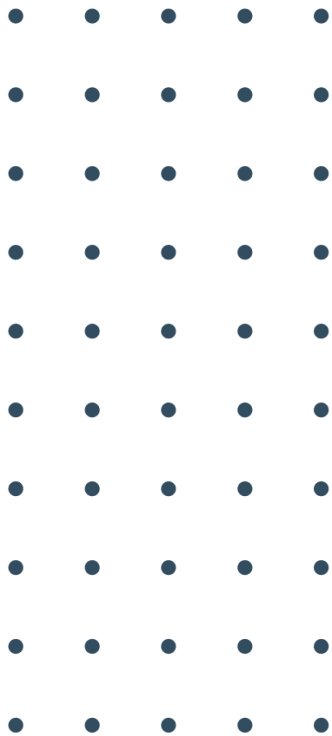


****SAMPLE****

**EXPLORING
DEAF CULTURE:
50 TOPICS**



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Reading Activity Directions

This interactive reading activity is designed to engage middle to high school students in exploring various aspects of Deaf culture. Here is how the reading activity works:

- 1. Chapter Selection:** Students can either have chapters assigned by their teacher or choose chapters that interest them personally.
- 2. Reading:** Encourage students to read the selected chapter thoroughly, taking notes if necessary. Remind them **not** to write directly in the textbook and to use their materials, such as paper or electronic devices, for note-taking and comprehension questions.
- 3. Preload Questions:** At the end of each chapter, there are ten preload comprehension questions provided by the textbook. These questions cover key points, concepts, and details from the chapter.
- 4. Answering Questions:** Once students have read the chapter, they should answer each preload comprehension question to the best of their ability. Encourage them to use evidence from the text to support their answers and to provide thorough explanations where needed.
- 5. Further Research:** Some preload questions may require further research beyond the textbook to produce high-quality and relevant answers. Encourage students to explore additional resources, such as online articles, videos, or interviews, to enhance their understanding of the topic.
- 6. Scoring:** Each preload question is worth 10 points, totaling 100 points or 100 percent. Teachers will evaluate the accuracy, relevance, and depth of students' answers to determine their scores.
- 7. Discussion:** After completing the reading and answering the preload comprehension questions, students can engage in discussions with their peers or the teacher to share their insights, ask questions, and deepen their understanding of Deaf culture.

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction – Author’s Intentions</u>	5
<u>Chapter #1 – “The Origin of A.S.L.”</u>	6
<u>Chapter #2 – “The Misconceptions”</u>	9
<u>Chapter #3 – “The Deaf Culture Identity”</u>	12
<u>Chapter #4 – “Difference between Deaf and Hard of Hearing”</u>	15
<u>Chapter #5 – “Causes and Types of Hearing Loss”</u>	17
<u>Chapter #6 – “The Deaf Family”</u>	19
<u>Chapter #7 – “C.O.D.A.”</u>	21
<u>Chapter #8 – “Assistive Devices”</u>	23
<u>Chapter #9 – “Video Relay Service”</u>	25
<u>Chapter #10 – “Diversity in Deaf Community”</u>	28
<u>Chapter #11 – “Laurent Clerc”</u>	31
<u>Chapter #12 – “Audism”</u>	33
<u>Chapter #13 – “Oralism”</u>	35
<u>Chapter #14 – “Milan Congress and George Veditz”</u>	37
<u>Chapter #15 – “Alexander Graham Bell”</u>	40
<u>Chapter #16 – “Gallaudet University”</u>	42
<u>Chapter #17 – “Deaf President Now !”</u>	44
<u>Chapter #18 – “Roberta “Bobbi” Cordano”</u>	47
<u>Chapter #19 – “Deaf Education”</u>	49
<u>Chapter #20 – “Sign Communication Methods”</u>	51
<u>Chapter #21 – “Medical vs. Cultural Views”</u>	53
<u>Chapter #22 – “Language Acquisition & Deprivation”</u>	55
<u>Chapter #23 – “Audiologists”</u>	57
<u>Chapter #24 – “Speech Therapists”</u>	59

Table of Contents

<u>Chapter #25 – “Mainstream School vs. Deaf School”</u>	61
<u>Chapter #26 – “Deaf Organizations”</u>	64
<u>Chapter #27 – “Native Indian Sign Language”</u>	66
<u>Chapter #28 – “John Clarke”</u>	68
<u>Chapter #29 – “De’VIA”</u>	70
<u>Chapter #30 – “Deaf & A.S.L. Literatures”</u>	72
<u>Chapter #31 – “Deaf Stars”</u>	74
<u>Chapter #32 – “Dancing with the Stars: Nyle DiMarco”</u>	77
<u>Chapter #33 – “Sean Forbes”</u>	79
<u>Chapter #34 – “Warren “Wawa” Snipe”</u>	81
<u>Chapter #35 – “Shaylee Mansfield”</u>	83
<u>Chapter #36 – “Sandra Mae Frank”</u>	85
<u>Chapter #37 – “Daniel Durant”</u>	87
<u>Chapter #38 – “The Daily Moth”</u>	89
<u>Chapter #39 – “Animals Signs”</u>	91
<u>Chapter #40 – “Hearing Dogs”</u>	93
<u>Chapter #41 – “Deaflympics”</u>	95
<u>Chapter #42 – “Derrick Coleman”</u>	97
<u>Chapter #43 – “The Huddle”</u>	99
<u>Chapter #44 – “Deaf Clubs”</u>	101
<u>Chapter #45 – “Deaf-Blind”</u>	103
<u>Chapter #46 – “Haben Girma”</u>	105
<u>Chapter #47 – “The ADA Law”</u>	107
<u>Chapter #48 – “Claudia Gordon”</u>	109
<u>Chapter #49 – “Certified Deaf Interpreter”</u>	111
<u>Chapter #50 – “Deaf Awareness Month”</u>	113

Introduction



Hello there, my name is Federico Quintana, and I am a proud member of the Deaf community. I was born Deaf, and from an early age, I embraced my Deaf identity and culture. Growing up, I faced many challenges, but I always knew that I wanted to pursue a career in education. I attended Gallaudet University, earning my bachelor's degree in American Sign Language. It was a life-changing experience that allowed me to immerse myself deeply in Deaf culture and learn more about my community.

After completing my undergraduate studies, I pursued a Master's in Education Leadership from Lamar University. During my time there, I focused on Deaf Education and researched ways to develop effective curriculum and pedagogy for teaching American Sign Language.

Since then, I have taught A.S.L. and Deaf Culture courses at the high school and college levels for over ten years. It has been a privilege to share my knowledge and experiences with students and help them appreciate the beauty and diversity of Deaf culture.

Aside from my professional life, I am a proud father of two young Deaf sons. They are my world, and I enjoy spending my free time with them, exploring the outdoors, and learning new things together. The ongoing of my journey has been challenging but also rewarding. I am grateful for the opportunities I have had and look forward to continuing to impact the lives of those around me positively.

In this book, "Exploring Deaf Culture: 50 Topics," I have carefully selected 50 topics that are crucial to understanding the complexity and diversity of the Deaf culture. As a Deaf educator and author, I have drawn upon my experience and knowledge to select these topics, ensuring they represent various issues and perspectives within the Deaf community.

Through this book, I aim to provide a comprehensive and engaging exploration of these fifty topics, covering historical events, cultural practices, social issues, and contemporary debates. Each chapter will delve into a specific topic, examining its historical context, its significance to the Deaf community, and its impact on society at large.

My goal is not only to inform readers about the Deaf culture but also to challenge assumptions and preconceptions about what it means to be Deaf. As someone who has lived and worked within the Deaf community, I offer insight and perspective on these complex and often misunderstood issues.

I hope this book will be a valuable resource for anyone interested in learning about Deaf culture, including students, educators, policymakers, and broader community members. By exploring these 50 topics, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the richness and diversity of Deaf culture and promote greater understanding and acceptance of this vibrant community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Federico Quintana'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Chapter 1

The Origin of American Sign Language





American Sign Language (A.S.L.) has a rich and complex history that dates back centuries. It is a natural language used primarily by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities in the United States and Canada. The exact origins of A.S.L. are unclear, but a piece of evidence shows A.S.L. evolved by a combination of French Sign Language (L.S.F.) brought to the United States by Laurent Clerc in the early 1800s and the signs used by Native American communities. Some evidence shows that Martha's Vineyard Sign Language, a form of sign language used on Martha's Vineyard, an island off the coast of Massachusetts, may have shaped the development of A.S.L.

For thousands of years, Native American communities developed their own visual and gestural languages to communicate with one another. These languages rely on hand signals and facial expressions, they used it as a form of visual communication for hunting, storytelling, and other aspects of daily life. When European settlers arrived in North America, they encountered these visual and gestural languages and began incorporating them into their communication systems. Over time, the visual and gestural languages of Native Americans merged with L.S.F. to create A.S.L.

In 1817, the first school for the Deaf in the United States, the American School for the Deaf, was established in Hartford, Connecticut. This school, which Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc founded, played a significant role in developing A.S.L. by introducing L.S.F. to the United States and adapting it to the needs of the American Deaf community. In the early 19th century, Deaf Education in the United States focused on teaching children how to read and write English rather than using sign language as a primary means of communication. At the same time, the use of sign language continued to grow and evolve within the Deaf community.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, A.S.L. continued to evolve and gain popularity within the Deaf community. In 1880, the International Congress on Education of the Deaf held in Milan, Italy, passed a resolution banning sign language in Deaf Education in favor of oralism. This resolution significantly impacted the Deaf community, as many Deaf children promoted to stop using sign language and learn to speak and lip-read instead. Despite this setback, the use of sign language persisted, and A.S.L. continued to develop and gain recognition as a legitimate language.

In the mid-19th century, A.S.L. underwent a period of standardization and codification. In 1960, William Stokoe, a linguist, and A.S.L. teacher published a groundbreaking paper arguing that A.S.L. is a fully formed and complex language deserving the same recognition as any spoken language. His work legitimized A.S.L. as an actual language and paved the way for its recognition and acceptance within the broader academic and linguistic communities.

The Deaf community has also made significant strides in advocating for the recognition of A.S.L. and the rights of Deaf people. In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law, recognizing A.S.L. as a legitimate language and providing legal protections for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in areas such as employment and education. Today, A.S.L. is officially recognized as an actual language in the United States and Canada. It is one of the most popular foreign language courses offered in many universities and colleges.



Comprehension Questions

1

1. Who were the most significant contributors to the development of A.S.L.?
2. What language did Laurent Clerc bring to the United States, and how did it influence the development of A.S.L.?
3. How did Martha's Vineyard Sign Language influence the development of A.S.L.?
4. What was the focus of Deaf Education in the United States in the 19th century?
5. When and where was the first school for the Deaf in the United States established?
6. Who founded the American School for the Deaf?
7. What was the impact of the 1880 Milan Congress on the use of sign language in Deaf Education?
8. Who was William Stokoe, and what was his contribution to the field of A.S.L.?
9. What legal protections are provided to Deaf individuals by the Americans with Disabilities Act?
10. How did French Sign Language influence the development of A.S.L.?

Chapter 2

The Misconceptions





The Deaf community and American Sign Language (A.S.L.) have often been subject to myths, misconceptions, and stereotypes. As a beginner of A.S.L. students, there are several common misconceptions about A.S.L. and Deaf People that they might encounter.

1. Sign language is universal: Sign languages vary across countries like spoken languages. A.S.L. is used in the United States and Canada, and British Sign Language (B.S.L.) is in the United Kingdom.
2. Learning A.S.L. is quickest and easier to pick up than any other spoken foreign language: While some people may find A.S.L. easier to learn than other languages, it still requires a lot of time, practice, energy, and effort to become proficient.
3. A.S.L. is just a collection of made-up signs as long it makes sense: It is not simply a random mimic or gestures out of thin air.
4. All Deaf people use A.S.L.: Some Deaf people use A.S.L., some may use other forms of sign language or a combination of different communication methods.

One common misconception is that all Deaf people can read lips. While some Deaf people may have developed the skill of lip reading, it is not a reliable or effective means of communication for most Deaf people. Lip reading requires seeing the speaker's mouth clearly and accurately interpreting their movements, which is often tricky in real-world situations. Only about 30% of spoken language is visible on the lips.

The second common misconception is that hearing aids and cochlear implants can "cure" deafness. While these devices can improve hearing ability, they do not restore hearing to normal levels and do not address the cultural identity and language of the Deaf community. Many Deaf individuals choose not to use hearing aids or implants, a decision that should be respected.

Lastly, one of the most damaging misconceptions is that Deaf individuals are always angry or frustrated. This stereotype stems from the misinterpretation of facial expressions and body language in A.S.L., which can often appear more animated or intense than spoken language they are not exposed to yet. However, these expressions are simply part of the language, not an emotional indication.



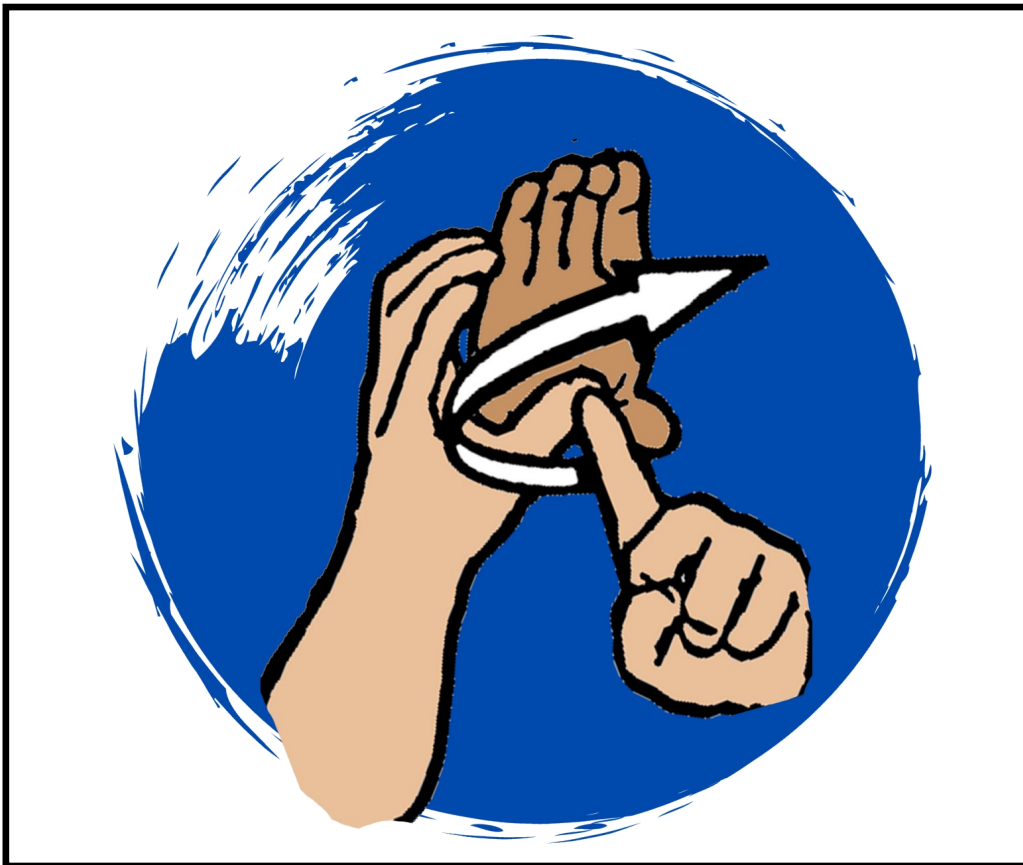
Comprehension Questions

2

1. What are some common misconceptions about American Sign Language (A.S.L.) ***not included*** on the list?
2. What is the misconception about the intelligence level of Deaf individuals?
3. Is it true that all Deaf people can read lips?
4. What is the misconception about the use of hearing aids and cochlear implants?
5. What are some misconceptions about Deaf individuals' ability to participate in various activities?
6. What is the misconception about the Deaf community's preference for isolation?
7. How does the misconception that all Deaf people want to be "fixed" or "cured" affect the Deaf community?
8. Is it true that A.S.L. is not an actual language?
9. What are some misconceptions about Deaf individuals' ability to communicate with hearing individuals in emergencies?
10. Can people communicate with each other underwater? Please explain how to do it without drowning.

Chapter 3

The Deaf Culture Identity





Beyond the front line of the Deaf community, the term "hearing" person typically refers to a person who does not have a hearing loss or does not primarily identify with the Deaf community or culture. Also, this term distinguishes between those who are part of the Deaf community and those who are not and is often used to describe individuals who do not use or know A.S.L.

The Deaf culture is a unique and vibrant community united by a shared identity, language, and values. One of the defining features of Deaf culture is its dominant use of A.S.L. Through A.S.L., members of the Deaf community can share stories, express their emotions, and build strong bonds with one another. Members of this community may identify themselves with a capital "D" Deaf identity or a small "d" Deaf identity, which can significantly affect their relationship to Deaf culture.

The capital "D" Deaf identity refers to individuals who primarily identify with the Deaf community and culture, which includes a shared language, values, and experiences. These individuals may be Deaf or Hard of Hearing and may or may not use hearing aids or cochlear implants to aid communication. In contrast, the small "d" Deaf identity refers to individuals who may have a hearing loss but do not necessarily identify with the Deaf community or culture. These small "d" individuals may prefer to communicate using spoken language and may not use A.S.L. primarily.

Our Deaf culture is a tight-knit community strongly emphasizing shared experiences and values. For example, Deaf individuals may have a unique sense of visual-spatial orientation, allowing them to navigate the world differently than hearing individuals. They may also use facial expressions and body language to communicate, making conversations more dynamic and nuanced. In addition, Deaf culture is often characterized by a sense of community, with Deaf schools and Deaf community centers serving as important gathering places for community members.

Many stereotypes and misconceptions exist about the Deaf community, making it difficult for individuals to fully embrace their Deaf identity and participate in society on equal terms. The culture tends to be a shared community experience among the members, and the Deaf culture also faces many challenges in a society that often relies on spoken language. For example, Deaf individuals may struggle to access information, communicate effectively with hearing people, and feel socially isolated.

Despite these challenges, the Deaf community has adapted to the modern world in many ways. For instance, the increasing use of video and internet communication has made it easier for Deaf individuals to connect and access information. Additionally, the Deaf community supports using interpreters and captioning in public settings to ensure accessibility and communication.

There are approximately 10-20 million Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in the United States and Canada. 1-2 million people identify as members of the Deaf community and culture, with a capital "D" identity. Deaf culture values the use of sign language and the unique perspectives of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. It promotes the idea that being Deaf or Hard of Hearing is not a disability or deficit but a unique way of experiencing and participating in the world.



Comprehension Questions

3

1. What does the term "hearing" person typically refer to in the Deaf community?
2. What is one of the defining features of Deaf culture?
3. What is the difference between a capital "D" Deaf identity and a small "d" identity?
4. What unique sense do many Deaf individuals have that allows them to navigate the world differently than hearing individuals?
5. What are some challenges that the Deaf community faces in a society that often relies on spoken language?
6. How has the Deaf community adapted to the modern world in recent years?
7. Approximately how many Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals are there in the United States?
8. How many people identify as members of the Deaf community and culture with a capital "D" identity?
9. What does Deaf culture promote about being Deaf or Hard of Hearing?
10. What are some important gathering places for Deaf community members?

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