

Talking and Learning with Sight and Signing

I Am Deaf

Don't talk loud or yell at me.
It won't help.

Please tap me lightly or turn the
lights on and off to get my attention.

Always face me when you are
talking to me.

If you don't know how to sign,
please write notes or gesture to me.

Please understand that English
may not be my first language and
don't make fun of me if my written
English is not correct or my speech
sounds different.

Tell me what is happening when
friends are talking together in
a group.

—Anne Marie Smith, *The Learning
Center for Deaf Children*

What Is Deafness? Lead a class discussion, encouraging students to share background knowledge and personal experiences. Introduce the information below into the conversation.

There are different degrees of hearing loss. Some people are hard-of-hearing. This means they cannot hear everything. People who are hard-of-hearing often use hearing aids to help make sounds louder. People who are deaf cannot hear at all. They often use sign language to converse. Most children who are deaf have families who can hear.

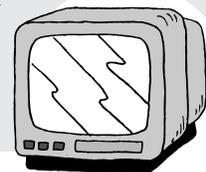
Encourage children to pose questions, such as: *How do you become deaf? Can someone who is deaf speak?* Write the questions on a chart. Search out answers together as you share the “I Am Deaf” sidebar text, read Kid Talk (page 11), and some of the Books for Kids (page 10). For more information, see the books and Web sites referenced in Resources (page 16).

Kid Talk: Activity Sheet (page 11). Read and discuss the interview with the class. Ask: *What other questions would you ask KP and Derek?* Add these questions to your chart. Practice the American Sign Language (ASL) sign for “friends” taught in the photograph. Students also may want to try the signs for “hello” and “join in,” which D.W. and Buster are signing below. Encourage students to take this worksheet home and teach the ASL signs to family members.

Explore Closed Captions. Watch a few minutes of an ARTHUR episode with the sound turned off. Ask: *Did you understand the show?* Then turn on the closed captions. (See directions below.) The edited captions are ideal for second grade students. Ask: *What did the captions include besides the characters' words? How can captions help people who can't hear? How can they help people who can hear?*

To view closed captions on your TV, use the remote control or on-screen menu. For ARTHUR programs, select “CC1” for original captions or “CC2” for edited, easy-to-read captions. When you record a show on your VCR, the closed captions

are also recorded. To view the captions when you watch the tape, use the remote control or on-screen menu.



Using American Sign Language (ASL),
D.W. signs, “Hello!” and Buster signs, “Join in!”

Create Your Own Captions: Activity Sheet (page 12).

Distribute the activity sheet and read the directions together. Share and discuss the completed worksheet.

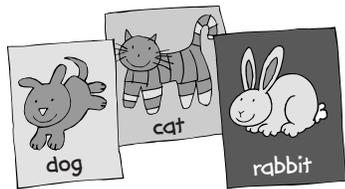
Fingerspelling Word Puzzle: Activity Sheet (page 13).

In American Sign Language (ASL), most words or phrases are represented by one motion. Fingerspelling is used for certain words, such as names. Distribute the activity sheet and encourage students to practice the fingerspelling alphabet. As students fingerspell, they should try to keep their arms motionless and use only their wrists and fingers to make the letters. Next, have children work in pairs or small groups to solve the word puzzle. Words hidden in the puzzle include: *stop, car, pond, tag, red,* and *sand*.

ASL Animal Go Fish. Interested children can learn the ASL signs for several animals and teach the signs to friends. Some good resources are *Handtalk Zoo* by Mary Beth Miller and the Web sites:

www.lesstutor.com/eesASLFarm.html and
www.lesstutor.com/eesASLgrassland.html.

Let children choose eight animals whose names they can sign. Help them make a card deck of 32 cards with 4 cards for each animal. Have them draw



or cut out pictures of the animals and write the name below. Use the card deck to play an ASL version of Go Fish. Partner A will ask for a card by making the sign of the animal. Partner B will sign back either *yes* or *no*.



To sign *yes* in ASL, nod your fist up and down in front of you.



To sign *no* in ASL, bring your right index, middle finger, and thumb together.



Books for Kids

A Button in Her Ear by Ada Bassett Litchfield

Dad and Me in the Morning by Pat Lakin

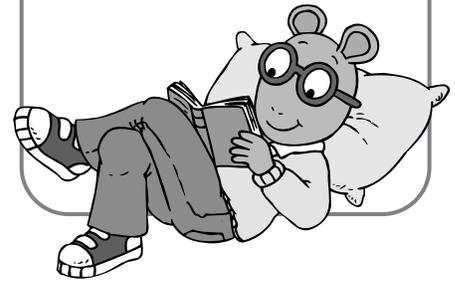
Elana's Ears, or How I Became the Best Big Sister in the World by Gloria Roth Lowell

Handtalk Zoo by Mary Beth Miller and George Ancona (photographer)

Moses Goes to a Concert by Isaac Millman

A Place for Grace by Jean Davies Okimoto

Eyewitness Explorers: Human Body by Steve Parker, Deni Bown



American Sign Language (ASL) is a language. Just like English or Spanish, it has a grammar system, but in ASL grammar, the rules involve the way you use space (the air in front of you), how you move your hands, and how you use facial expressions to convey meaning.

◀ This child and woman are signing, "I love you."

Photo by Lisa Tanner

Kid Talk



Derek and Kirsten-Paige (whose nickname is KP) are nine years old. They attend a school for children who are deaf. Here's what they said in an interview.

Q: Tell me about your brothers or sisters.

Derek: I have a big sister who is twelve and a little sister who is two. My older sister is deaf. My baby sister is hearing but I'm teaching her how to sign a little.

Q: Do you play sports? Who do you play with?

KP: I used to play basketball here at school. Now I play soccer and basketball with hearing kids in my town.

Q: What's your favorite part of school?

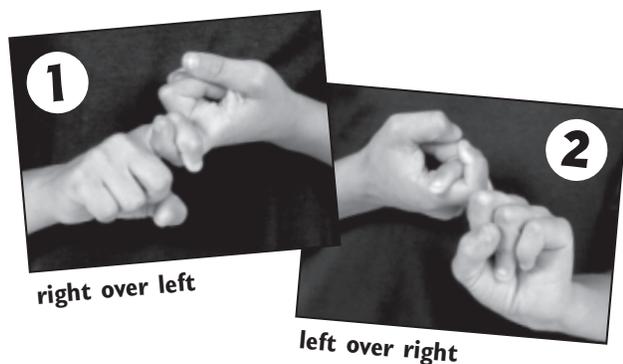
Derek: I like science because I like to try different things and see what happens.

Q: How do you communicate with hearing kids?

KP: Sometimes we write on paper what we want to say, and sometimes we gesture. Also, I read lips a little bit. On my basketball team, a couple kids wanted to know how to sign, so I taught them some signs.

Q: What do you like hearing kids to do when they first meet you?

Derek: I like them to gesture, so we can talk and be friends. I have a neighbor who's a friend. My dad said, "Come and play basketball with us." So he came over, and now we play together. We have our own way of talking to each other.



At the top of the page, Derek and KP are using American Sign Language (ASL) to say *friends*.

To sign *friends*, hook your right index finger over the left, then switch and hook your left index finger over the right.

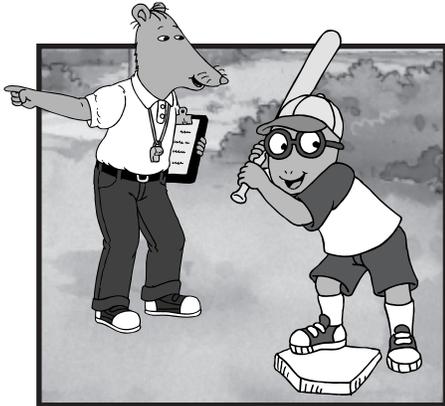
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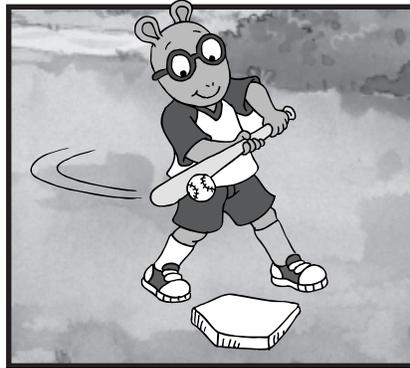
Date: _____

Create Your Own Captions

Captions are words that appear on the television screen. Sometimes the words are what the characters are saying. Sometimes they are sound effects like “phone ringing!”

- ➡ Cut out the three caption strips at the bottom of the page.
- ➡ Match each caption with the correct picture.

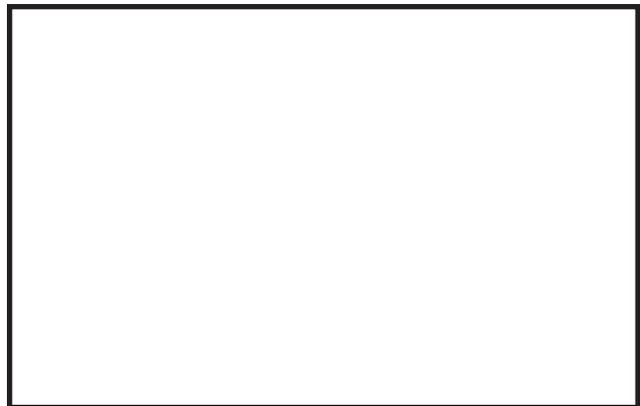






- ➡ Draw your own scenes. Write a caption below each one.





Cut out these caption strips.

(ball hitting bat loudly)

You can do it, Arthur!

**Yay, we won!
Hip, hip, hooray!**

Name: _____

Date: _____

Fingerspelling Word Puzzle

Try signing the alphabet.

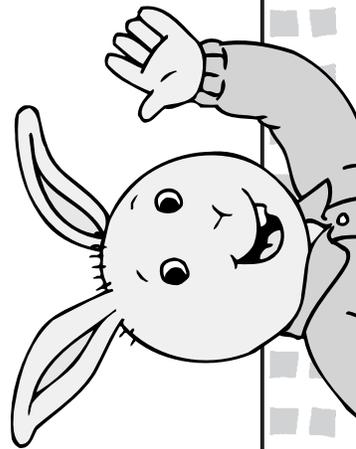
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Find at least five hidden words in this puzzle.

- Look at each fingerspelling picture.
- Write the matching letter in the box on the right.
- Find and circle the hidden words in the box on the right.

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Reflections and Projects

“In our culture it is not unusual for people to be uncomfortable about disabilities. In most cases, the discomfort is the result of a lack of information. Provide information and personal contact and discomfort is eased.”

—Beth Mendel, *Understanding Our Differences, Inc.*



Make Classroom Communication Inclusive. List some common classroom events: a knock at the door, assignments written on the board, a P.A. announcement, raised fingers to signal “quiet down.” For each, ask:

- *Would someone who is blind or has limited vision get the message?*
- *Would someone who is deaf or hard-of-hearing?*
- *How could we make this message accessible to all?*
- *How would it help everyone to have the message conveyed in more than one way?*

Cool Tools! Activity Sheet (page 15). Reproduce and distribute Cool Tools. Have children complete Part 1 with a partner, or in small groups. Then discuss: *How do you think each cool tool might be useful for you?* Next, have children work with a partner, or in small groups to complete Part 2. Encourage students to use pictures as well as words to explain their cool tools invention ideas. Provide time for class sharing.

Tactile Picture Books: Class Project. Make a picture book with tactile art that children who are blind (as well as those who are sighted) can enjoy by touching. Help students retell a familiar story or create an original one. Let them use different fabrics and textured materials to illustrate each page. You may want to present the book as a gift to a hospital, daycare, or other organization that works with children who are blind or visually impaired.

Community Fieldtrips. You may be able to plan a visit to a local movie theater equipped with Motion Picture Access (MoPix®), technology that makes movies accessible to people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind, or visually impaired. To find a location near you, go to www.mopix.org. Also, check local offerings to see if you can attend a play or concert for children that is ASL interpreted.

Pen Pals. Contact a local school for children who are deaf or blind to see if your class can establish a pen pal relationship with a classroom there. Eventually, you may want to extend this experience and plan a shared event.

Classroom Speaker. If possible, invite a member of your community who is blind or deaf to visit your class. Contact a local school or organization. The Resources section (page 16) provides information about arranging a visit from a speaker who is blind. You may want to invite your visitor to read a book to the class using a picture book with braille overlay, or present a book together, asking your visitor to translate into ASL (American Sign Language) as you read aloud. Prepare students for the visit by reading some of the informational Books for Kids (pages 5 and 10) and brainstorming questions to ask your visitor.

Reflections. Have children write about what they have learned through this “Communication Adventure.” What activities did they most enjoy? What questions do they still have?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Cool Tools!

Part 1

Look at each item from the *Cool Tools Catalog*. Was it designed for people who can't see or for people who can't hear? Mark your answer.

COOL TOOLS CATALOG



Shake-Me-Awake Alarm Clock

Place this alarm clock under your pillow. It will vibrate to wake you.

- Someone who can't see
- Someone who can't hear



Fill-It-Up-Gadget

Put this on the rim of your cup. It beeps when the cup is almost full.

- Someone who can't see
- Someone who can't hear

ILLUSTRATIONS: Bonnie Matthews

COOL TOOLS 1

COOL TOOLS CATALOG



Beeping Soccer Ball

This soccer ball beeps so you can tell where it is.

- Someone who can't see
- Someone who can't hear



Teletypewriter

Need to call a friend? Type messages to each other on a TTY telephone.

- Someone who can't see
- Someone who can't hear

ILLUSTRATIONS: Bonnie Matthews

COOL TOOLS 2

Part 2

Invent your own cool tools! How would you make...

- a doorbell that will alert someone who can't hear?
- picture book for a child who can't see?
- board game that everyone can play?

Draw and write your answers on a separate piece of paper.

HINT:
Think of all the senses people can use.



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Resources



**BRaille ALPHABET CARDS;
BRaille SLATE AND STYLUS**
Packets of braille alphabet cards are available through the Howe Press at Perkins School for the Blind at: perkins.pvt.k12.ma.us

With a slate and stylus, your students can write in braille. Order from American Printing House for the Blind at: aph.org (cost approximately \$6).

BRaille BOOKS
Braille children's books are available at most public libraries. To order books in braille, visit the following Web sites: Seedlings Braille Books for Children at: seedlings.org and National Braille Press at: nbp.org



**AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE AND
FINGERSPELLING ON THE WEB**
For an animated American Sign Language dictionary, visit the American Sign Language Browser site at: commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/aslweb/browser.htm

Type in a word and see it fingerspelled at the ASL Fingerspelling site: where.com/scott.net/asl/lookup.html

BRaille ON THE WEB
Braille Bug is a great Web site for kids: afb.org/braillebug

**FINGERSPELLING AND
BRaille FONTS**
Make your own worksheets and signs using fonts from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Find the fonts at: tsbvi.edu/Education/fonts.html

ACCESSIBLE VIDEOS AND MOVIES

Described videos and videos with closed captions are available at most public libraries. You can also record TV programs with these features intact (see pages 5 and 9). To purchase described videos of ARTHUR episodes, visit the DVS Home Video online catalog at: main.wgbh.org/wgbh/access/dvs/dvs hvcatalog.html

For information on movies with descriptive narrations and closed captions and a listing of where they are playing locally, visit the CPB/WGBH National Center for Accessible Media site at: ncam.wgbh.org/mopix

CLASSROOM SPEAKERS

Would you like to invite an adult who is blind to speak to your class? A local chapter of the National Federation of the Blind can help you make arrangements. National Federation of the Blind: nfb.org/localorg.htm phone: (410) 659-9314 e-mail: nfb@nfb.org

MORE INFORMATION

Good sources of information about blindness and visual impairment include:

- *Children with Visual Impairments: A Parent's Guide* by M. Kay Holbrook
- American Foundation for the Blind Web site: afb.org

Good sources of information about deafness and hearing impairment include:

- Web site for Beginnings, an organization for parents of children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing: beginningssvcs.com
- Web site for American Speech-Language-Hearing Association at: asha.org

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Dear Educator,

Post® Alpha-Bits® cereal is proud to sponsor the PBS ARTHUR® television series. Programming like ARTHUR provides a perfect mix of education and fun, both of which are critical to fueling a child's desire to explore and discover all that the world has to offer.

Post Alpha-Bits is especially committed to the importance of reading. Our unique letter-shaped cereal provides kids with all 26 letters of the alphabet they need to spell words and feed their imaginations and minds. We are excited to sponsor *Arthur's Communication Adventure* because it helps kids learn how to communicate better with people who are different from them—an invaluable skill for any child in today's diverse world.

Post Alpha-Bits hopes that you and your students find these materials to be helpful and enjoyable.

Sincerely,

Post Alpha-Bits



Dear Educator,

Chuck E. Cheese's® is proud to sponsor ARTHUR, the award-winning PBS television series. Like the creators of ARTHUR, we at Chuck E. Cheese's recognize that having fun is an integral part of a child's development.

Chuck E. Cheese's is especially proud to support *Arthur's Communication Adventure* because of our commitment to foster wholesome, empowering, inclusive environments that encourage all children to communicate and interact in enjoyable ways, regardless of their age, sex, ethnic background, or their physical or emotional challenges.

Chuck E. Cheese's hopes this guide will help students discover how to communicate better in their play, in their work, and in all their social interactions.

Here's to ARTHUR and the joy of learning.

Chuck E. Cheese's





D.W.
is signing,
"Hello!"

Buster
is signing,
"Join in!"

Buster and
D.W. are using
American Sign
Language.



WGBH
Educational Programming and Outreach
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Boston, MA 02134
pbskids.org/arthur

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