ASL B1

Beginning American Sign Language

Class Packet

Tom Moran
ASL 1 Class Packet Index

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American Sign Language as a Foreign Language

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Interest in American Sign Language (ASL) as a foreign language has become, in the words of Gary Olsen, former Executive Director of the National Association of the Deaf, "an American ground swell." Many colleges and universities are beginning to recognize the study of ASL and Deaf culture as legitimate academic pursuits and are starting to accept ASL in fulfillment of their foreign language entrance and exit requirements. In several states, ASL is mandated by law as acceptable in fulfillment of high school foreign language graduation requirements.

More and more colleges and universities are accepting ASL in fulfillment of foreign language requirements. The University of California system (all campuses) will soon accept ASL in fulfillment of foreign language entrance and graduation requirements. Harvard and Yale are among some of the schools which are investigating similar action. Recently, we have witnessed tremendous activity by state legislatures to support the teaching and acceptance of ASL as a foreign language. Many states now recognize ASL as a foreign language for the purpose of meeting high school graduation requirements.

In 1988, the parliament of the European Community, noting that there are 500,000 profoundly deaf people in member states whose first language is their national signed language and not the dominant spoken language of their country, recognized as legitimate languages the indigenous signed languages of the twelve member states. Recognition and acceptance of signed languages is clearly an idea whose time has come on an international scale.
Many questions come to mind when the topic of ASL as a foreign language is brought up. People often ask if it is appropriate to call ASL a foreign language. Is it really a language? Isn't it a derivative of English, on the order of Black English? Is ASL "foreign"?—after all, it is used in the United States. Is there a body of literature associated with ASL? Others may note that foreign language courses teach students about the culture of the group of people who use the language. They may wonder if there is a full and distinct culture associated with users of ASL.

The answers to all of these questions support the recognition of ASL as a foreign language. Because of its unique modality—visual/gestural rather than aural/oral—many people wrongly assume that ASL is fundamentally different than spoken languages. ASL is a fully developed human language, one of the hundreds of naturally occurring signed languages of the world. It is not a derivative of English. It is not a "simplified" language—it contains structures and processes which English lacks (such as ASL’s rich verbal aspect and classifier systems). There is abundant linguistic research on ASL demonstrating that the grammar of ASL is radically different from English—surely as different as any of the more traditional foreign languages taught in school. Comprehensive sources of information on the linguistics of ASL are *Linguistics of American Sign Language* by Clayton Valli and Ceil Lucas (1993, Gallaudet University Press), *American Sign Language: Linguistic and Applied Dimensions* by Ronnie Wilbur (1987, Little Brown and Co.) and *The Signs of Language* by Edward Klima and Ursula Bellugi (1979, Harvard University Press).

The question of whether ASL is "foreign" depends on what we mean by foreign. ASL is not universal; it is indigenous to the United States and parts of Canada. This should not, however, exclude it from study as a foreign language. The question also arises with other languages indigenous to North America. At the University of New
Mexico, for example, Navajo is taught and accepted in fulfillment of the foreign language requirement, yet it is not used in a foreign country. For reasons such as this, many language scholars now speak of second language, rather than foreign language, requirements.

Some people may suggest that ASL lacks an international scope. In the hearing world of international world affairs this is true. It is also true for many of the spoken languages traditionally accepted to fulfill foreign language requirements. On the other hand, in the Deaf world, ASL is quite an important language on the international scene; for example, ASL is often an official language of international conferences.

There is a rich body of ASL literature by and about Deaf people, as well as texts on ASL in both written and oral modes. The folk heritage of Deaf people, passed down through generations of ASL users, includes legends, naming practices, tall tales, jokes, word play, games, poetry, customs, rituals, and celebrations. For more examples of the heritage and folklore of Deaf people, Jack Gannon’s Deaf Heritage: A Narrative History of Deaf America (1981, National Association of the Deaf) is an excellent resource.

Foreign language study necessarily involves learning about the values, worldview, and way of life—the culture—of a group of people. The same is true for the study of ASL. ASL students learn about the rich cultural life of Deaf people. Deaf culture is now recognized and studied by anthropologists, ethnographers, folklorists, and others interested in culture and cross cultural communication. One excellent description of Deaf culture is the recent book by Carol Padden and Tom Humphries, Deaf in America: Voices from a Culture (1988, Harvard University Press). American Deaf Culture: An Anthology, by Sherman Wilcox (Linstok Press, 1989), contains several articles presenting a variety of perspectives on the language and culture of Deaf people in America. Oliver Sacks’ recent book, Seeing Voices (University of California Press, 1989) is an introduction
to Deaf culture, ASL, and the struggle of Deaf people to gain control of their individual and community identity.

The facts are overwhelming. ASL is a true human language fully distinct from English with its own literature and culture. It is important to go beyond these facts, however, and to ask whether, by offering ASL as a foreign language option, we do students an injustice by steering them away from courses which could be of more intellectual or economic value. Is ASL instruction a worthwhile addition to the curriculum?

The answer clearly is "Yes—absolutely!" One of the educational benefits of foreign language study is that it gives students a fresh perspective on their own language and culture. This is especially true of ASL. Applying linguistic and anthropological methods to the study of ASL and Deaf culture is an excellent intellectual exercise for students. It leaves them with a better understanding of another people's language and customs, as well as a deeper appreciation of their own language and culture.

We do not teach languages only for the intellectual rewards. There are also practical, economic reasons for learning a foreign language. For example, our nation's businesses need employees who can understand the language and customs of foreign people. This might seem to work against ASL because it is not associated with a foreign nationality. Again, the facts do not support such a contention. For example, students in the bachelor of science degree program in sign language interpreting at the University of New Mexico are regularly recruited into competitive positions in business, education, and government. Many students report that they take ASL specifically to make them better qualified or more employable in non-deafness related careers. Those students who want to continue their education at the graduate level find that a background in ASL opens up several avenues for advanced study and research.
Finally, some might wonder whether offering ASL as a foreign language option will cause a decline in enrollment in other foreign languages. The evidence from those universities which accept ASL as a foreign language is precisely the opposite. At these universities there is no record of a decrease in traditional foreign language enrollment due to enrollments in ASL. As a matter of fact, ASL instruction may lead to increased foreign language enrollment. ASL students often report that they are more interested in other languages—and indeed more likely to take a traditional, spoken foreign language—as a result of their ASL study. The joy of learning a new language and of communicating with people across cultural boundaries, it seems, is contagious!

Students who know a foreign language commonly find that their perceptions of themselves and the world are richer than their monolingual peers. The study of a language, culture, and literature different than their own propels students beyond the limits of their own world. In all respects ASL affords students the same challenges and rewards as more traditional foreign languages.

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http://www.unm.edu/~wilcox/ASLFL/asl_fl.html
August 15, 2005

Dear ASL Enthusiast:

When I first wrote this letter two years ago, it was a long tirade on attendance. I’m sure you don’t want to read that, so allow me to briefly state the following:

1. This is a language workshop: you must be ever-present—no ifs, ands, or buts.
2. In order to learn ASL, you must participate. You can’t negotiate your way out of this simple truth.
3. Everyone in my class will treat one another with the utmost respect, including me:
   a. I won’t play favorites.
   b. I will assign you the grade you earn; nothing more, nothing less.
4. I like to laugh and have fun. Let’s keep it that way.
5. If you’re not sure about anything, ask. Anytime.

We are all students and we are all teachers. I expect that you will learn from me, and I expect to learn from you, too.

I’m committed to your education and am prepared to help you in any way I can. I promise to support and encourage you, and that I will never belittle or humiliate you. If you’ve taken ASL with other teachers, you may see me do and sign things differently than they do. That’s good for you and will help your learning. There are other things that will help your learning: work hard, be diligent, do more than the minimum required, help your classmates, and always be in class.

Oh—one more thing: come by my office to tell me you’ve read this letter and I’ll give you 10 points for completing your first assignment.

I’m looking forward to traversing the semester with you.
Deaf Studies Terminology

1. **ASL:** American Sign Language. The everyday language of nearly one million Americans. It is commonly believed that ASL is the third most commonly used language in the U.S., but this is not the case; however, it is a popular language. It is based largely on French Sign Language (LSF) and was brought to the U.S. by Laurent Clerc, a French educator of Deaf children who partnered with Thomas Gallaudet to open the first public school for Deaf people in 1817.

2. **Deaf:** Note the capital “D”; this is the term is used to describe members of North American Deaf Culture. Note the capital “D,” which denotes a proper noun, much in the same way you might refer to someone as “Chinese” or a “Black American.” Refer to people who have a hearing loss and are members of a culture as “Deaf people” or “people who are Deaf.” Never refer to them as “the Deaf” or in a manner such as “I saw a Deaf.”

3. **deaf:** This term is used to describe an auditory pathology, that is the inability to hear, or hear well enough to transact a spoken conversation. The term “deaf” with a lowercase “d” is used to describe the condition of deafness or a person who is not a member of American Deaf Culture.

4. **deaf and dumb:** This is another opprobrious term from times gone by. Here the term “dumb” means unable to speak; unfortunately, it’s homonym means “unintelligent.” Too often Deaf individuals are perceived of as unintelligent or incapable, and usually this is not the case. This was a very common term and you will see it still, from time to time, in the media. Never use this term.

5. **Deaf Culture:** See *Deaf World*.

6. **deaf-mute:** This was a term popular up until the mid-20th century. It is no longer used and has become opprobrious. It incorrectly describes people who are Deaf. The
inability to hear makes it very difficult to modulate one’s voice and to pronounce words correctly; however, almost all Deaf people possess the power of speech. Rarely is a Deaf person actually “mute,” though many choose not to speak.

7. **Deaf World:** This is a somewhat antiquated term, the way in which Deaf people used to refer to their collective experience: no telephones, residential schools, menial jobs, Deaf spouses, etc. Typically we now refer to the collective experience of North American Deaf people (and Deaf people from around the world) as Deaf Culture.

8. **death:** For reasons that are a mystery to me, many students refer to Deaf people as “death.” While sometimes humorous (“I see deaf people. . . .”) it can be offensive and make you look ignorant—which you are not. When people ask me if I work with “the death,” I reply, “Yeth.”

9. **facial expressions:** Facial expressions are emotive and universal. In every culture the same facial expressions means, “OW! I just hit my thumb with a hammer,” or “Gee, I love you.” People who don’t understand sign language often confuse ASL’s non-manual grammar with emotive facial expressions, leading them to conclude that “ASL is SO expressive!”

10. **gesture:** The use of movement to convey a message; more purposeful than body language, but not a language governed by a grammar. One uses basic invented gestures to play that party game *Charades.* Someone who is skilled at gesture—like a certified deaf interpreter—can communicate quite effectively with individuals who have little expressive or receptive language.

11. **hearing:** This is the term applied to people who have no hearing loss. Most of the students who take my class are hearing. Do not refer to hearing people as “speaking.” All too often people confuse the ability to speak with the ability to think or reason; on the contrary, if you listen talk radio, you will quickly learn that there is no
link between the ability to speak and the ability to think. Almost all Deaf people are capable of speech but choose to sign as it is easier and more comfortable—in a word, natural.

12. **hearing impaired:** Much has been said and written on the origin of this term. Some think it is politically correct. Others think it is an economics term coined to talk about 20,000,000 Americans—many of them elderly—who have some significant form of hearing loss. It does not refer to members of a culture, and Deaf people rarely refer to themselves as “hearing impaired.”

13. **Interpreter:** An individual trained in interpreting and transliterating who is fluent in at least two languages, in our case English and ASL.

14. **MCE:** Manually-Coded English. Whereas ASL is its own language, many people (most of them hearing) believe that if teachers sign in English word-order, with symbols invented to mimic our syntax and phonology, Deaf students will improve their written English. This method has been tried since at least the early 18th century. An experiment as old as deaf education itself, it is largely a failure.

15. **manual communication:** Communicating using the hands and “body language.” Its counterpart is verbal communication.

16. **non-manual behavior:** A form of communication which is non-verbal as well as non-manual, that is not on the hands. Non-manuals are movements of the face, head, shoulders, and upper body which have grammatical meaning in ASL. For example if you tilt your head to your shoulder, you are indicating spatial or temporal immediacy (he’s right there; she just left). If you raise your eyebrows, you are asking a yes/no question. Non-manual behaviors are sometimes referred to as the grammar of ASL.
17. **Oralism**: This is a method of instruction wherein a teacher mouths every word to a Deaf person and asks the Deaf person to learn to speak normally in spite of his inability to hear himself. A product of the Victorian age—and the preferred method of instruction in most countries around the world—it was standard procedure in the U.S. until the 1970s. There are schools who practice this method to this day. Many Deaf people are raised and educated by the oral method. A vast majority of them turn to ASL at some point in their lives. I have never known a Deaf person to grow up signing and later become oral.

**Pidgin Signed English**: See “MCE”

**SEE**: See “MCE”

**Signed English**: See “MCE”

**Signer**: Someone who signs. Often you will see someone signing for a Deaf person in a classroom or at a performance. While that individual is often referred to as a “signer,” he is actually an interpreter/transliterator. Interpreters actually interpret from one language into another language, ASL to English for example. Transliterator translate from one language to another form of the same language, spoken English to signed English, for example.
The Signing Naturally Curriculum

As you know by now, the text we are using for this course is *Signing Naturally, Level I*. This is the book I use to teach both ASL 1 and ASL 2. For those students continuing in their studies, I use *Signing Naturally, Level 2* for ASL 3, and portions of *Signing Naturally Level III* for ASL 4 and beyond. I chose this text series carefully for a number of reasons which I would like to share with you.

1. Two of the three authors of this text series are Deaf; the hearing author is a CODA, the child of Deaf adults. All three are native users of ASL. Each is a pioneer in ASL instruction and they are teachers of ASL teachers. (It may interest you to know that your instructor has trained with them.) They are ASL interpreters, linguists, poets, and each has an advanced degree in language or linguistics.

2. *Signing Naturally* is the best and most-widely used—by far—ASL text book available. If you came from a high school or college that offered ASL, you likely used this book. If you plan to transfer and continue your studies elsewhere, you will likely use this textbook series. Among the colleges that use—and endorse—this text are Gallaudet University (in their Center on ASL Literacy), CSU Northridge, CSU Hayward, San Diego State University, and the University of California at San Diego, just to name a few.

3. This text series uses the most modern second-language teaching methods. Whereas in the past ASL has been taught by listing vocabulary or transcribing English sentences, *Signing Naturally* uses a functional/notional approach. This means ASL is taught using ASL, emphasizing “communicative purpose” in the language we are studying. It means ASL is taught emphasizing the functions of language use in situations students are likely to encounter outside the classroom.

4. Finally, the *Signing Naturally* text series teaches ASL in a way that is respectful of ASL and members of Deaf culture. To begin with, it encourages a “no-voice” policy.
This can be unsettling to students who are not accustomed to guessing and feeling “off-balance” in a classroom; however, I assure you that it is the quickest and most effective way to learn ASL. In addition, *Signing Naturally* eschews the use of English “glosses” in labeling signs. A *gloss* (usually written in all caps, like CAT) is a label, printed in English, below the picture of a sign. While common sense would reason that this would enhance learning, the opposite is actually true. The overwhelming majority of signs can be translated into several, sometimes dozens, of different English words. To label a sign with a single English word is to do a grave disservice to an ASL student, and leads students to asking such ignorant questions as “What’s the sign for ‘run,’” where, in fact there are literally dozens of signs for that single English word, even more than there are definitions of that word.

As you can tell, I think highly of this textbook series. I chose it to make both your life and my life easier, and because I think if you use this book to its fullest intent and if you study hard, you will leave this class a competent, beginning ASL user who is comfortable conversing with a stranger.
Did you know that . . .

. . . ASL has recorded the fastest enrollment growth rate (over 400%) of any “foreign language” offered on U.S. college campuses, according to the Modern Language Association?

. . . origins of ASL can be traced to Martha’s Vineyard in the late 1600s?

. . . in the U.S. approximately 500,000 people use ASL as their primary language?

. . . more than 150 colleges and universities recognize ASL as a language in its own right?

Source: Los Angeles Times, January 18, 2005
Fingerspelling in ASL

Try reading the following paragraph quickly:

```
The pweor of the hmuan mnid
Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttar in what oredr the
ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt thng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae.
The rset can be a total mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit any porbelms. Tihs is bcuseae the
huamn mnid deos not raed ervey ltเตer by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.
```

Not that hard, is it? This demonstrates the fallacy of trying to see each letter when reading fingerspelled words. Many Deaf children—children not old enough to read—can understand many fingerspelled words. That’s because they recognize the words as whole units, rather than as a series of letters. Being able to recognize all the words in the above paragraph is an example of the three Cs of fingerspelling—Context, Clozure, and Configuration.

**Context:** Once you determine the paragraph is a report on scientific research, that reduces the number of possible words you might encounter.

**Clozure:** Because you see the first and last letter of each word in its proper place, it’s much easier to determine what the word is. Similarly, though you may miss some of the internal letters in a fingerspelled word, you can usually see the first and last letter.

**Configuration:** The capitalized letters denote proper nouns (Cambridge University) as well as the beginnings of sentences. Additionally, some words seems to have a unique “shape”: research, important, without, and whole. Even scrambled, these words stand out in the paragraph.
Fingerspelling
RADAR
Deaf Community Interaction

As you know from your syllabus, interaction with members of the Deaf community is a requirement for this course. It is a privilege to meet and share the company of Deaf people. Do so only when you are invited to. Respect the privacy and independence of Deaf people you meet. Treat them as you would have others treat you.

To receive full credit toward your semester grade, you must complete 15 hours of interaction with the Deaf community. I offer credit only for conversational interaction with Deaf people. Credit is not available for conversation with hearing classmates, for watching open-captioned movies, or for viewing videotapes in the lab.

You may attend any of the events listed on our website: <www2.bakersfieldcollege.edu/asl>. You may also find events on your own. Examples could be attending an event at the Bakersfield Club of the Deaf, a Deaf bowling league, an event at BGLAD, or even spending time with a Deaf classmate or coworker. Your instructor must approve any of these self-generated interaction opportunities in advance—you will not receive credit without approval. Please check to make sure that you are attending an event that you, as a hearing ASL student, are invited to.

In order to receive credit for interacting with the Deaf community, you must submit a one-page written report (I prefer it be word-processed) about your interaction. I would like for you to follow exactly the format on the following page, “Deaf Community Event Report.” You may photocopy the page and fill it out, or you may type it on a word processor copying the format as it is shown.

IMPORTANT: To receive full credit, you must submit your report within one week of having attended your event. If you turn it in later, I reserve the right to offer partial or no credit.

I do double check reports periodically to see if, in fact, you were at the event. Should I discover that you have submitted a false report, you will lose ALL your Deaf community hours and will accept no others from you for the remainder of the semester. This is a penalty equaling 1.5 letter grades, making it virtually impossible to earn an A or a B in the course.

Interacting with the Deaf community is a core component of this course because it is the best and most enjoyable way for you to test your skills, to apply what you’ve learned in class, and to learn from the people whose language you are studying. While you will be exposed to—and learn about—Deaf Culture, the primary reason for Deaf Community Hours is to support your language learning. Don’t be afraid to take chances, to learn something new, to have fun, and write a short account of that for me. I assure you that you’ll have a great time.
Deaf Community Event Report

If you attend an event that supplies a ticket, flyer, brochure, or other verification of attendance, you must attach it to your report. If you need additional room you may write on the back or submit two pages.

Name: ________________________________  Deaf Community Event Report is due ONE WEEK after you attend the event.

Name of Event: ________________________________
Location of Event: ________________________________
Date of Event: ________________________________
Hours You Attended: ________________________________

1. Describe the event:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. What did you observe? For example, eye contact, mouthing, gesture vs. ASL, interaction between Deaf and hearing people, cultural behaviors. Write about one or two in detail.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3. How do your observations relate to what you are learning in class?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

4. Additional comments or questions?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Videotape Final Project

Your final project is an opportunity for you to demonstrate what you’ve learned about how to communicate in American Sign Language in your first semester course. With a partner, you will engage in a brief dialogue (2-3 minutes in length) in which you discuss the following:

- Introductions (full name; ask how old, give age; ask if student? Where? Studying what?)
- Exchange personal information (where you live/work/hobbies; talk about yourself)
- Ask partner about his/her family
- Tell about family members (parents or grandparents, siblings or cousins or friends)
  - use fingerspelling for names
  - use numbers on non-dominant hand, or space, for family order
  - comment on issue/situation between two family members using space, verb agreement
- Make a request for directions (on campus or off campus)
- Give directions (use real-world orientation, NMs and appropriate limb-extension)
- Give appropriate goodbyes; take your leave

Requirements:
1. Select a partner you’re comfortable signing with, someone who is reliable and dependable.
2. I expect you to fingerspell (names, places, titles) but do not fingerspell a term for which you should know a sign.
3. Incorporate numbers into your signing (age, address, ordinal numbers, etc.)
4. Be sure to think about non-manuals (raised eyebrows, puffed cheeks, etc.) for questions, topic markers, rhetoricals, etc.; in addition, use mime, gesture, space, to convey your story.

My date is: ___________________________ My time is: ___________________________

Grading Criteria:
1. ASL grammatical structure, syntax, and conceptual accuracy.
2. clarity and accuracy of sign production
3. correct use of space (spatialization)
4. eye contact (with your partner)
5. non-manuals, body language, use of gesture
6. preparation and creativity

*Videotaping takes place on a scheduled basis during the final week of classes. Make-ups are not possible. Make certain you keep your scheduled appointment.
Deaf Culture Poster Session

A poster session allows academic professionals to learn important information on a specific topic in a concentrated and visually appealing manner. For this assignment, you will develop a poster and a short (3 minute) oral presentation to be delivered in class.

Please choose a specific aspect of Deaf culture on which you wish to design a poster. Your topic must reflect research from at least two sources, at least one of which must be a professional journal or book; the other may be a credible website (meaning a web address ending in “.edu,” “.org,” or maybe “.com”). Below is a partial list of possible topics:

- Infants learning ASL
- Elementary education for Deaf students
- Postsecondary education for Deaf students
- ASL linguistics (a specific aspect of ASL, i.e. fingerspelling, classifiers, etc.)
- Biography of a famous Deaf person*
- Deaf sports hero or entertainer*
- Cochlear implants
- ASL vs. MCE
- Deaf residential schools

The poster you design should be colorful, organized, contain minimal text, and several images. Your poster should be on standard poster board, suitable for display. The text and images need to be large enough to be seen from six feet away. The text should be a series of short phrases (“bullet points”) that allow you to expand in an oral presentation. Finally, your poster should list your sources in small print on the back of the poster.

This is a fun and creative assignment; you and your classmates can learn a great deal from each other. Please follow the guidelines below in order to earn a good grade on this assignment, worth 100 points, or 10% of your grade.

On the designated day and time, you will present your poster to your classmates. You will be graded on the quality of your poster as well as your oral presentation. Your oral presentation must be delivered, not read. I strongly suggest you rely on your poster, rather than written notes, to present your topic.
A note on choosing a famous Deaf person: you must choose an individual famous within the Deaf community, not a famous person who can’t hear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable Choices</th>
<th>Unacceptable Choices</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Gallaudet</td>
<td>Ludwig von Beethoven</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laurent Clerc</td>
<td>Heather Whitestone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Douglas Tilden</td>
<td>Pete Townsend</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Bove</td>
<td>Rush Limbaugh</td>
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<td>William “Dummy” Hoy</td>
<td>Kathy Buckley</td>
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<td>Charles Michel de l'Eppe</td>
<td>Amy Ecklund</td>
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<td>I King Jordan</td>
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<td>Andrew Foster</td>
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Neither of these is an exhaustive list. Please check with me on your topic choice before doing your research or developing your presentation. DO NOT assume that I will approve your choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Rubric</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Oral presentation preparation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Oral presentation delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Eye contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Smooth delivery (few “um’s” and “ah’s”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Quality information, fact-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Poster preparation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Multiple images</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Brief text cues</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Creativity/organization</td>
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<td>- Clean display</td>
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Time Line for American Sign Language
Let There Be Light
One reason that it is troublesome to label signs with glosses (for a definition of “gloss” see pg. 11) is that one English word can have a dozen or more sign possibilities and vice versa. As a simple example of just how complex this issue can be, how would you sign the following sentences?

1. Will you light the fire for me please?
2. Turn out the lights please.
3. She was wearing a coat that was too light and almost froze.
4. She made light of the situation.
5. She had on a light blue dress.
6. There isn’t enough light in here.
7. I ate a light lunch.
8. I slept very light last night.
9. The medicine made me very light-headed.
10. I painted light yellow on the wall last night.
Minimal Pairs
There are five parameters for almost every sign; they are

1. Location
2. Handshape
3. Movement
4. Palm Orientation

A minimal pair is two signs that differ only by one parameter. Examples:

Location:    FUNNY – SUGAR  Movement:    VOTE – TEA
             SEE – VOICE            FAKE-MOUSE
             UGLY – DRY – SUMMER    MAKE – COFFEE
             MISS – THINK          FULL – ENOUGH

Handshape:  WHITE – LIKE       Palm Orientation: THING – CHILDREN
             KNOW – THINK
             CAR – WHICH

Non-Manual: NAKED – AVAILABLE
Spatial Agreement

1. To show that a location or person is far away:
   a. Head: tilted
   b. Eyes: squinted
   c. Mouth: open slightly
   d. Index finger: trace route, extend arm fully

2. To show that a location or person is at a moderate distance:
   a. Head: tilted
   b. Eyes: normal
   c. Mouth: purse lips slightly, “mm”
   d. Index finger: trace route, extend arm moderately, about half way

3. To show that a location or person is very near:
   a. Head: tilt to the dominant side with cheek almost touching raised shoulder
   b. Eyes: wide open
   c. Mouth: teeth clenched, “cs”
   d. Index finger: trace route, keep hand close to body and no arm extension
Noun-Verb Pairs

One of the important distinctions of ASL grammar is its verb-modulation system. Whereas in English we modify a verb by changing its spelling, in ASL we modulate a verb with movement. Like English, many verbs are based on nouns. In ASL, a noun is gently “bounced” to indicate they are nouns. Many verbs move to show the direction of the action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. AIRPLANE</td>
<td>FROM-FLY-TO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. AIR PUMP</td>
<td>PUMP AIR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. BABY</td>
<td>ROCK-baby-IN-ARMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. BACKPACK</td>
<td>PUT-ON-BACKPACK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. BATH</td>
<td>BATHING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. BED</td>
<td>GO-TO-BED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. BICYCLE</td>
<td>RIDE-bicycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. BOAT</td>
<td>GO-BY-BOAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. BOOK</td>
<td>OPEN BOOK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. CAMERA</td>
<td>TAKE-PICTURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. CAR</td>
<td>DRIVE-car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. CHAIR</td>
<td>SIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. CIGARETTE</td>
<td>SMOKE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. COAT</td>
<td>PUT-COAT-ON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. COMB</td>
<td>COMB-HAIR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. DOOR</td>
<td>OPEN/CLOSE-DOOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. FOOD</td>
<td>EAT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Non-Manual Markers

Also known as “Non-Manuals” (NMs), these facial expressions are not emotive; they are grammatical. One’s eyebrows signal whether one is asking a yes/no question, an information question, or a rhetorical question. Generally, one does not “mouth” words as one signs (though there are exceptions), but one does convey adjectives and adverbs with mouth movements, also known as “mouth morphemes.” Other NMs include eye movements, head tilt, and body shifts. Non-Manual Markers are the grammar of ASL.

Yes/No Questions
Raised eye brows

WH Questions
a.k.a information Qs
Lowered eye brows
WHO
WHAT
WHEN
WHERE
WHY
HOW

Rhetorical Questions
—with answer
Raised eye brows
WHO
WHAT
WHEN
WHERE
WHY
HOW

A Few Mouth Morphemes:
• cha: height, length, size
• luch: jumbo, large
• pah: finally
• pow: explode, hit hard, hot temper
• puh: tend, give in
• bro: burned-out bulb, break, broke
• ahh: far
• th: not yet
• pth: melt, smash
• cs: near (physically or temporally)
• mm: normal, relax, take time
• ps-ps: fancy, chic
• shh: wild time, make out
Activity Sheet

Directions: Mark and label the locations of five or six places on the top drawing of the hallway. Give your partner a list of the places you used. Then take turns asking and telling your partner where each place on the lists is located. Afterwards, compare drawings.

Your locations:

Your partner’s locations:
Directions: The instructor will describe one of the patterns in each row. You are to circle the drawing that best corresponds to the description. Remember to choose drawings according to the instructor’s perspective.
Worksheet A

Instructions: Watch your partner describe one of the pictures in the first row and mark that picture with an (X). Then describe the picture with the black dot (●) in the next row. Continue taking turns without looking at your partner's worksheet.
Worksheet B

Instructions: Describe the picture with the black dot (•) in the first row. Then watch your partner describe one of the pictures in the next row and mark that picture with an (X). Continue taking turns without looking at your partner’s worksheet.
Instructions: Watch your partner describe one of the pictures in the first row and mark that picture with an (X). Then describe the picture with the black dot (*) in the next row. Continue taking turns without looking at your partner's worksheet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Watch and Mark</th>
<th>Describe</th>
<th>Watch and Mark</th>
<th>Describe</th>
<th>Watch and Mark</th>
<th>Describe</th>
<th>Watch and Mark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Watch and Mark" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Describe" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Watch and Mark" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Describe" /></td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Watch and Mark" /></td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Describe" /></td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Watch and Mark" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Worksheet B**

**Instructions:** Describe the picture with the black dot (*) in the first row. Then watch your partner describe one of the pictures in the next row and mark that picture with an (X). Continue taking turns without looking at your partner's worksheet.

**Describe**

**Watch and Mark**

**Describe**

**Watch and Mark**

**Describe**

**Watch and Mark**

**Describe**
| Name: ______________________   | Name: ______________________   |
| Residence: __________________ | Residence: __________________ |
| How she/he gets to class:      | How she/he gets to class:      |
|                                 |                                 |
| Name: ______________________   | Name: ______________________   |
| Residence: __________________ | Residence: __________________ |
| How she/he gets to class:      | How she/he gets to class:      |
|                                 |                                 |
| Name: ______________________   | Name: ______________________   |
| Residence: __________________ | Residence: __________________ |
| How she/he gets to class:      | How she/he gets to class:      |
|                                 |                                 |
| Name: ______________________   | Name: ______________________   |
| Residence: __________________ | Residence: __________________ |
| How she/he gets to class:      | How she/he gets to class:      |
|                                 |                                 |
Regional Quiz
I will sign a series of sentences about people who live here in Kern County. After I sign each sentence, write the name of the person above the area that I say he or she lives in. Draw a circle around both the individual’s name and the town’s name. This quiz is worth 10 points.