPOLMA, 110 DIRECTION, 53 DIRTY, 164 DISAGREE, 48 DISAPPEAR, 93 DISCUSS, 110 DISCUSS, 143 DISLIKE, 33 DIVIDE, 93 DIVORCE, 143 DON'T-KNOW, 38 DON'T-MIND, 28 DON'T-WANT, 48 DORM, 104 DOUBLE, 93 DREADLOCK, 169 DULL, 159 DUMB, 154 DUTY, 126 DYE, 169</p>	<p>E</p> <p>EARLY, 88 EARRINGS, 174 ECONOMY, 110 EGO, 148 ELABORATE, 120 ELECTRONIC, 115 ELEMENTARY, 110 EMBARRASS, 159 EMPHASIS, 126 END-OF, 48 ENEMY, 143 ENGAGE, 143 ENGLISH, 110 ENOUGH, 93 ENTERANCE, 104 EQUAL, 93 ESTIMATE, 82 ETERNITY, 88 EVENING, 82 EVERY, 63 EVERYDAY, 88 EXAGGERATE, 148 EXCITE, 159 EXCUSE, 68 EXHAUST, 82 EXPLAIN, 68 EXPRESS, 159 EYEBROW, 174 EYE-CONTACT, 33 EYEGLASSES, 174</p> <p>F</p> <p>FACE EXPRESSION, 159 FACE, 132 FAIL, 98 FASCINATE, 68 FAST, 63 FATHER, 132 FAVORITE, 104 FAVORITE, 104 FEAST/PICNIC, 138 FEEL, 159 FEMALE, 132 FEW, 126 FINE, 28</p>
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A.S.L. Vocabulary Index

- FINISH, 63
FIRE, 120
FIRST, 93
FLAG, 104
FLAT-BELLY, 164
FLIRT, 148
FLUNK, 48
FOCUS, 93
FOLLOW, 138
FOOD, 104
FOR, 28
FOREVER, 88
FORGET, 38
FREQUENT, 88
FRICTION, 93
FRIEND, 68
FRIENDLY, 148
FROM-NOW-ON, 88
FRONT, 104
FROWN, 164
FULL, 63
FUN, 148
FUNNY, 148
FUTURE, 88
- G
- GATHER, 143
GENERAL, 110
GENERATION, 138
GENIUS, 148
GET-ALONG, 143
GET-ALONG, 143
GET-BEHIND, 58
GIRL, 132
GIVE-TO-YOU, 63
GLAD, 159
GO, 38
GOAL, 120
GOATEE, 174
GOOD, 12
GOODBYE, 28
GORGEOUS, 164
GOVERNMENT (2), 110
GOVERNMENT, 110
GRADE, 93
GRADUATE, 104
GRANDMA, 132
- GRANDPA, 132
GRASS, 104
GRASS-FIELD, 104
GRAY, 74
GREEN, 74
GUESS, 28
GULP, 82
GUM, 68
GYM, 104
- H
- HAIR, 169
HAIR-DRYER, 169
HAIR-PIN, 174
HAIRY CHEST, 174
HALF-HOUR, 82
HALLWAY, 104
HAND-OUT, 120
HAPPEN, 38
HAPPY, 159
HARD, 63
HEADBAND, 174
HEARING, 12
HEART, 148
HEAVY, 120
HELLO, 12
HELP, 12
HER/HIS/THEIR, 43
HERE/PRESENT, 38
HEY, 12
HISTORY, 110
HOME, 12
HONOR, 110
HORSEPLAY, 148
HOUR, 82
HOW, 12
HOW, 38
HOW-MANY, 28
HUMBLE, 148
HURRY, 88
HURT, 159
HUSBAND, 132
HYPER, 148
- I
- I-CALL-THEM, 58
IF/SUPPOSE, 68
I-GIVE-ALL, 53
I-GIVE-THEM, 53
I-GIVE-YOU, 53
I-HIT-YOU, 53
I-LOOK-YOU, 53
IMPORTANT, 93
IN, 28
INDIAN, 110
INDIVIDUAL, 148
INFORM-ALL, 58
INNOCENT, 148
INSIDE, 28
INTELLIGENT, 154
INTEREST, 28
INTERPRETER, 104
INTRODUCE, 132
I-SHOW-YOU, 53
I-TELL-YOU, 53
I-TELL-YOU, 58
- J
- JANITOR, 104
JEALOUS, 159
- K
- KNOW, 38
KNOW-NONE, 48
- L
- LAMP ON/OFF, 120
LAMP, 120
LANGUAGE, 110
LARGE, 164
LAST, 58
LAST-WEEK, 88
LAST-YEAR, 88
LATE/TARDY, 88
LATER, 33
LATER, 88
LATER-ON, 33
LATER-ON, 88
- LAUGH, 148
LAUGHTER, 148
LEARN, 126
LEARN, 63
LEFT (Abandon), 58
LEFT (Depart), 58
LEFT, 53
LEND-TO-YOU, 53
LESS/LEAST, 93
LESS-THAN, 93
LIBRARY, 104
LID/CAP, 74
LIGHT-WEIGHT, 164
LIKE, 33
LINE, 120
LIPSTICK, 174
LISTEN, 93
LONELY, 148
LONG, 88
LONG-CURLY, 169
LONG-HAIR, 169
LONG-TIME-AGO, 88
LOOK-DOWN, 58
LOOK-LIKE, 132
LUCK, 115
- M
- MACHINE, 104
MAD, 159
MAINSTREAM, 104
MAJOR, 104
MAJOR, 110
MAKE, 33
MAKE-COPIES, 53
MAKE-UP, 174
MAKE-UP, 174
MAKE-UP, 21
MAKE-UP, 93
MALE, 132
MANIC, 164
MARRY, 143
MASCARA, 174
MATH, 93
MAYBE, 143
ME, 12
ME/I, 43
MEAN/PURPOSE, 68
- MEET, 33
MEETING, 104
MEMORIZE, 120
MIDDLE, 143
MIDNIGHT, 82
MILLION, 93
MINUTE, 82
MIRROR, 174
MISCHIEF, 154
MISCOMMUNICATE, 154
MISS, 28
MISS, 138
MISTAKE, 33
MISTAKE, 48
MOHAWK, 169
MONTH, 82
MORE, 48
MORNING, 33
MORNING, 82
MOTHER, 132
MOTIVATE, 159
MOTORMOUTH, 154
MOVE, 115
MULLET, 169
MULTI-CHOICE, 58
MULTIPLY, 93
MUSIC, 110
MUSTACHE, 174
MY/MINE, 43
MYSELF, 43
MY-TURN, 53
- N
- NAME, 12
NEED, 63
NEED/NECESSARY, 68
NEGATIVE, 48
NEPHEW, 132
NERVOUS, 159
NEVER, 33
NEW, 138
NEW, 21
NEXT-TO, 58
NEXT-WEEK, 88
NEXT-YEAR, 88
NICE, 154
NICE, 33
NIECE, 132

A.S.L. Vocabulary Index

NIGHT, 33	PAST, 88	REMAIN, 93	SHOW-OFF, 148	SUBTRACT, 93
NO, 12	PAY-ATTENTION, 104	REMEMBER, 38	SHOW-UP, 115	SUE, 48
NO-IDEA, 38	PEN, 115	REMOVE, 126	SHOW-UP, 93	SUMMARY, 115
NO-IDEA, 48	PEOPLE, 138	REMOVE, 48	SHOW-YOU, 93	SUNGLASSES, 174
NONE, 120	PHYSICS, 110	RESIST, 48	SHY, 154	SUNRISE, 88
NONE, 48	PICK-BROW, 174	RESPECT, 43	SICK, 21	SUPERIOR, 126
NONE-AT-ALL, 48	PICK-ME-UP, 58	RESPONSIBILITY, 110	SIGN, 21	SURE/CERTAIN, 33
NOON, 82	PICK-UP, 120	RESTROOM, 21	SIGN, 63	SWEET, 154
NOSE-PIERCE, 174	PICK-YOU-UP, 58	RIDICULOUS, 154	SILLY, 164	SYSTEM, 110
NOT, 21	PICTURE, 138	ROOM, 68	SISTER, 132	
NOTHING, 21	PINK, 74	ROOMATE, 104	SIT, 21	T
NOTHING-AT-ALL, 48	PLAGIARISM, 126	ROOMATE, 143	SKILL/EXPERT, 63	
NOTICE, 164	PLEASE, 21	RUDE, 154	SKINNY, 164	TABLE/DESK, 120
NOT-MUCH, 21	PLUS, 93		SKIP, 93	TAKE, 68
NOT-UNDERSTAND, 12	POLICY, 104	S	SLEEPY, 164	TAKE-TURNS, 53
NOT-YET, 88	PONYTAIL (2) , 169	SAD, 159	SMART, 154	TALK, 143
NOW, 82	PONYTAIL, 169	SALON/BARBER, 169	SMILE, 154	TALK, 154
NUMBER, 93	POP-SODA, 104	SAME, 138	SNOB, 154	TALKIVE, 154
NURSE, 21	POPULAR, 154	SAME, 154	SOCIAL STUDIES, 110	TALL, 138
	PRACTICE, 63	SAME, 28	SOCIALIZE, 68	TALL/ADULT, 138
O	PRECIOUS, 138	SAME-OLD, 120	SO-FAR, 88	TAPE, 115
	PRESIDENT, 126	SATIRE, 148	SOFT-HEART, 154	TATTOO, 174
OBSERVE, 104	PRETTY, 164	SAY, 38	SOME, 88	TEACH, 126
OBVIOUS, 115	PRINCIPAL, 126	SCARE, 159	SOMETIME, 33	TEACHER, 126
OF COURSE, 43	PROJECTOR, 115	SCHOOL, 33	SON, 132	TEACHER, 21
OFF-POINT, 115	PROUD, 138	SCIENCE, 110	SOON, 88	TEASER, 148
OFF-POINT, 48	PURPLE, 74	SCISSOR/CUT, 115	SORRY/APOLOGIZE, 68	TECHNOLOGY, 110
OH-I-SEE, 154	PUT, 93	SECOND, 82	SO-SO, 93	TELL, 53
OH-I-SEE, 33	PUT-GLASSES, 174	SEE, 21	SPANISH, 110	TEMPORARY, 88
OH-REALLY, 68	PUZZLE, 93	SEEM, 159	SPEECHLESS, 82	TEND-TO, 148
OLD, 138		SEE-U-LATER, 68	SPIKY-HAIR, 169	TEST, 115
OLDER, 138	Q	SELFISH, 154	SPLIT/DIVIDE, 38	THANK-YOU, 21
ONCE, 88	QUARREL, 143	SENSITIVE, 159	SPOIL, 138	THAT, 154
OPPOSITE, 58		SENTENCE, 115	STAFF, 126	THAT, 43
OPTIMISTIC, 143	R	SEPARATE, 143	STAND, 21	THEATER, 110
ORANGE, 74	RAPID/QUICK, 63	SERIOUS, 154	STAPLE, 115	THEIR, 43
OUR, 43	READING, 68	SHARE, 138	START/BEGIN, 93	THEM, 43
OUT, 28	RECENT, 88	SHARE, 154	STAY, 115	THEMSELVES, 43
OVERLOOK, 154	RED, 74	SHAVE, 174	STEP/FOSTER, 132	THEY, 43
OVERLOOK, 48	REDUCE, 93	SHAVE-CHIN, 169	STILL, 154	THEY-CALL-ME, 58
	REFUSE, 48	SHAVE-HAIR, 169	STOP, 12	THEY-GIVE-ME, 53
P	REJECT (2), 48	SHE/HE, 43	STRANGE, 154	THEY-GIVE-ME, 53
	REJECT (3), 48	SHELF, 115	STRESS, 159	THEY-HIT-ME, 53
PAPER, 63	REJECT, 48	SHORT, 138	STRICT, 93	THEY-HIT-ME, 53
PARAGRAPH, 115	RELATIONSHIP, 143	SHORT/BRIEF, 82	STRUGGLE, 159	THEY-HIT-YOU, 53
PARANOID, 159	RELIEF, 115	SHORT-CURLY, 169	STUDENT, 126	THEY-LOOK-ME, 53
PARENTS, 132		SHOW-ME, 53	STUDENT, 21	THEY-NEXT-TO, 58
PASS, 93			SUBMIT/NOTE, 93	THIN, 164
				THING/OBJECT, 38

A.S.L. Vocabulary Index

- THINK, 38
THIS, 38
THIS-WEEK, 82
TIME, 120
TIME, 21
TIME, 82
TIME-CLOCK, 120
TIME-CONSUME, 82
TIME-NEAR, 82
TIME-RUN-OUT, 88
TO-BORROW, 53
TO-CALL, 43
TO-COPY, 53
TODAY, 82
TO-DO, 38
TOGETHER, 143
TO-INFORM, 58
TOMORROW, 82
TOPIC, 93
TO-SHOW, 53
TO-SWITCH, 48
TOTAL, 93
TOUCH, 115
TOUGH, 138
TRICK, 53
TRIPLE, 93
TRIPLET, 132
TROUBLE, 126
TROUBLEMAKER, 126
TRUST, 143
TUTORIAL, 115
TWEEZER (2) , 174
TWEEZER, 174
TWIN, 132
TYPE/KIND, 148
- U
- UGLY, 164
UNCLE, 132
UNCLEAR, 21
UN-CLEAR, 63
UNDERSTAND, 12
UPSET, 159
UP-TO/MAX, 93
USE, 43
- V
- VERY-OLD, 138
VERY-TALL, 164
VICTORY-SLAM, 93
VOTE, 126
- W
- WAIT, 33
WAIVE, 104
WANT, 38
WASTE-TIME, 88
WATER, 21
WAVE-NO, 48
WE, 43
WEAK, 48
WEEK, 82
WEEKEND, 82
WELCOME, 21
WHAT, 38
WHAT'S UP, 21
WHAT-DO, 38
WHEN, 38
WHERE, 38
WHITE, 74
WHO, 38
WHY, 38
WIFE, 132
WILL, 33
WILL, 38
WINNER, 126
WISH/PASSION, 93
WISH/STRIVE, 143
WITH, 68
WORD, 68
WORK, 68
WORN-OUT, 115
WORRY, 159
WOW/WHOA, 68
WRITE, 115
WRONG, 159
- Y
- YEAR, 82
YELL-AT, 115
YELLOW, 74
- YES, 12
YESTERDAY, 82
YOU, 12
YOU-LOOK-ME, 53
YOUNG, 138
YOUR, 43
YOURSELF, 43
YOUR-TURN, 53
YOU-TELL-ME, 53