Language Abilities & Approaches

Language Abilities (SLO)

SIGNACY	Signacy refers to fluency in a signed language, requiring the ability to view and sign.
LITERACY	Literacy refers to fluency in a written language, requiring the ability to read and write.
ORACY	Oracy refers to fluency in a spoken language, requiring the ability to speak and listen.

Pathways

COMPREHENSION	Comprehension refers to an individual's ability to perceive and understand.
COMPOSITION	Composition refers to an individual's ability to create and express.

Approaches

Intentionally using one of or combination of: signacy, literacy and oracy in both areas, composition and comprehension.

The Whole Child

Setting up opportunities for rich and varied language and literacy experiences is critical to equitably preparing students to reach their full potential.

Motivation for Language

Activities that stimulate enjoyment of learning materials and appreciation for the usefulness of modalities motivate students to engage with the magic of the words.

Language Use

Understanding and using language is fundamental to developing language skills. Teachers need to provide rich opportunities for students to communicate in the classroom.

Knowledge Building

New learning builds upon what students already know, Exposing them to novel concepts and encouraging inquiry and exploration enhances their school success.

Foundational Skills

The science of signing, writing, reading, viewing, speaking, and listening, which comes from evidence-based research studies, is rooted in a systematic process and is essential for language learning skills.

Concepts of Sign, Print, and the Spoken Word

Explicitly show students the features of language and how they serve as an essential introduction to language learning.

Morphological Awareness

Young children need to be taught that the words they use can be broken into parts. Having this morphological awareness plays an essential role in fingerspelling out/sounding out and spelling words.

Decoding and Encoding

Understanding the relationships between fingerspelled/spoken sounds and letters in text is also essential for developing language and literacy, particularly in the early elementary years. Students best learn these letter-fingerspell or letter-sound connections through systematic and explicit teaching.

Vocabulary

To be successful language users, students need to learn spelling patterns, which are the building blocks of most words, through word analysis and useful spelling strategies, and they also need to view/read and spell automatically those tricky, irregularly spelled words that they encounter frequently both in ASL and in English. Understanding word meanings is essential to high levels of comprehension and expression, so students need to have many opportunities in the classroom to see/hear, and use signs/words to promote vocabulary growth.

Fluency and Expression

It is not enough for students to identify words to understand the meaning in sign/text. They also need to recognize words effortlessly in order to focus their attention on the ideas. Teachers need to use effective strategies to promote the growth of fluency and expression.

Conventions

To communicate effectively, students must be explicitly taught the “mechanics” of the language.

Experience

Students will experience/explore different strategies, structures, and genres to grasp the broad meaning of language and literacy.

Structures and Genres

Exploring structures and genres in fiction and nonfiction signed productions/texts develops students' understanding of the importance of purpose, audience, and message. Teachers must provide opportunities for students to sign/write for authentic purposes and teach them structures and genres to support those purposes.

Comprehension Strategies

Students must be aware when they do not understand what they perceive and problem solve to figure out the meaning. Teachers need to model and promote effective comprehension strategies.

Processes and Strategies

Learning to express is a complex process involving sub-processes such as choice, organization of ideas, and foundational skills.Teachers must provide many engaging opportunities for students to learn to plan, organize, edit, and revise expressed compositions.

Instructional Design

The language-rich environment emphasizes the importance of signing, speaking, listening, reading, viewing, and writing in the learning of all students. This involves selecting materials to facilitate language and literacy opportunities, reflection and thought regarding classroom design, and intentional instruction and facilitation by teachers and staff.

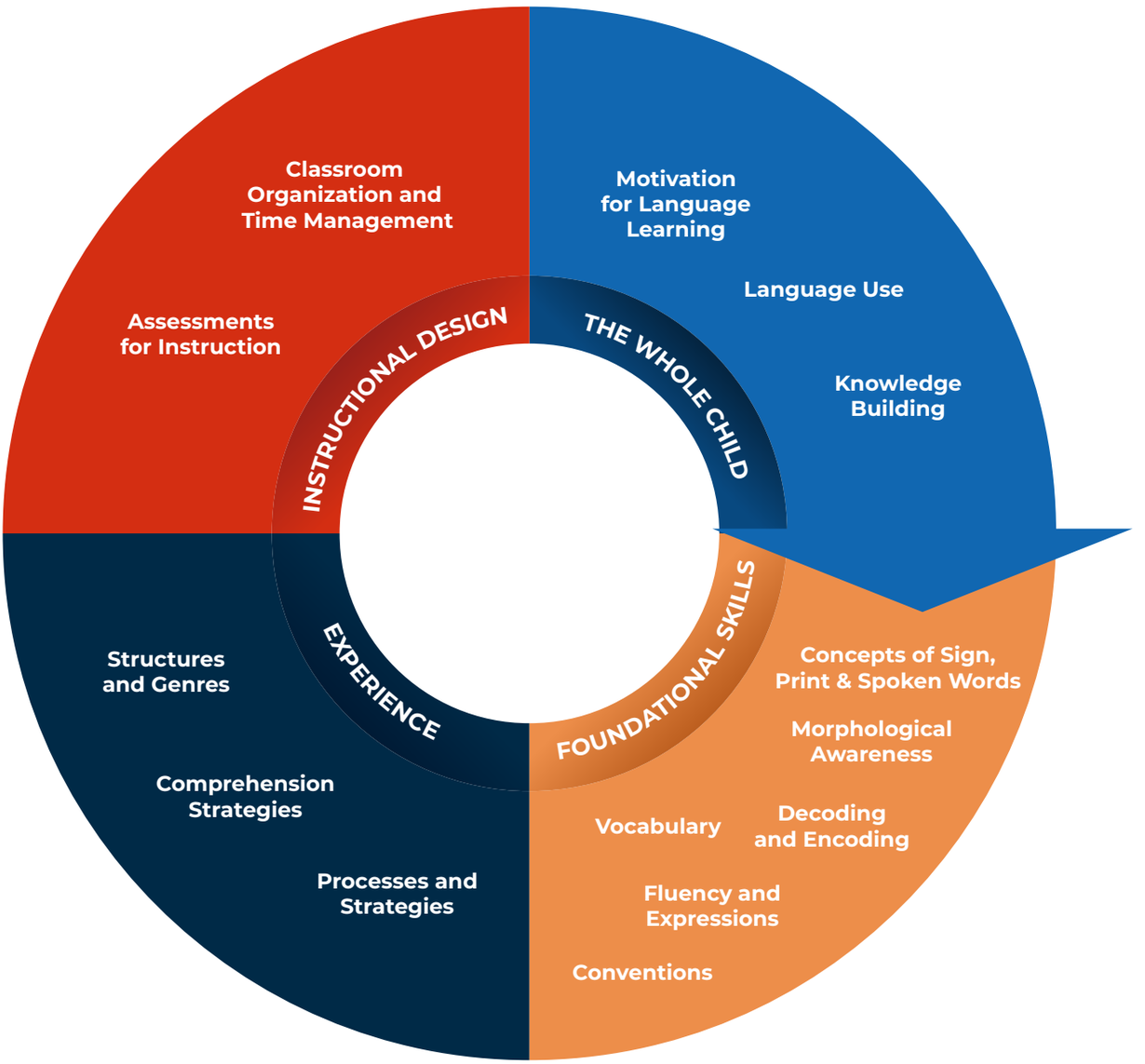
Classroom Organization and Time Management

A positive and well-organized language-rich classroom environment is fundamental for student productivity and success in all subject areas. Teachers need to prepare activities and plan instructional time to build an engaging learning community in which students feel confident and are motivated to learn.

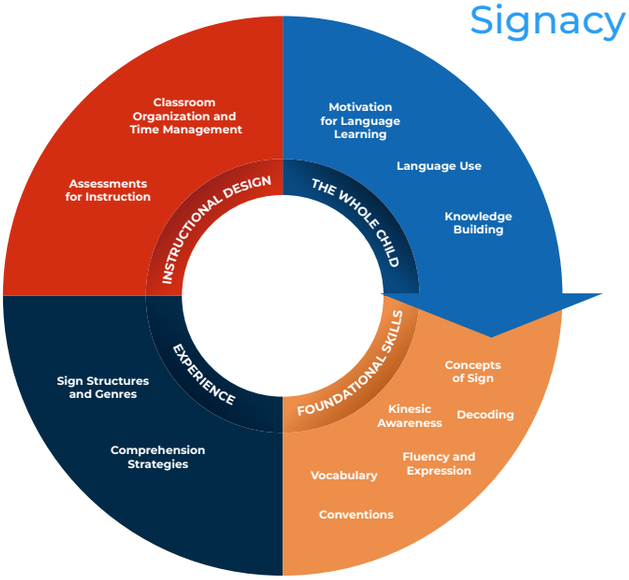
Assessments for Instruction

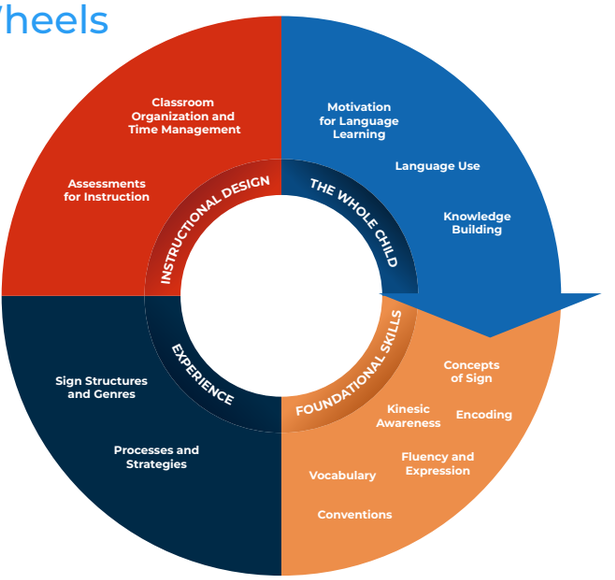
Assessing students' language skills and understanding and providing them with formative feedback on a regular basis is essential to the promotion of student growth and learning. In addition to guiding the students, language assessment provides direction to the teacher for whole class and small group instruction.

The Foundational Wheel

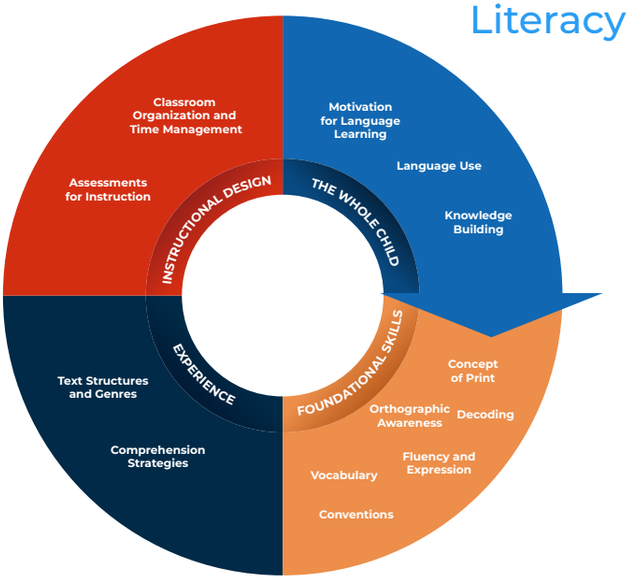


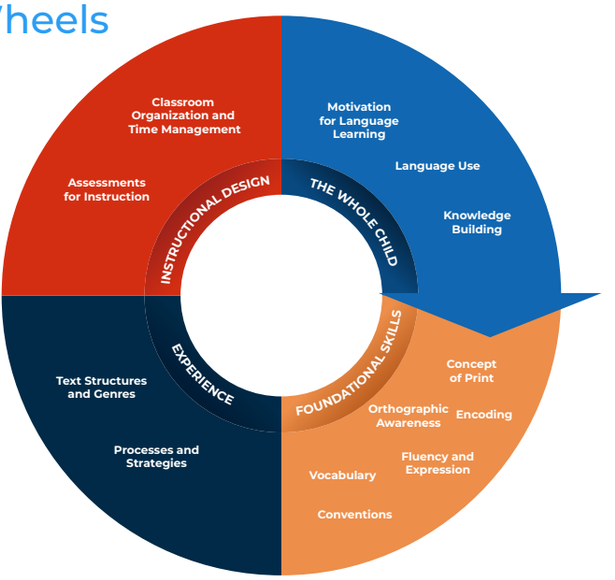
Signacy Wheels



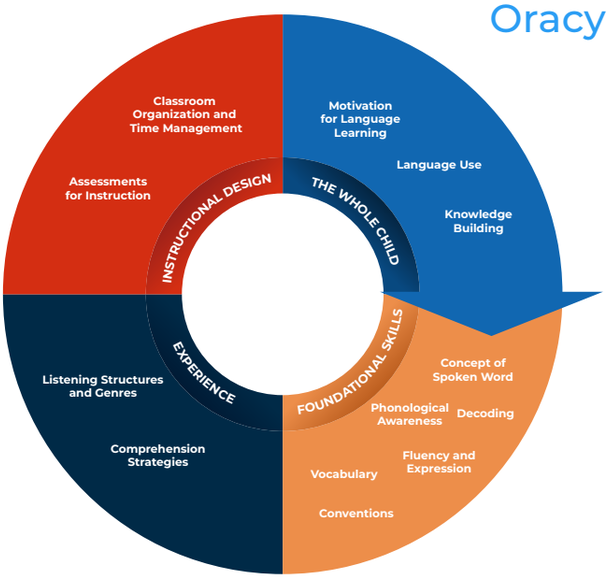


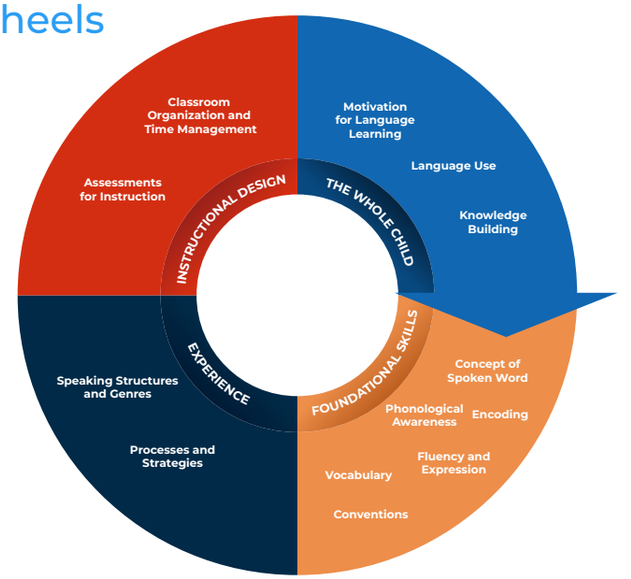
Literacy Wheels





Oracy Wheels





SIGNACY

	COMPREHENSION SIGNACY The comprehension part of signacy refers to the ability to view and interpret content in sign language.	COMPOSITION SIGNACY The composition part of signacy refers to the ability to express content in sign language.
The Whole Child		
Motivation for Learning	Interactive viewing exercises, such as immersive storytelling, and engaging viewing games highlight the value and joy of signed communication.	Interactive signing games, storytelling, role playing, and creative exercises cultivate a passion for signing and inspire active participation and fascination.
Language Use	The understanding and use of sign language are fundamental to developing viewing skills, so teachers must intentionally create time and space for dialogues, ASL stories, visual language activities, and such viewing activities.	Understanding and using sign language is fundamental to developing signing skills. Teachers must create time and space for expressive ASL discourses.
Knowledge Building	Exposing students to novel concepts of signed language through viewing and encouraging inquiry and exploration enhances their school success.	Exposing students to novel concepts of signed language through signing and encouraging inquiry and exploration enhances their school success.
Foundational Skills		
Concept of Sign	Explicitly demonstrating sign language features, such as sign production, classifier use and explaining organization of signs, is vital for language and literacy introduction.	Explicitly demonstrating sign language features, such as sign production, classifier use, and explaining the organization of signs, is vital for language and literacy introduction.
Kinesic Awareness	Students need to be taught that the words they view and fingerread can be broken into parts based on movement and patterns. This awareness plays an essential role in fingerspelling out and spelling words.	Students need to be taught that the words they sign and fingerspell can be broken into parts based on kinesics. This awareness plays an essential role in fingerspelling out and spelling words.
Decoding/ Encoding	Understanding the relationships between fingerspelled words and words in text is also essential for developing language and literacy, particularly in the early elementary years. Students learn these fingerspelled letter connections through systematic and explicit teaching.	Understanding the relationships between fingerspelled words and words in text is also essential for developing language and literacy, particularly in the early elementary years. Students learn these fingerspelled letter connections through systematic and explicit teaching.
Vocabulary	Success in using language requires understanding signed word meanings and learning fingerspelling patterns and strategies. Students must have opportunities to see and interpret signs and fingerspelled words to promote vocabulary growth.	Success in using language requires understanding the signed word meanings and learning fingerspelling patterns and strategies. Students must have opportunities to practice fingerspelling new vocabulary words and define words in ASL to promote vocabulary growth.
Fluency and Expression	To support students in recognizing words effortlessly so they can focus more on the idea(s), teachers need to create opportunities for students to view fingerspelled letters and signed words and check for their understanding to grow their vocabulary fluency and comprehension.	To support students in expanding vocabulary fluency and comprehension so they can focus more on the idea(s), teachers need to create opportunities to practice fingerspelling and defining in ASL after being introduced to new age-/grade-appropriate words.
Conventions	To communicate effectively through viewing sign language, students need to be explicitly taught the mechanics of signed language, such as when and how to use topicalization, pausing, and body shifting.	To communicate effectively through expression in sign language, students need to be explicitly taught how to use the mechanics of signed language and given opportunities to practice them, such as when and how to use topicalization, pausing, and body shifting.
Experience		
Comprehension Strategies	Students must recognize and address gaps in understanding when viewing sign language, using problem-solving skills. Teachers need to model and encourage effective viewing comprehension strategies.	
Processes and Strategies		Signing involves complex skills. Teachers need to ensure student learning through engaging opportunities, emphasizing planning, organizing, editing, and revising signed compositions.
Structures and Genres	Analyzing fiction and nonfiction sign productions enhances students' grasp of purpose, audience, and message. Teachers need to offer authentic viewing opportunities and instruction.	Analyzing fiction and nonfiction sign productions enhances students' grasp of purpose, audience, and message. Teachers need to offer authentic signing opportunities and instruction.
Instructional Design		
Classroom Organization and Time Management	Teachers need to build a productive learning community by preparing engaging viewing activities and allocating instructional time for students to feel confident and motivated to learn viewing skills.	Teachers need to create a vital signing environment, planning activities and instructional time to build a confident, motivated learning community for signing skills.
Assessments for Instruction	Regularly assessing students' viewing skills and offering feedback guides both students and teachers in whole class and small group instruction.	Regularly assessing students' signing skills and offering feedback, guides both students and teachers in whole class and small group instruction.

LITERACY

	COMPREHENSION LITERACY The comprehension part of literacy refers to the ability to read and interpret content in print.	COMPOSITION LITERACY The composition part of literacy refers to the ability to write content in print.
The Whole Child		
Motivation for Learning	Interactive reading activities, such as book clubs, author visits, reading challenges, storytelling sessions, and interactive book-themed games, highlight the value and joy of reading.	Interactive writing activities, such as creative writing prompts, collaborative storytelling, penpal exchanges, and author-led workshops, cultivate a passion for writing and its significance.
Language Use	Understanding language in print is fundamental to developing reading skills. Teachers must intentionally create time and space for reading different text, media, genres, and literature.	Understanding the language in print is fundamental to developing writing skills, so teachers must intentionally create time and space for writing different text, media, genres, and literature.
Knowledge Building	Exposing students to the novel concepts of literature through reading and encouraging inquiry and exploration enhances their school success.	Exposing students to novel expression concepts through writing and encouraging inquiry and exploration enhances their school success.
Foundational Skills		
Concept of Print	Explicitly demonstrating written language features, such as how letters and words are used and explaining text organization, is vital for language and literacy introduction.	Explicitly demonstrating written language features, such as how letters and words are used, and explaining text organization is vital for language and literacy introduction.
Orthographic Awareness	Students need to be taught that the words they read can be broken into parts, known as morphemes. This awareness plays an essential role in writing out/reading out and spelling words.	Students need to be taught that the words they write can be broken into parts, known as morphemes. This awareness plays an essential role in writing out/reading out and spelling words.
Decoding/ Encoding	Understanding the relationships between fingerspelled/spoken words and words in text is also essential for developing language and literacy, particularly in the early elementary years. Students learn these fingerspelled letter-sound connections through systematic and explicit teaching.	Understanding the relationships between fingerspelled/spoken words and words in text is also essential for developing language and literacy, particularly in the early elementary years. Students learn these fingerspelled letter-sound connections through systematic and explicit teaching.
Vocabulary	Success in using language requires understanding word meanings and learning spelling patterns and strategies. Students must have opportunities to see and interpret text and spelled words to promote vocabulary growth.	Success in using language requires understanding the word meanings and learning spelling patterns and strategies. Students must have opportunities to practice spelling new vocabulary words and defining words in written English to promote vocabulary growth.
Fluency and Expression	To support students in recognizing words effortlessly so they can focus more on the idea(s), teachers need to create opportunities for students to read words and check for their understanding to grow their vocabulary fluency and comprehension.	To support students in recognizing words effortlessly so they can focus more on the idea(s), teachers need to create opportunities for students to read words and check for their understanding to grow their vocabulary fluency and comprehension.
Conventions	To communicate effectively through reading, students need to be explicitly taught the mechanics of written text, such as capitalization and punctuation in text.	To communicate effectively by writing, students need to be explicitly taught the mechanics of a written language, such as capitalization and punctuation in text.
Experience		
Comprehension Strategies	Students must use problem-solving skills to recognize and address gaps in understanding when reading text. Teachers need to model and encourage effective reading comprehension strategies.	
Processes and Strategies		Writing involves complex skills. Teachers need to ensure student learning through engaging opportunities, emphasizing planning, organizing, editing, and revising written compositions.
Structures and Genres	Analyzing fiction and nonfiction texts enhances students' grasp of purpose, audience, and message. Teachers need to offer authentic reading opportunities and instruction.	Analyzing fiction and nonfiction texts enhances students' grasp of purpose, audience, and message. Teachers need to offer authentic writing opportunities and instruction.
Instructional Design		
Classroom Organization and Time Management	Teachers build a productive learning community by preparing engaging reading activities and allocating instructional time for students to feel confident and motivated to learn reading skills.	Teachers need to create a vital writing environment, planning activities and instructional time to build a confident, motivated learning community for writing skills.
Assessments for Instruction	Regularly assessing students' reading skills and offering feedback guides both students and teachers in whole class and small group instruction.	Regularly assessing students' writing skills and offering feedback guides both students and teachers in whole class and small group instruction.

ORACY

	COMPREHENSION ORACY The comprehension part of oracy refers to the ability to lipread/listen and interpret content from a spoken language.	COMPOSITION ORACY The composition part of oracy refers to the ability to mouth and/or speak content in a spoken language.
The Whole Child		
Motivation for Learning	Interactive lipreading/listening activities, such as lipreading games, audio stories, role playing, and debates, highlight the value and joy of lipreading/listening.	Interactive speaking/mouthing games, storytelling, role playing, and creative exercises cultivate a passion for a spoken language and inspire active participation and fascination.
Language Use	Understanding and using spoken language is fundamental to developing auditory listening and/or lipreading skills. Teachers need to intentionally create time and space for students to interact with spoken language through listening and viewing.	Understanding and using spoken language is fundamental to developing mouthing/speaking skills. Teachers need to intentionally create time and space for mouthing and speaking activities.
Knowledge Building	Exposing students to the novel concepts of lip movements through lipreading and of sounds through listening and encouraging inquiry and exploration enhances their school success.	Exposing students to the novel concepts of mouthing and speaking, and encouraging inquiry and exploration enhances their school success.
Foundational Skills		
Concept of Spoken Word	Explicitly demonstrating spoken language features, such as lip movements and voices, and explaining speech organization is vital for language and literacy introduction.	Explicitly demonstrating spoken language features, such as lip movements and voices, and explaining speech organization is vital for language and literacy introduction.
Phonological Awareness	Students need to be taught that the words they lipread or hear can be broken into parts, based on individual speech sounds, known as phonemes. This phonemic awareness plays an essential role in fingerspelling/sounding out and spelling words.	Students need to be taught that the words they mouth or say can be broken into parts, based on individual speech sounds, known as phonemes. This phonemic awareness plays an essential role in fingerspelling out/sounding out and spelling words.
Decoding/ Encoding	Understanding the relationships between spoken sounds and words in text is also essential for the development of reading and writing, particularly in the early elementary years. Students best learn these letter-sound connections through systematic and explicit teaching.	Understanding the relationships between spoken sounds and words in text is also essential for the development of reading and writing, particularly in the early elementary years. Students best learn these letter-sound connections through systematic and explicit teaching.
Vocabulary	Success in using language requires understanding meanings of the spoken words and learning spelling patterns and strategies. Students must have opportunities to hear and interpret different sounds, including letters and words, and/or lipread to promote vocabulary growth.	Success in using language requires understanding the word meanings and learning spelling patterns and strategies. Students must have opportunities to practice speaking/mouthing new vocabulary words and define words in spoken English to promote vocabulary growth.
Fluency and Expression	To support students in recognizing words effortlessly so they can focus more on the idea(s), teachers need to create opportunities for students to lipread and hear spoken words and check for their understanding to grow their vocabulary fluency and comprehension.	To support students in expanding vocabulary fluency and comprehension so they can focus more on the idea(s), teachers need to create opportunities to practice mouthing and/or describing in spoken language after being introduced to new age-/grade -appropriate words.
Conventions	To communicate effectively by listening, students need to be explicitly taught the mechanics of a spoken language, such as intonation and pausing.	To communicate effectively by speaking, students need to be explicitly taught the mechanics of a spoken language, such as intonation and pausing.
Experience		
Comprehension Strategies	Students must use problem-solving skills to recognize and address gaps in understanding when lipreading/listening spoken language. Teachers need to model and encourage effective listening comprehension strategies.	
Processes and Strategies		Mouthing/speaking involves complex skills. Teachers need to ensure learning through engaging opportunities, emphasizing planning, organizing, editing, and revising spoken compositions for students.
Structures and Genres	Analyzing fiction and nonfiction audio/verbal productions enhances students' grasp of purpose, audience, and message. Teachers need to offer authentic lipreading/listening opportunities and instruction.	Analyzing fiction and nonfiction audio/verbal productions enhances students' grasp of purpose, audience, and message. Teachers need to offer authentic mouthing/speaking opportunities and instruction.
Instructional Design		
Classroom Organization and Time Management	Teachers need to build a productive learning community by preparing engaging lipreading/listening activities and allocating instructional time for students to feel confident and motivated to learn lipreading/listening skills.	Teachers need to create a vital mouthing/speaking environment, planning activities and instructional time to build a confident, motivated learning community for mouthing/speaking skills.
Assessments for Instruction	Regularly assessing students' lipreading/listening skills and offering feedback guides both students and teachers in whole class and small group instruction.	Regularly assessing students' mouthing/speaking skills and offering feedback guides both students and teachers in whole class and small group instruction.

Glossary

Assessment	the evaluation or estimation of the quality and ability of someone. In this context we refer to educational assessments which could include but are not limited to: language, emotional, behavioral assesments
Abilities	competence in language(s), such as ASL or English - both natural aptitude or acquired proficiency
Approaches	intentionally using one of or combination of: signacy, literacy and oracy in both areas, composition and comprehension
Bilingual	the use of two different languages
Comprehension (input)	The pathway that creates a easy access to input so that information can be recieved, understood and interpreted.
Convention	What is considered to be the standard form of a written or signed language including guidelines for grammar and punctuation.
Curriculum	Thematerials, sequence of skills and content used in instruction
Composition (output)	The pathway that creates a easy access to output so that information can be expressed, explained and elaborated.
Fluency	the measurement of the ability to use the language in both pathways.
Kinesics	the study of body movements, gestures, facial expressions, etc. as a means of communication
Language Learning	the process of acquiring the ability to communicate in a new language, involving the development of linguistic, communicative, and cultural competence.
Language Profile	a set of data that shows the individual's significant language background, experience and language abilities
Lanugage Use	How one expresses oneself through language.
Language Usage	The structures and rules for making language-based messages.
Listen	actively give attention to information in order to understand and/or interpret.
Literacy	proficiency in written/printed language composition and comprehension
Morphological	the study of words and their internal structures.
Multilingual	the use of more than two different languages
Oracy	proficiency in oral language composition and comprehension; can include visual features of speech, i.e. mouthing and lipreading
Orthography	The part of language that deals with letters and spelling
Phonology	the study of the distribution and patterning of speech sounds
Print	text
Process	a systematic and possibly cyclical series of instructional actions to guide students from the beginning to the end to create a product
Read	To make sense of letters, words and symbols through sight or touch
Sign	the action of using a visual/gestural language to convey a message
Signacy	proficiency in sign language composition and comprehension
Speak	the action of uttering words or articulating sounds with voice to convey a message
Strategy	a plan, method, or series of actions to obtain a specific goal or result
Write	the action of putting words or symbols together in print to convey a message
View	to make sense of signs, handshapes and nonmanual markers by sight or by touch