



ASLA 1001H
(ASL LEVEL 1)

Signing Naturally Unit # 1
Updated as of: Summer 2022

HOW CAN YOU BECOME MORE DEAF AWARE?



MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE
PERSON'S ATTENTION BEFORE YOU
START SPEAKING.

MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT & FACE
THEM WHEN YOU TALK.



AVOID ENVIRONMENTS WITH
EXCESS NOISE & CHOOSE
SOMEWHERE WITH GOOD LIGHTING.

DON'T SHOUT & SPEAK CLEARLY,
NOT TOO FAST & NOT TOO SLOW.
DON'T COVER YOUR MOUTH.



KEEP TRYING. TRY TEXTING ON YOUR
PHONE, OR WRITING YOUR
MESSAGE DOWN.

Piano metaphor by Christine Sun Kim

Credit: Christine Sun Kim

<https://youtu.be/0m2k-voyA7E>

Piano metaphor - Use the samples to point at your fingers... Assign different parameter to each finger as you play the piano.

English is a linear language, as if one key is pressed one at a time.

However, ASL is like a chord, all 10 fingers need to come down simultaneously to express a clear concept or idea in ASL.

If one of those key were to change the chord, it would create a completely different meaning. The same applies to music in regards to pitch, tone and volume.

In ASL, by playing around with these different grammatical parameters, you can express different ideas.

For example, take the sign To-look-at. This is sign look-at.

“I’m looking at you” “Staring at you” “Mhm (rolling eyes)” “Oh-busted” “Uh-Oh”
“What are you looking at” “aw, stop – flirting”

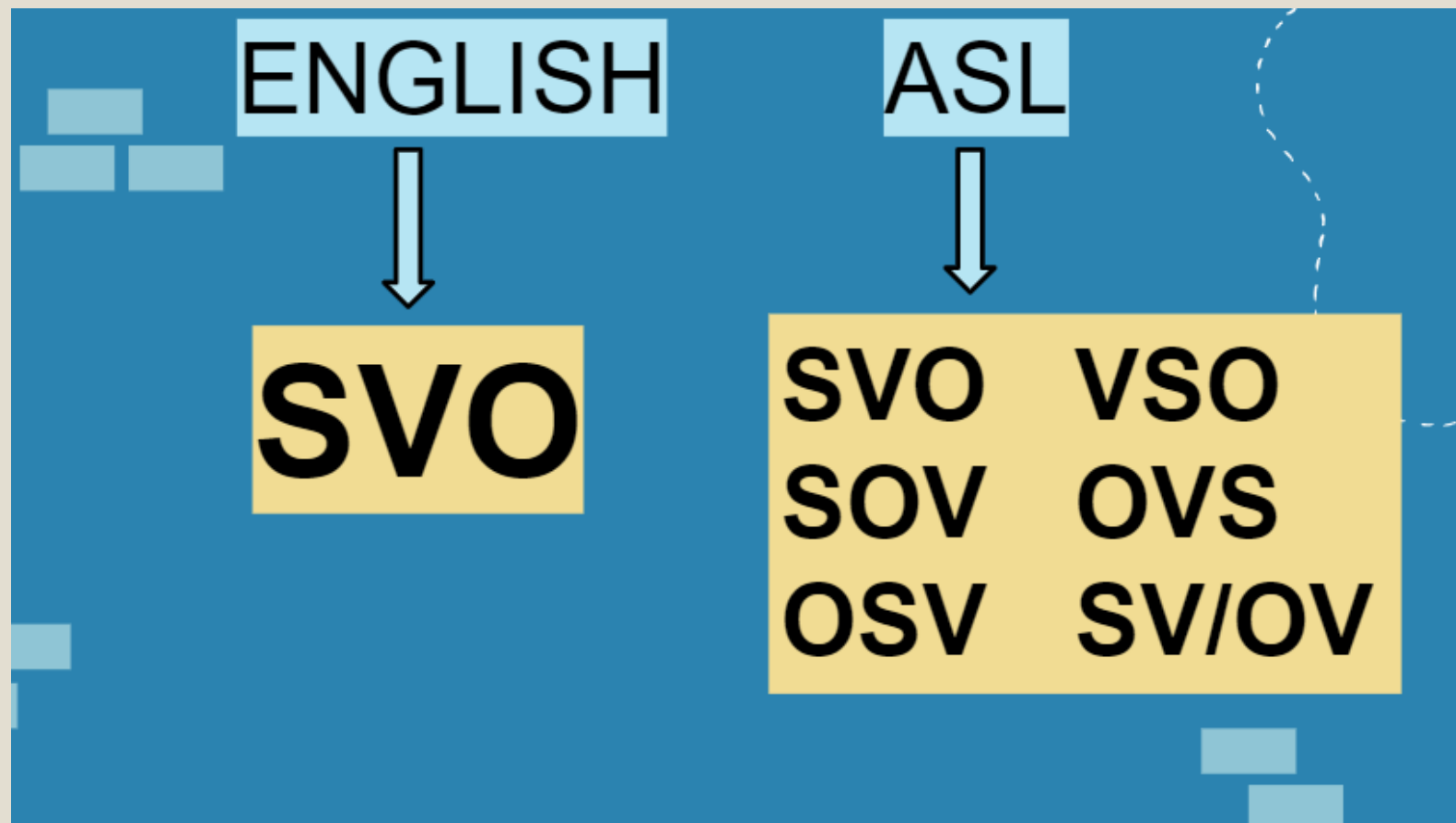
ASL is such a rich treasure that id like you to have same experience. I’d like to invite you to open your ears, to open your eyes take part in our culture and experience our visual language.

“Signing Space”

- Keep your hand position steady – do not bounce or move back & forth.
- Slow and steady creates clear fingerspelling.
- Slight pauses between fingerspelling words.
- Dominate RIGHT hand – use right shoulder space.
- Dominate LEFT hand – use left shoulder space.
- Relax your elbow and keep it near the body.



ASL Syntax



Left column, often used.
Right column, used sometimes.

ASL vs English

ASL

- OSV
- Object-subject-verb
- ASL ME ENJOY
- *Side note:*
- *6 possible orders*
- *SOV, SVO, VSO, VOS, OVS, and OSV*

English

- SVO
- Subject-verb-object
- I enjoy ASL
- Most frequent word order in languages of the world are SVO, VSO, and SOV

ASL Syntax



For ASLA 1001H, we'll start with basic ASL grammars:

Object | Subject | Verb (OSV)

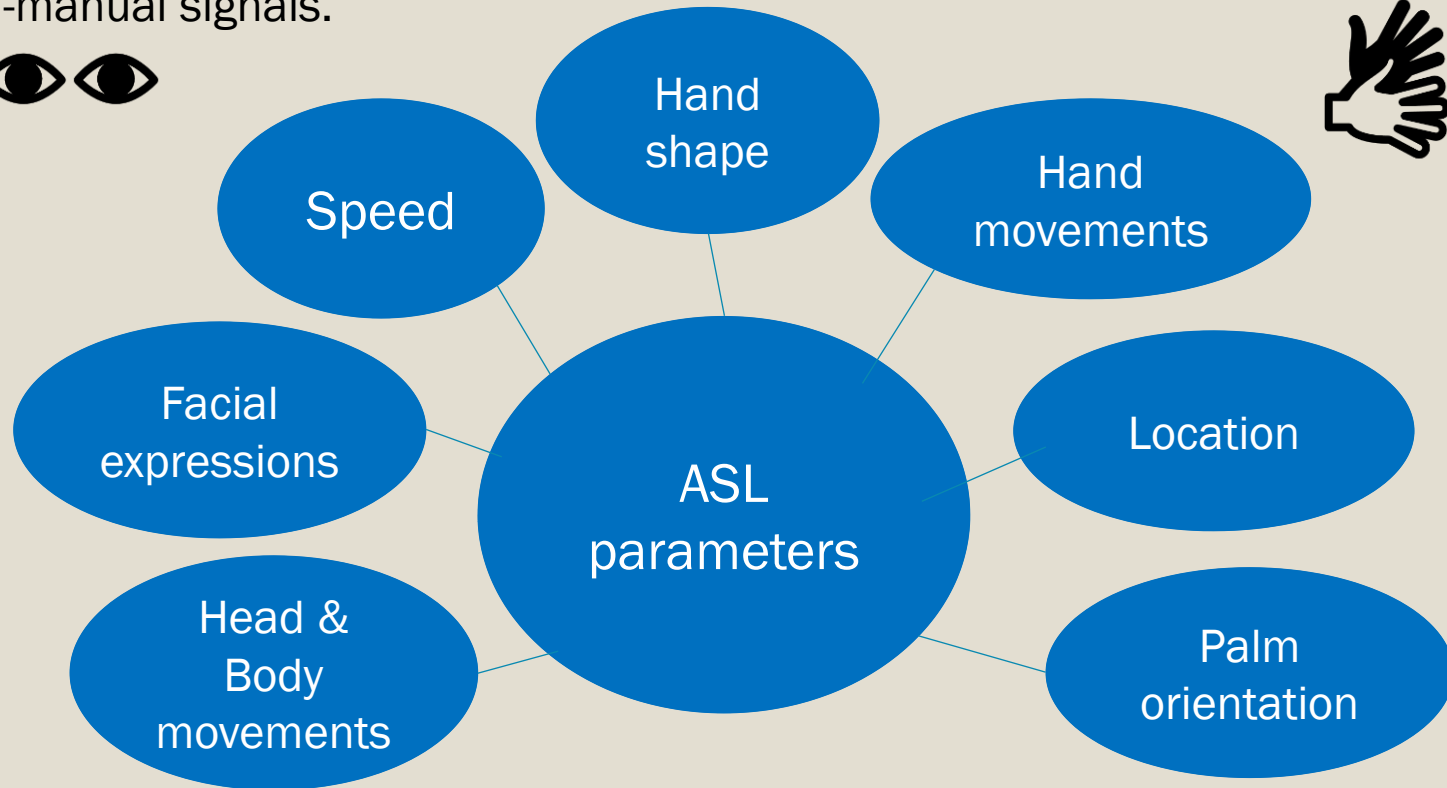
Topic | Comment (TC)

There are 7 parameters in ASL.

70% of ASL
is in the face called
non-manual signals.



30% of ASL
is in the hands.





nonmanual markers and facial grammar

ASL doesn't only exist on the hands—it requires a complex use of the upper body, including shoulders, head tilt, and eyebrows, nose, and mouth to provide supplemental information. These movements, called “nonmanual markers,” are in addition to the ways that speakers of any language (signed languages included) use their facial expressions as part of a conversation. They are standardized as part of the grammar itself.

- Shoulder raise to denote size or time since an event occurred, with close to cheek being small or recent
- Position shift to denote speaker or character shift

- Eyebrow raise to denote yes/no question
- Lower for wh- (who/what/when/where/why) questions
- Eyebrow and nose scrunch to denote size



TYPES OF MOUTH MORPHEMES:

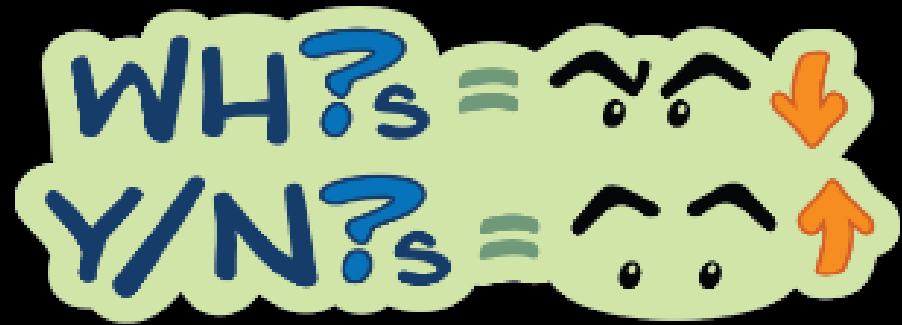
1. sounds paired with a sign, unrelated to spoken English (ex: “cha” with sign “big” meaning *giant*; “pah” with sign “success” meaning *finally*)
2. use of mouth shape and teeth to emphasize speed, size, frequency

Eyebrows position for asking questions.

WH –
questions:

- What
- Who
- Where
- Which
- When
- Why
- How

Yes / No
questions

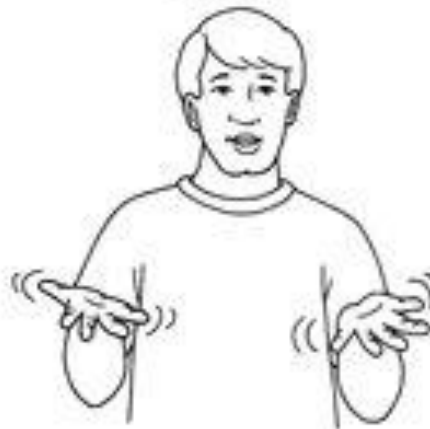


WH- question signs with eyebrows furrowed

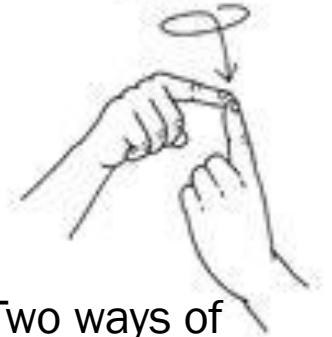
WHO



WHAT



WHEN



Two ways of signing WHEN

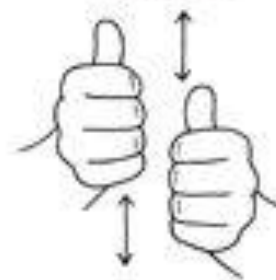
WHERE



WHY



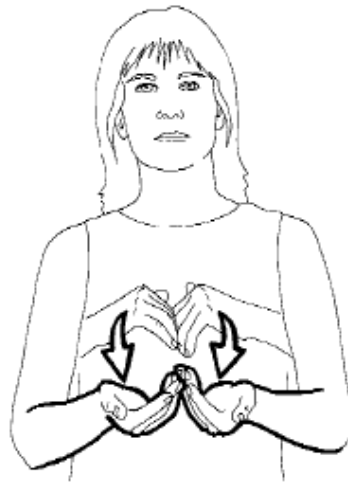
WHICH



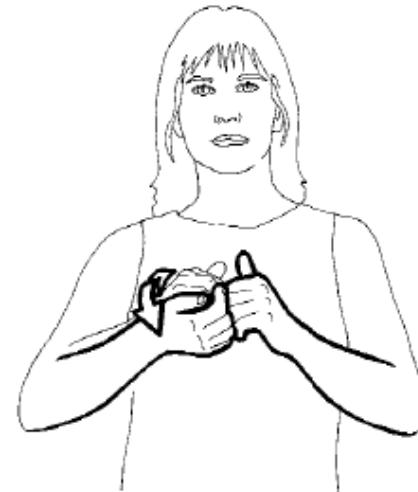
Two ways of signing HOW in the next slide

WH- question signs with eyebrows furrowed

how (how one is doing)



how (how to do something)





**TURN OFF
ENGLISH**

**TURN ON
ASL**



ASL IS NOT ENGLISH.



Below dialogue shown is in ASL grammar/GLOSS.

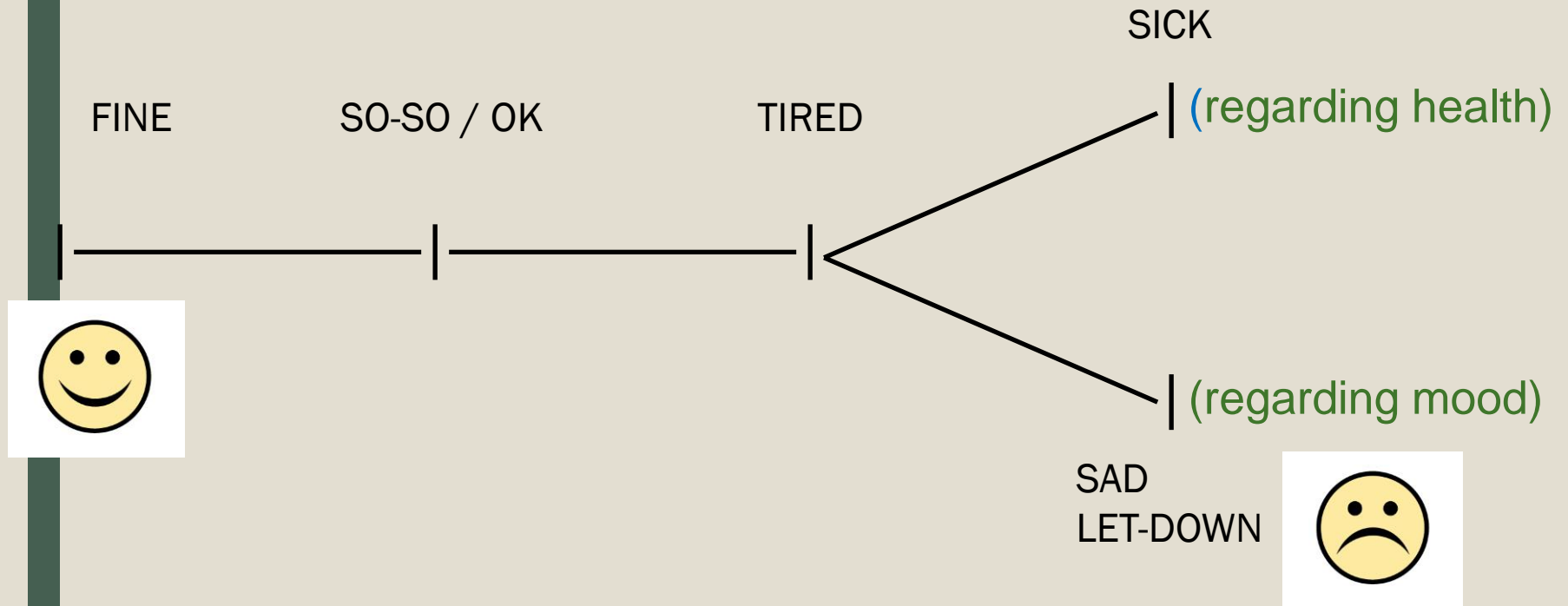
Note: Throughout the course, only sign the GLOSS / capitalized words.
FS = fingerspell.

Signer A: HELLO, ME NAME (FS-name),
YOU NAME WHAT?
(frown eyebrows)

Signer B: (FS-name)

A & B: NICE MEET-you

You good? (either thumb up or F-handshape)



Deaf culture: We don't say "how are you?", we say "you good?"

Below dialogue is in full ASL grammar.

Signer A: HELLO, ME NAME (FS-name),
YOU NAME WHAT?

Signer B: (FS-name)

Signer A: YOU GOOD?

Signer B: FINE / OK / TIRED / SICK / SAD / LET-DOWN,
YOU GOOD?

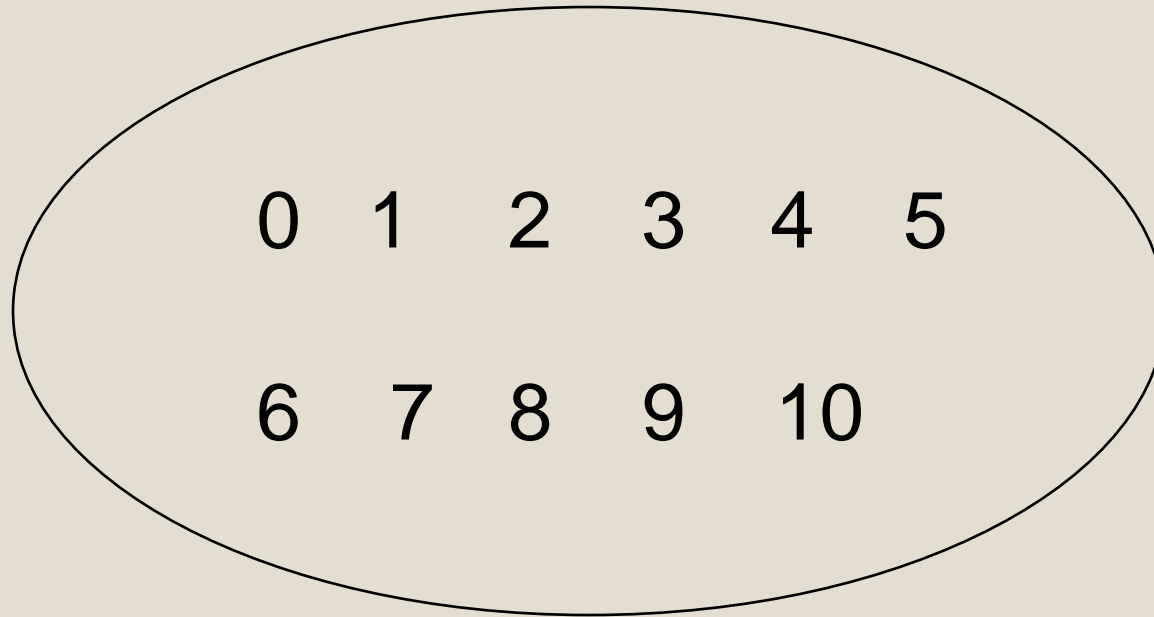
Signer A: (Respond with emotion)

A & B: NICE MEET-you

PLAY COPY GAME –

Stand in a circle. One person initiates movement. The other copies.

Cardinal NUMBERS are counting numbers.

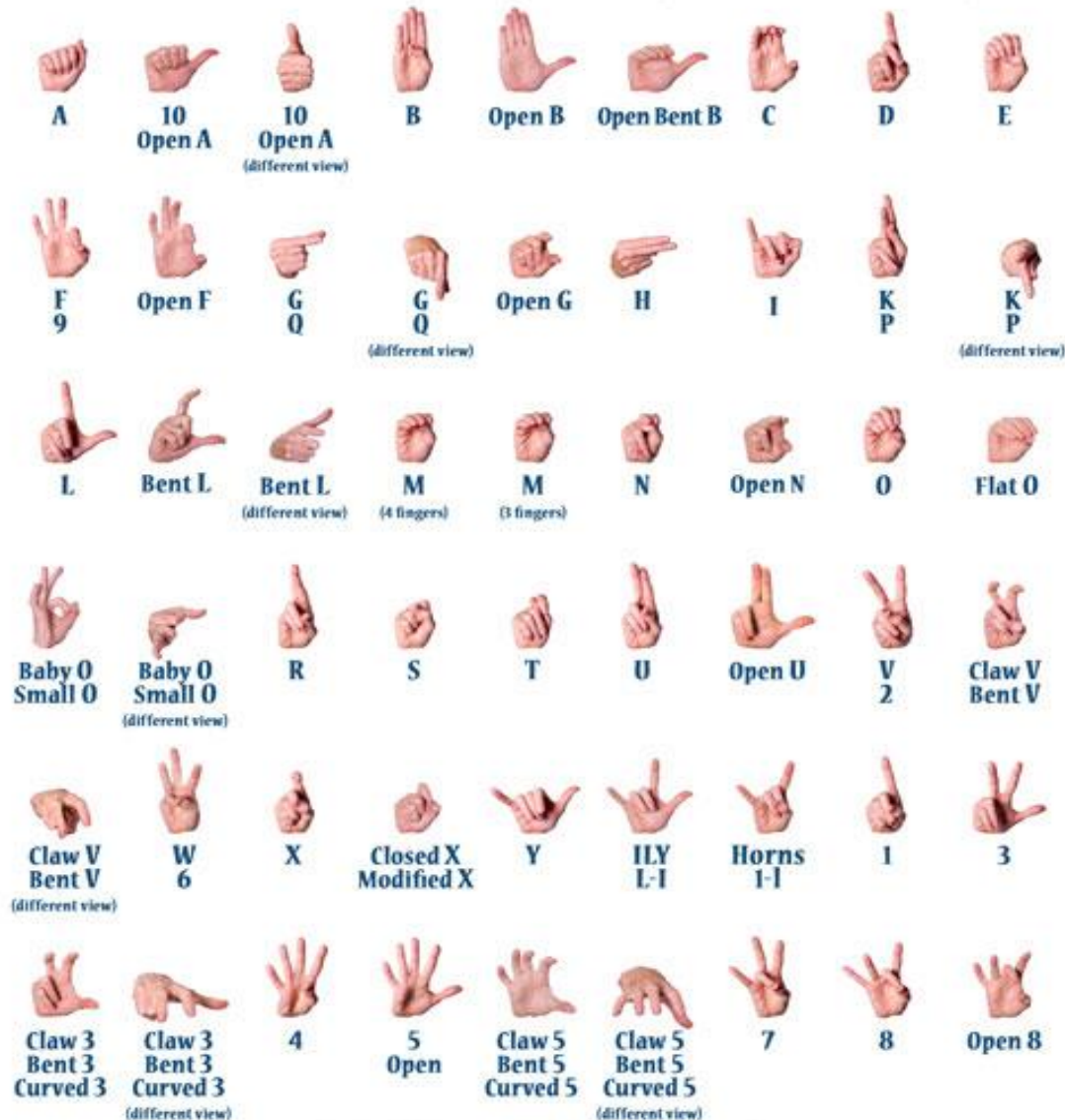


There are 140 handshapes in ASL.

Including the alphabet.

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE **handshapes**

NOTE: You will see these handshapes from different angles when used as part of signs.



These are called **Fist letters**
because as you fingerspell
these letters, your hand is
closed in like a fist.

A E I O S T N M

Practice letter combinations (in the next slide) on your own.

I will circulate around the room to check your fingerspelling hand forms.

Fist Letter Combinations

sa	so	se	st
an	en	in	on
ta	ti	to	te
ma	me	mi	mo

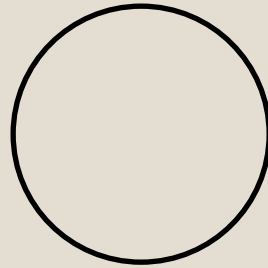
Stan

Esme

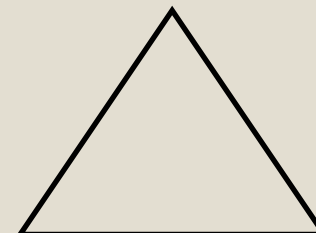
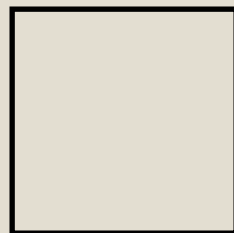
Tom

Mia

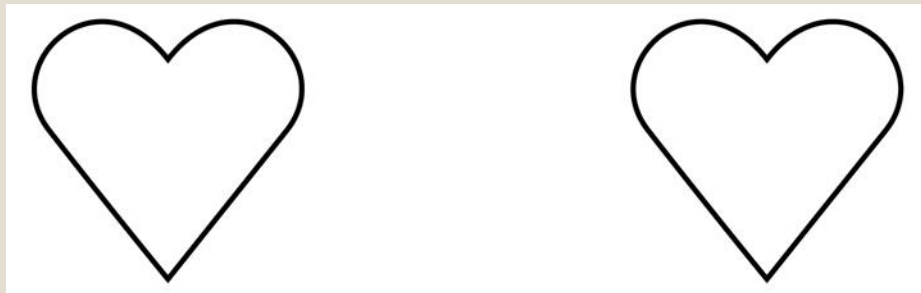
SAME or DIFFERENT



Make sure your reference point using your index finger of your non-dominant / weak hand stays stationary on the bottom of any shape.



SAME / DIFFERENT WHAT?



Joe

Joe

9

6

A

E

Pop quiz (no mark for this).

Get a plain piece of paper and blue or black pen. I will sign or trace 18 pairs. You are to write or draw like I showed you earlier.

Do NOT write “same shape”...“different names”... Please write the actual names I fingerspelled or draw the actual shapes.

This is good practice as I will do the same way for the Unit 1 test coming up.

1.

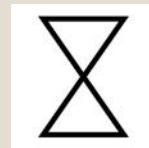
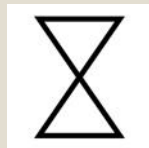
7

7

2.

(draw on board)

3.



4.

A

E

5.

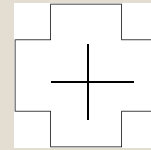
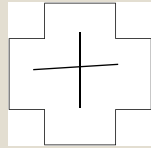
6

9

6.



7.



8.

10

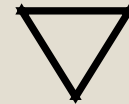
10

9.

2

7

10.



11.

E

0

12.

Stan

Ian

13.

9

3

■ 14. Mia Mia

■ 15. 7 8

■ 16. Tem Tom

■ 17.  

■ 18. 2 V

Review:

Signer A: HELLO, ME NAME (FS-name),
YOU NAME WHAT?

Signer B: (FS-name)

Signer A: YOU GOOD?

Signer B: FINE / OK / TIRED / SICK / SAD / LET-DOWN,
YOU GOOD?

Signer A: (Respond with emotion)

A & B: NICE MEET-you

11

12

13

14

15

11

12

13

14

12 2 13

 3

1 11 14
4

5
15 11
10

PLAY a GAME

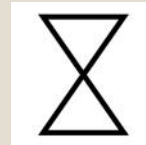
Give me the next number.

Make up a pair for each category:

Write and draw a pair each – shape, numbers, letters and names. Pick a partner and sign/trace them, then your partner is to record it.

For example:

- Shapes



- Numbers

6

9

- Letters

ao

es

- Names

Mary

Mary

Pronouns in ASL have no gender, so there is no distinction. They are genderless as it is just pointing. Only the spoken English translation would have a gender assigned to it.

Pronouns



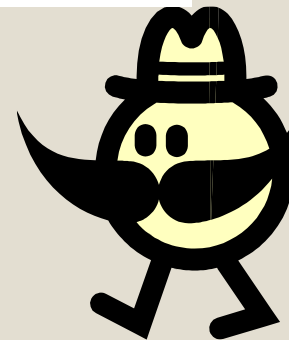
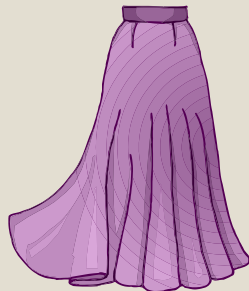
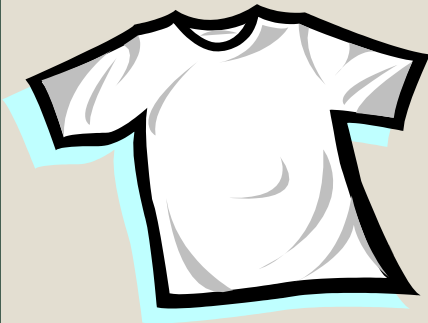
they/them

Pronouns



Basic CLOTHING & APPEARANCE

Page 38 – 39 in your SN work book



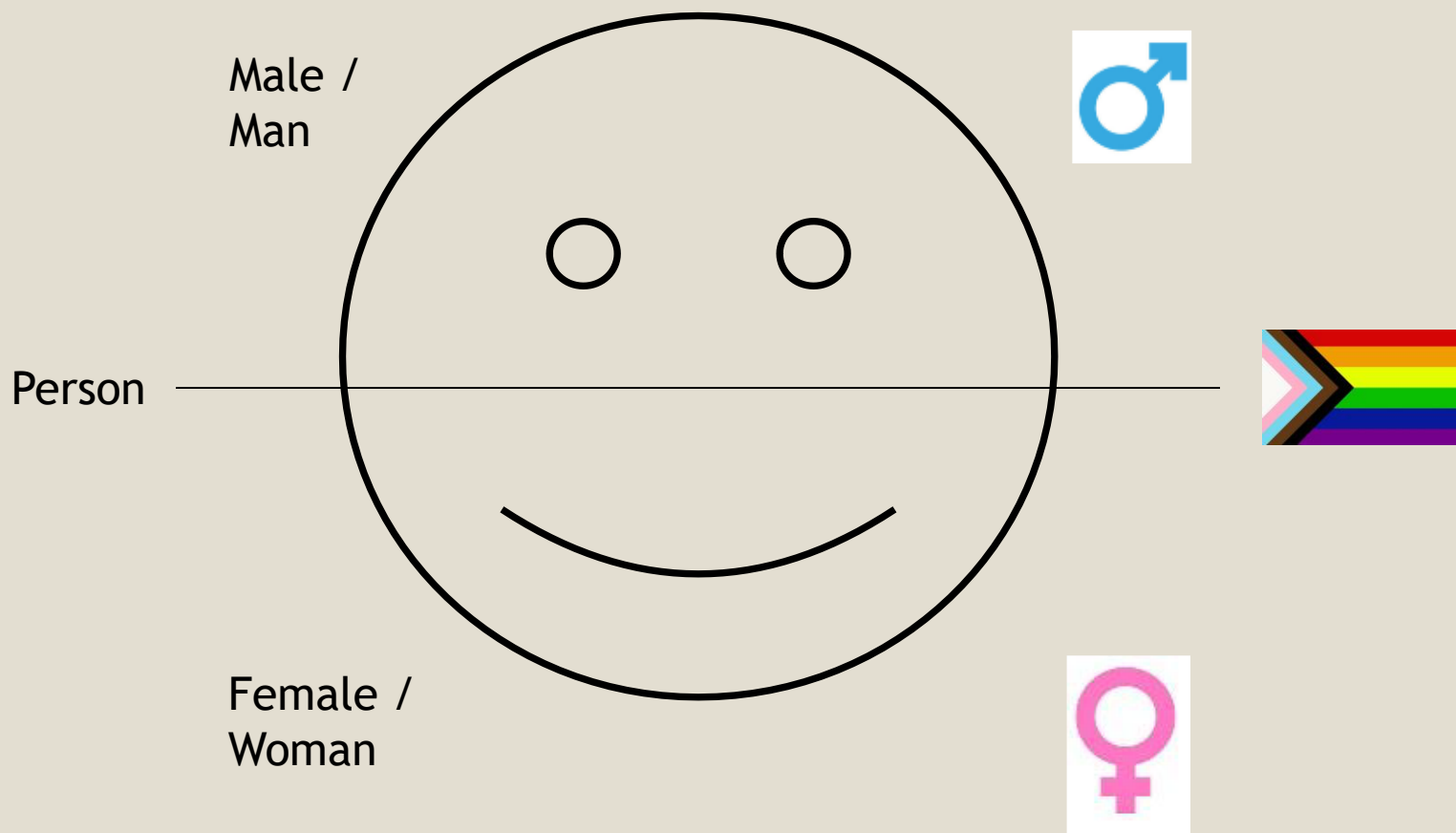
COLOURS

(Page 40 in your SN work book)



- Beige
- Tan
- Wine
- Peach
- Blonde (for hair only)
- Rainbow
- Multiple colours

*There are two signs for ORANGE and GREY.



When you see this: IX-point or (IX) in the dialogues, you are to point. I'm aware it's rude to point in hearing culture, but it's not rude at all in Deaf culture. It's part of ASL.

■ This is called Spatial Agreement.

- Important to point & glance at a person you're identifying.
- To share information about the person, orient your signs in the direction of the person you are talking about.

(IX) = “indexing” point with index finger/spatial agreement
(underlined brackets italics) words = body language/NMS

Signer A: FS-name, WHO?
(frown brows)

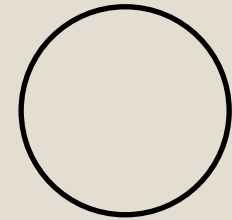
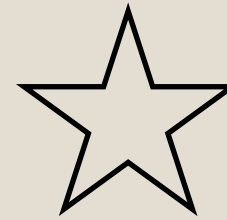
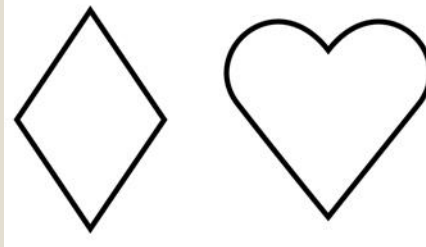
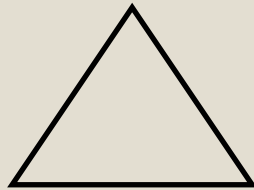
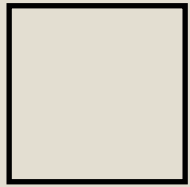
Signer B: PERSON (IX)
COLOUR, HAIR
SHIRT, COLOUR, STYLE
GLASSES / HAT ..if any
then (IX) and glance at the same time

Signer A: Glance at the person, then look back to your
partner and nod to acknowledge

Signer B: Affirm (nod)

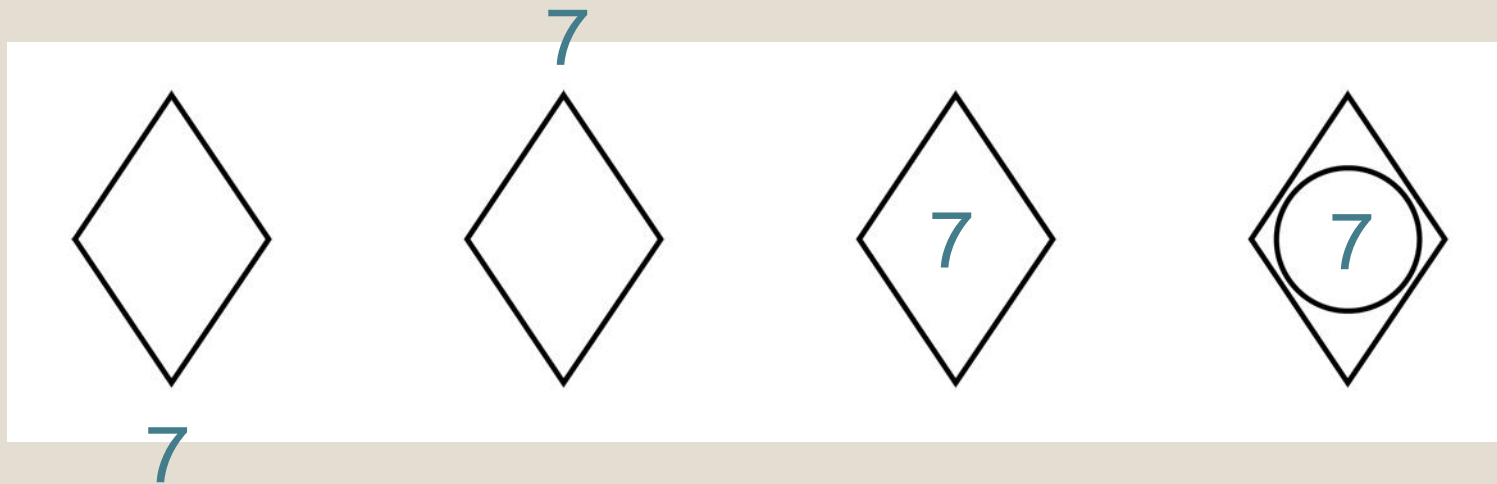
Basic Shapes

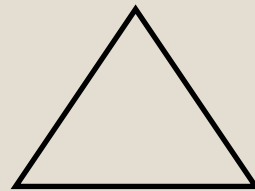
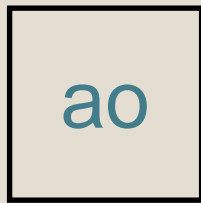
Make sure your reference point using your index finger of your non-dominant / weak hand stays stationary on the bottom of any shape.



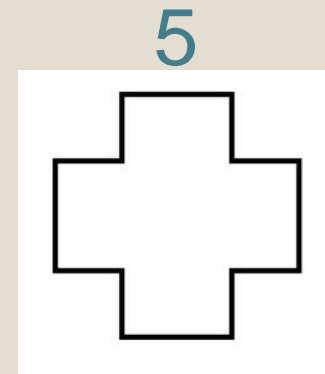
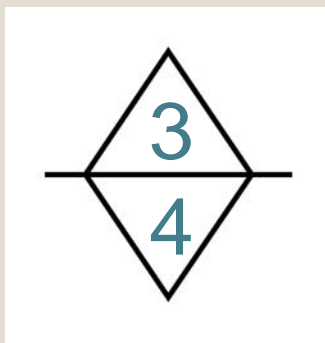
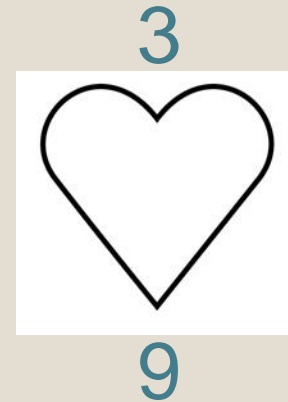
Above, Below, or Inside

- Make sure your reference point using your index finger of your non-dominant / weak hand stays stationary on the bottom of any shape.
- Point out the location where your number will be, then fingerspell the number in that specific location.





Ann



Exercise 1:1

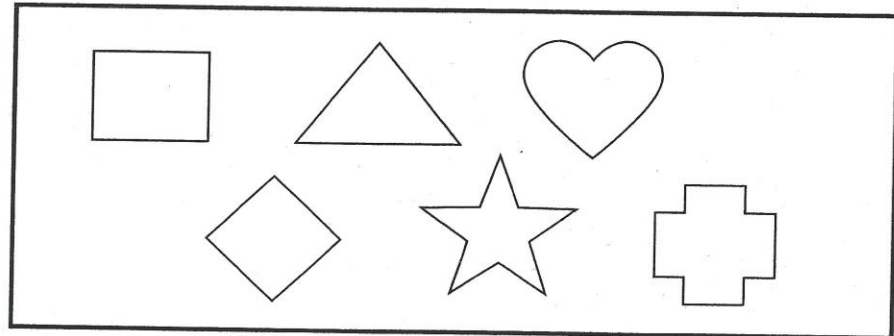
- Go to page 375 in your workbook and do this exercise with your partner.

ABOVE, BELOW, AND INSIDE

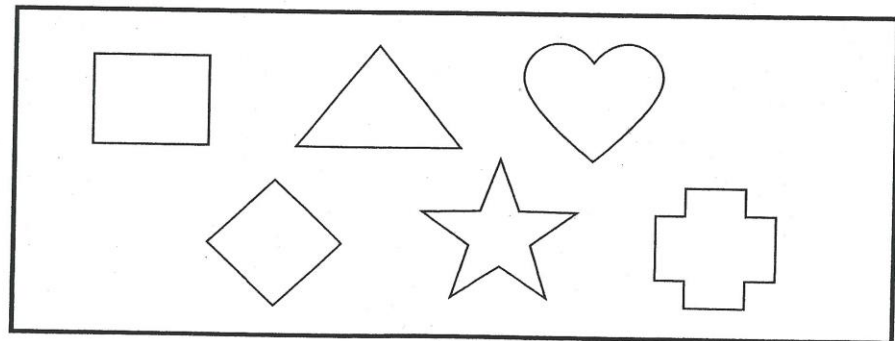
Instructions: Add shapes, names, or numbers to the shapes in the top box. Limit your additions to above, inside, or below the existing shapes. Do not add anything to the left or right of the shapes.

Describe to your partner what you have done. First, identify which shape, then describe your additions. Your partner will draw your additions.

Add to the shapes here (above, below, or inside only).

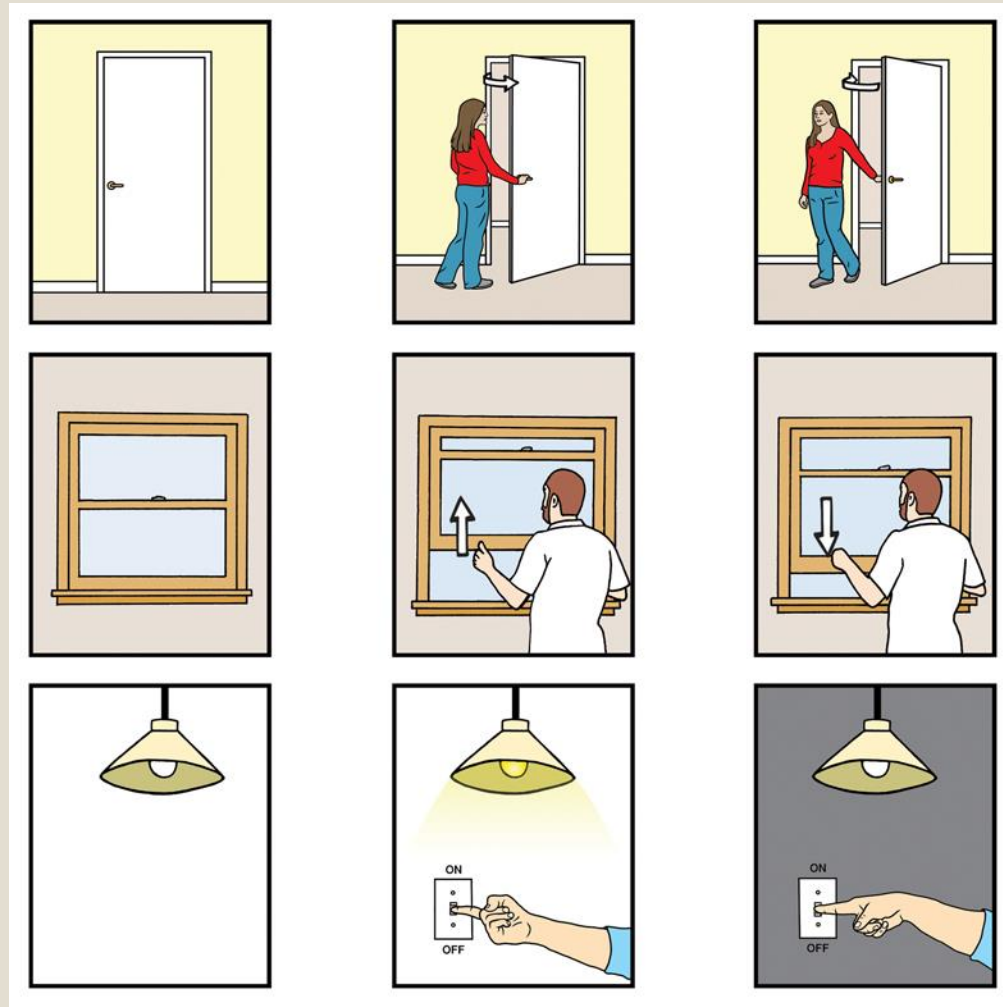


Draw your partner's additions here.

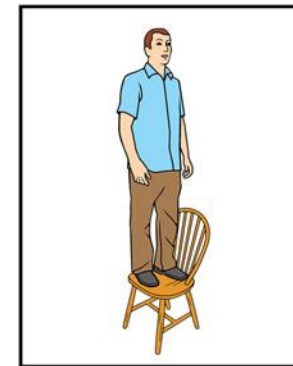
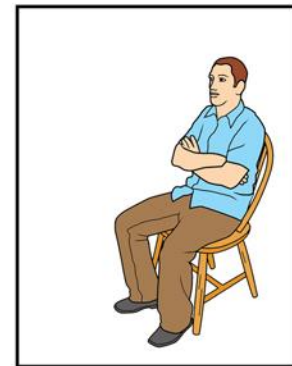
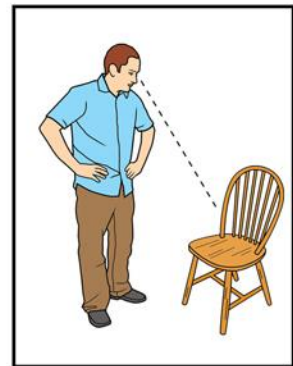
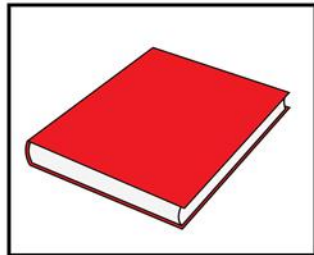
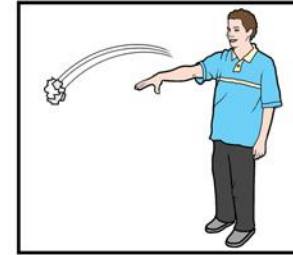
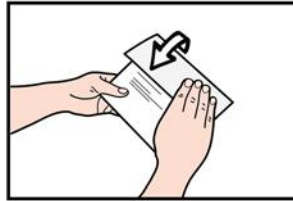


When done, compare drawings with your partner.

Giving Commands: Actions Involving an Object



Giving Commands: Actions Involving an Object



ASL grammar: Object | Subject | Verb

Signer A: Give a command involving objects

raise brows

(object) (person) + (action)

ie: DOOR, YOU CLOSE
BOOK, YOU OPEN
LIGHTS, YOU ON

Signer B: (perform as instructed)

Ways to get the attention of another person:

OTHER PERSON ATTENTION HOW?

1. Waving – wave within the person’s visual field and follow up with a comment or question.
2. Tapping – two short taps on the shoulder with firm pressure, not too hard.
3. Being an intermediary – wave to or tap the target person and direct the person’s attention to the first person.
4. Using an intermediary – get the attention of a person closest to the intended person to ask that person to tap the shoulder of the intended person.

PLAY NUMBERS GAME -

Sign previous person's number and your number.
The person with the next number signs your number
and their number, and so on.

PLAY NAME GAME -

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. Moe | 6. Ines |
| 2. Naomi | 7. Sean |
| 3. Anna | 8. Mia |
| 4. Anne | 9. Estee |
| 5. Toni | 10. Tina |