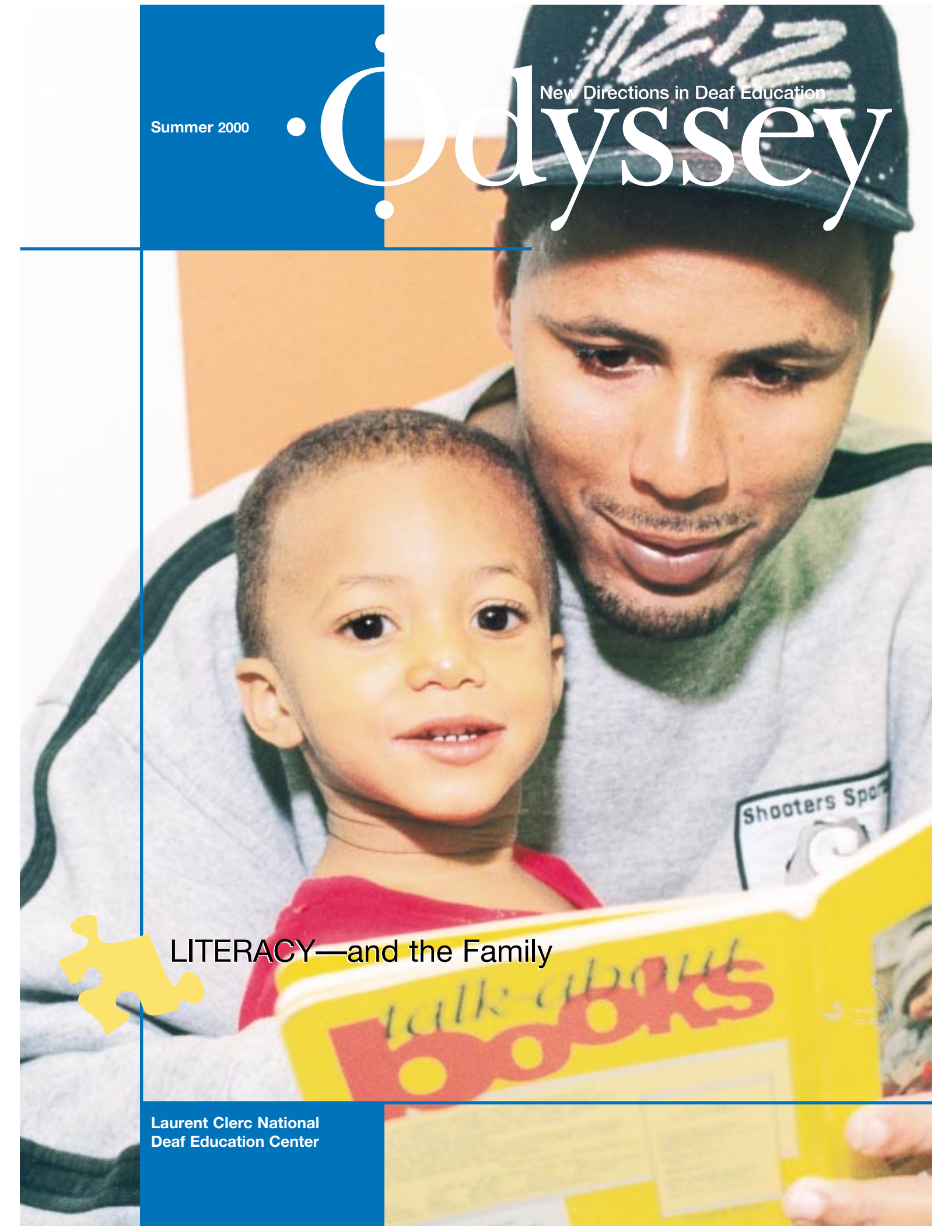


Summer 2000

New Directions in Deaf Education

Odyssey



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and the

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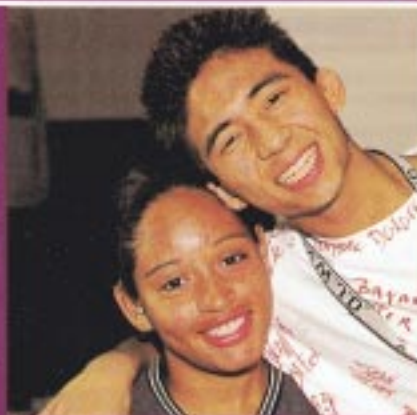
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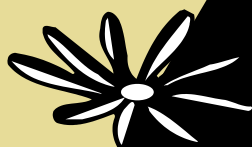
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On the Cover: Sharing books is part of the nine-piece program that parents can use to advance their children's literacy at home. Photo by Goodman/VanRiper.

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Odyssey New Directions in Deaf Education



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A Letter From the Provost

Learning from our Children— Incorporating Literacy in the Home

Dear Friends,

We learn from our children and in this issue of *Odyssey*, children of all ages teach us about the importance of learning outside of the classroom. Bridget Berrigan, daughter of Clerc Center staffer Dennis Berrigan and his wife, Sharon, is our first teacher. At 34 months, Bridget is already on her way to joyful literacy. We've seen many times how hearing children with friendly but targeted instruction begin to read at early ages. In the Berrigans' article, **Reading to Deaf Children**, we see a young deaf child's journey to literacy, and follow a unique record of how this adventure may be pursued through visual language.

We watch in fascination as Bridget, the baby, delights in her father's rhythmic rendition of the sign alphabet and we laugh as Bridget, the toddler, confuses the fingerspelling of her nickname, *BRI*, with that of what she puts around her neck when she eats—*BIB*. As Bridget makes the connection between the letters on her parents' fingers and those on the printed page, we know that she is on her way to becoming a bilingual child with a complete and profound understanding of both English and American Sign Language.

In other articles, students of all ages continue to teach us about engaging them in print. In **Shared Reading and Writing**, writers Cynthia Lomax and Angela McCaskill, the mother and tutor of Solomon Lomax, delineate how the Shared Reading Project meant a new beginning for Solomon's family as parents and son began to enjoy reading books together. In **Independent Reading**, Meghan Venturini's mother, Donna Venturini, relates how she exploited her daughter's interest in history and allowed Meghan and each of her siblings to select their own magazine subscriptions. Meghan keeps a journal by her bed as well, her mother notes, enabling her to record her end-of-the-day thoughts.

In **Research, Reading, and Writing**, teenager Tenzin Chopak, from the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, articulates the importance of extending literacy activities outside the classroom. Tenzin suggests his experience participating in the after-school program in the MSSD dorm has enabled him to pursue reading and writing in a new way. Surrounded by easy-to-access communication and working with activity leaders such as Frank Turk, author of this article, Tenzin reports, "I feel more comfortable with writing."

These are just some of the articles that explore each of the nine strategies that are essential in facilitating literacy development for all deaf children. In this issue, published in honor of the biennial convention of the American Society for Deaf Children, readers will find a wealth of after-school activities to improve their children's literacy.

Facilitating literacy development is a rich and complex field.

Luckily our students make it also a rewarding one.

Sincerely,

Jane K. Fernandes, Ph.D.

Provost

Gallaudet University



Literacy in a Nine-Piece Program

Applications at Home

By Jane K. Fernandes

Literacy is the ability to read and write, speak and sign, and understand and communicate in accordance with need. Literacy is also the ability to engage in critical thinking and exchange information with different people in a variety of settings. It is a continuum of skills necessary for everyday life in the home, at work, in education, and in the community.

At the Clerc Center, we apply the nine literacy practices delineated below and explored throughout this issue within a bilingual setting. The practices are helpful in every educational setting. Whether parent and child communicate through signs, signs and speech, speech and cues, or speech only, the practices remain the same—and the same as those used with children with normal hearing.

Here are the nine practices and suggested ways of applying them at home.

Language Experience

Children dictate a story or explain an experience and adults translate their production into written English. Teachers use this printed translation for instruction; parents and home care providers use it for pleasure reading.

Home Applications

FAMILY VACATION

On a family vacation, take photos and talk about the sights. Later, develop the photos and glue them into a notebook. Ask your child to say something about each photo. Write what he or she says under the appropriate photo in the notebook. You will find that children return to this sort of notebook again and again, talking about the vacation, and reading and re-reading the sentences they helped to craft.

SPECIAL NOTEBOOK

Each night before bed, ask your child what he or she would like to write down about the day. For young children, most of the time, this will be brief. In a special notebook—just for you and your child—write what your child says and sign each entry. You will find children are often eager to go back and review previous entries, reading and re-reading what they have already written before they generate new language for the current day.

Dialogue Journals

A dialogue journal is a written dialogue between a student and an adult, a child and a parent. Each day, each takes a turn writing about his or her experiences. The adult—whether a parent, teacher, teacher aid, or trusted caregiver—does not correct the child's grammar, punctuation, and spelling, but demonstrates these skills by writing English when responding.

Home Applications

TO EXPLORE SENSITIVE ISSUES

Journal writing may prove helpful to young adolescents who find it difficult to talk to their parents about sensitive issues. One mother made it clear that her daughter could write about anything at all in the journal. She and her daughter use journal writing to discuss questions about dating, friendship, God, peer pressure, violence, sex, drugs, and other sensitive issues. Leaving the journal on her mother's pillow, the daughter communicates that she has something she needs to talk over. Her mother writes back in response to her and the dialogue is on the way.

E-MAIL

E-mail provides an excellent way for a parent to have a written dialogue with a child. Use e-mail when children go away to camp, school, or visit relatives.

Other Journals and Logs

Other journals and logs provide a way to record, explore, and reflect on personal responses to science, math, social studies, Deaf culture, and school themes through writing. The adult reads and responds to the journal regularly. Both the student and the adult monitor development and progress.

Home Applications

PET DIARY

Keep a journal with your child related to the family pet, especially if you acquire the pet as a baby. Draw pictures; keep a list of when and what the pet was fed. Explain what is happening with the pet.

GROWTH CHART

Measure the child's growth periodically and keep a chart, measuring his or her height in inches and weight in pounds and ounces. Keep a logbook of the information for future reference.

SHOPPING LIST

Develop shopping lists to use at the grocery store. Have your child check off items as you select them and add them to the shopping cart. As children get older, have them weigh items and record prices for future reference.

Reading to Deaf Children

Reading to children is seen as the single most influential factor in students' educational development. Teachers read and sign books at students' age-levels to improve visual skills, build vocabulary, aid reading comprehension, and have a positive impact on students' attitude toward reading. Parents read and sign books that children request be read. Read these books again and again whenever your child asks. Read aloud to your children from the earliest age and continue as long as they enjoy it. As children get older, read great novels and other stories that may be too hard for your children to read independently.

Home Applications

- Go to the library and seek out large colorful books.
- Read street signs and sports, store, and clothing labels.

Guided Reading and Writing

In Guided Reading, students are encouraged to respond to text in open-ended and personal ways. Teachers work with small groups of students at their instructional level. Teachers and parents can work on developing fluency and confidence with reading strategies, and help children develop insights into theme, style, divergent opinion, and various forms of literature.

Home Applications

ENCOURAGE PREDICTIONS

Help your child make predictions about upcoming experience within a narrative. For example, while watching a closed captioned TV show, stop at each commercial and ask, "What do you think will happen next in the story?" At the next commercial, follow up by asking, "Were you right or wrong?" "What happened?" "What will happen next?" Do the same thing when renting a captioned movie, reading a newspaper or taking a trip.

SHARE LITERATURE

Have everyone in your family read the same book and discuss it.

Research, Reading, and Writing

In Research, Reading, and Writing, students develop project-related writing to demonstrate comprehension of non-fiction books. Often students as individuals or in groups use a Know-Want-to-Know-Learn (K-W-L) process to identify concepts that need to be investigated and develop reports using the writing process.

Home Applications

EXPLORE INTERESTS THROUGH PRINT

Help find books, magazines, Web sites and other materials that interest your child.

RESEARCH FAMILY PROJECT

Suppose you plan to buy a family dog and your child is excited at the prospect. Help your child research different types of dogs and decide which type would best fit best your family. Ask your child questions about what he or she wants to know and help your child use community resources to find answers.

RESEARCH FAMILY VACATION

Plan a vacation and get books, magazines and materials about the places you are going. Work together with your child to ask questions about the place and find answers.

Independent Reading

Independent Reading, of course, is when a child reads independently. Teachers should have a wide selection of fiction and non-fiction through school, classroom and home libraries. Teachers should offer mini-lessons, and foster individual or small group discussions and ask open-ended questions to get interesting and insightful responses to journals. Parents should also have available a wide selection of books, magazines, newspapers, Web sites, and other printed media. Parents and children should talk about what they are reading and why they like or don't like a particular author. Families should make frequent trips to libraries and bookstores.

Home Applications

- Keep lots of books at home and in the car.
- Go to the library at least once per week.
- Let your child see you reading daily.
- Encourage less time watching TV or playing with Nintendo, and more time reading!

Writer's Workshop

In Writer's Workshop, students write, share, edit, and publish writing. At school, adults give daily mini-lessons on writing style, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Students and adults work on ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. At home, children follow the same process and use their writing for real reasons. Parents help by correcting and demonstrating proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. Parents and children work together.

Home Applications

- Have a TTY at home and use it with your child.
- Help your child write thank you notes to family members for gifts.
- Help your child write friendly letters to grandparents or others.
- Help your child with homework or writing projects for school.
- Help your child write a book or short novel.

Shared Reading and Writing

Shared Reading and Writing is the process in which the adult and student read a book over and over. Appropriate books usually have an easily understood and predictable storyline, and the experience of reading the same story in the same language again and again helps students develop confidence in their ability to read. Students may act out the story and make a new version of the book. At home, children may re-read the book, act it out as a play, draw pictures of it, and demonstrate their understanding in some fun way.

Home Applications

Read something like *The Gingerbread Boy* again and again as a family. Then family members act out the story as a play for grandparents or other visitors. Another option: After reading the book again and again, make gingerbread cookies or draw pictures, and discuss the story.

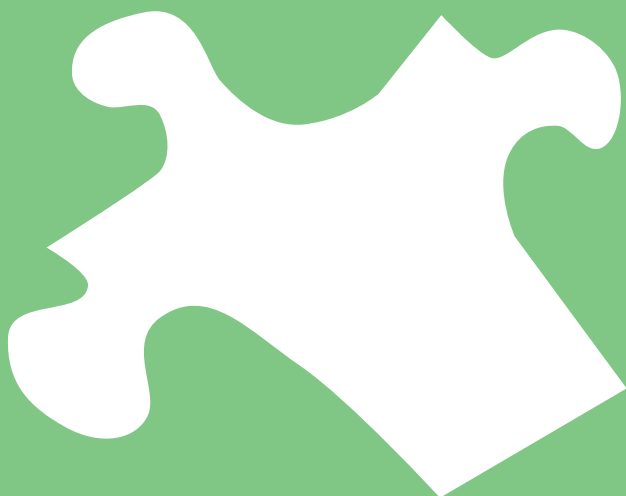
A

B

C

Bridget & Books

Fingerspelling, Reading—and Sleeping—with Print



E	P	&
D	O	Z
C	N	Y
B	M	X
A	L	W



By Dennis Berrigan
and Sharon Berrigan

When our daughter, Bridget, came into this world, we greeted her with awe—and language. Bridget, like us, is Deaf. From those first wonderful moments in the hospital, we signed and fingerspelled to her. Perhaps because of all this language, she was an alert baby and we introduced her to books quickly. At 34 months old, she has been entertained by over 200 books, an average of four books a day.

We point to the pictures, tell stories, and translate printed English (text and phrases) into signs and fingerspelling. We talk about the letters,

too, and how they can be printed or fingerspelled.

Fingerspelling is critical because we know it helps with reading skills. While Bridget was still a baby, we introduced her to the sequence of letters that make up the alphabet. As she watched, we would fingerspell all 26 letters, A to Z, in rhythmic motions. We did this on a regular basis, if not every day. In addition, we signed numbers, one through 10, then one through 20, with a similar rhythmic flow. We also included fingerspelling when we communicated with her.

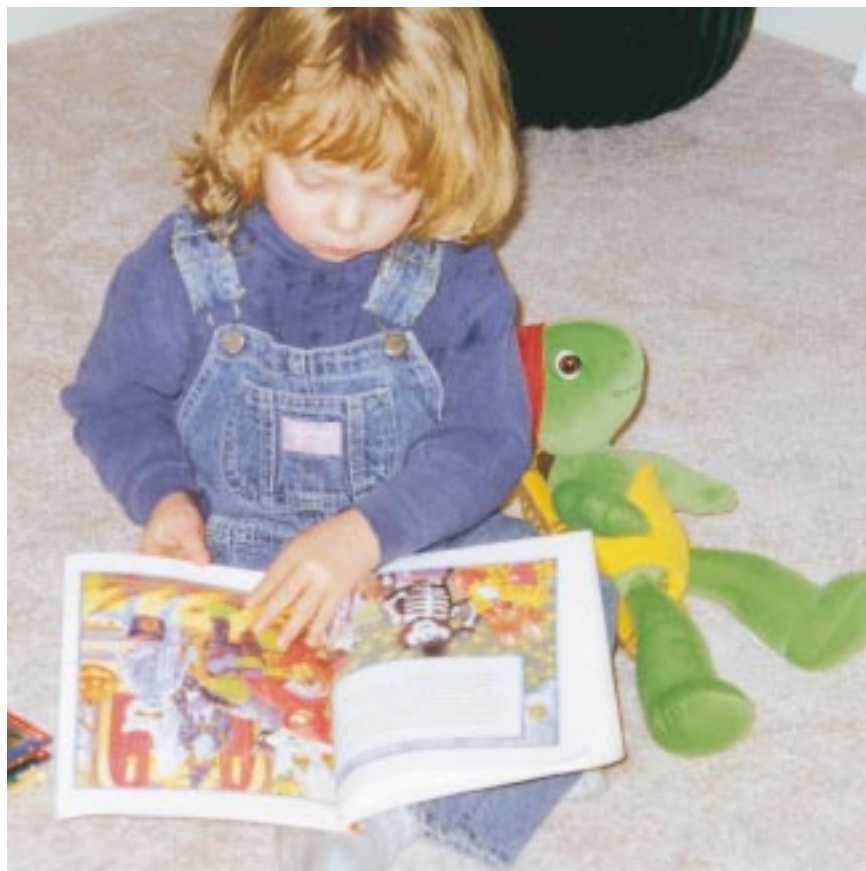
Bridget was fascinated by this. She loved watching. She asked us to do it again and again. During the same time, we exposed her to printed letters, both capital and lower case. We

enjoyed print in other ways too—books, posters, object manipulation boards, puzzles, magnets, and erasers. We called her attention to posters that listed the ABCs with their accompanying handshapes that corresponded with the letters. We brought writing and print constantly into her environment, and made English as visible as possible. By two years old, Bridget started to recognize numbers and letters on shirts, license plates, and store names, and would initiate conversations about them.

Bridget and Fingerspelling

Bridget has witnessed countless examples of fingerspelling in countless situations. As we read to her before she goes to sleep, she sees fingerspelling. Of

ABOVE: As a little girl—already reading with daddy, co-author Dennis Berrigan. **TOP RIGHT:** And where are the teeth?—discussing literature with daddy. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Rock and read together—Bridget with a friend.



course, she was exposed to numerous fingerspelled words. By the time she was one year old, we realized that she attended to our fingerspelling as she did to the rest of our conversation. She may not have been able to understand all fingerspelled words, but she knew that use of fingerspelling identified real things in conversation. At 19 months, Bridget began fingerspelling clearly back to us. Her first letters were generated on her fingers before she was able to recognize them in print. These were *A*, *B*, *C*, *Z*, and *OK* (in a sign play form).

Bridget made the transition to reading quickly after that. When she first noticed the word *moon* from her storybook, *Goodnight Moon*, she pointed to it and signed *mom*. We praised her for noticing that both words have the same first letter *m*, and noted that different letters follow. *MOON*, *MOM*. We fingerspelled, signed, and pointed to

the print with each word. Bridget looked at the title of the book on the cover and visibly pondered. Then she pointed to the print *M-O-O-N* and signed *MOON*.

From Fingers to Print

She was quick in her associations—*M* indicated *MOM*, *W* indicated her friend, *WOLFGANG*, and *I* was for *ICE CREAM*. She also picked up *I* for her name, catching the last letter as we fingerspelled *BRI*, which we use as her nickname. She knew *B* led the three-letter progression that was her name though, and one meal time when we fingerspelled *BIB*, she pointed directly to herself. Then we fingerspelled each word slowly so she could see how *BIB* and *BRI* differ. She learned fingerspellings. Then she matched the fingerspelling to the print. Thereafter, she knew the words were separate and

identified them correctly.

At 30 months old, Bridget began to try to fingerspell the entire alphabet. She started with *A* and fingerspelled each letter in its place to *G*. Then she returned to *E* and *T*. Her fingerspelled alphabet looked like this, *A-B-C-D-E-F-G-E-T*. Why this order? We wondered if she confounded the order of the letters in the alphabet with those of her first name. Shortly afterward, with the stumbling block behind her, she successfully generated all 26 handshapes of the manual alphabet.

Letters + Play = Literacy

Every day we take turns playing with Bridget using a variety of literacy-related activities. Each session is about 20 min-



utes and each of us may do a session two or three times a day. As a result, Bridget has come to enjoy reading books with us. She has her favorite books that she wants us to read to her again and again, often over several days and weeks.

At 30 months old, two of Bridget's favorite books were *Franklin is Lost* and *Franklin in the Dark* by Paulette Bourgeois. We fingerspelled many words as we read this book to Bridget, including *SHELL*, *GOOSE*, *PARACHUTE*, *SUPPER*, *BED*, and *FRANKLIN*. We fingerspelled the name of Franklin, the turtle star of both books, and Bridget recognized both the fingerspelled and printed name and frequently fingerspelled the word to us. Here's our record of how her fingerspelling evolved over a two-week span.

ABOVE LEFT: Booking it—Bridget discovers books are fun toys too. RIGHT: Sweet dreams—Forming the night time reading habit sometimes means sleeping beside a good book.

F-L-N

F-R-L-N-I

F-R-K-L-N-I

F-R-A-N-K-L-N-I

F-R-A-N-K-L-I-N-I

F-R-A-N-K-L-I-N

Just before Bridget's final mastery of Franklin's name, she spelled it with an extraneous *I*, i.e., *F-R-A-N-K-L-I-N-I*. We never corrected Bridget's fingerspelling, teaching her instead through modeling. But on one occasion, when she attempted to correct Dennis as he spelled the turtle's name without its phantom *I*, he offered an explanation. "There's no *I* at the end of Franklin," he told her. He pointed to the word in the book, and then he fingerspelled it again. Bridget watched intently. The next time she fingerspelled Franklin, the extraneous *I* was gone. It never resurfaced on her fingers again.

Since that time, Bridget has recognized the printed word Franklin in many different contexts throughout her environment. She has pointed out



stories about the Berenstain Bears. Every three weeks we go to the library, and recently Bridget chooses books that focus on words and word lists. These books are not exciting to us, but Bridget loves them. She has us read them again and again. This week's book focuses on words for body parts. We sign and fingerspell each word, pointing to the body part that it signifies and then pointing to the printed word in the book to refer to what was

As she makes her way through sequences of words...Bridget discovers and recognizes rhyme.

the familiar spelling in Franklin Mint, Franklin Street, and on a basketball that carries the Franklin brand name. One day as we were reading, Bridget bestowed a last name on Franklin the Turtle. It was Berrigan. She fingerspelled the entire production clearly, *F-R-A-N-K-L-I-N B-E-R-R-I-G-A-N*.

The process through which Bridget's language and reading skills emerge continues to amaze us. She is acquiring American Sign Language and learning printed English quickly and naturally—and at a very young age. At 34 months old, she recognizes approximately 150 fingerspelled words. She is able to generate about 50 of the fingerspelled words intelligibly herself.

She enjoys many theme-based books, such as the Franklin books and

signed. We made some flash cards and were pleased to see how many body parts Bridget recognizes in print.

For example, when Bridget saw *KNEE* on a card, she pointed to her knee. "I remember when I fell and hurt my knee," she said. The flashcard that said *ears* stumped her briefly. She didn't recognize the word until we fingerspelled, *E-A-R-S*. Then she pointed to her own ears and explained about Dumbo, the flying elephant whose tales appear in books and on television. We find it interesting that, at this stage in her literacy development, Bridget uses fingerspelling to recognize printed words. She recognizes the print and fingerspelling for *hair, eyes, nose, mouth, arms, belly button, legs, toes, feet, and hands*.



Bridget's recent selection, Dr. Seuss's *Hop on Pop*, has us marveling at her joy in reading and exploring English words. As she makes her way through sequences of words like *hop* and *pop*, and *three, tree, and bee*, Bridget discovers, recognizes, and delights in rhyme.

With fingerspelling, story reading, lots of print, and natural communication, Bridget has learned to love books. At night when she falls asleep, there are often books tucked under her pillow. She is becoming richly bilingual—and she is loving it. ●

Dennis Berrigan, M.A., is American Sign Language training and evaluation coordinator at the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.

Sharon Berrigan, M.A., is currently staying at home to be with Bridget.

ABOVE: Bridget and her mother, co-author Sharon Berrigan, explore number books together.

F · I · N · G · E · R

S · P · E · L · L · I · N · G

Critical for Literacy Development

By David R. Schleper

Fingerspelling—representing the letters of the alphabet on the fingers—may be a critical bridge for deaf and hard of hearing children in learning English. Children should be exposed to fingerspelling on a regular basis. This exposure begins with the child's identification as deaf or hard of hearing. Infants and toddlers should be immersed in fingerspelling. They may not immediately understand the letters, but the exposure will prepare them for acquisition of reading and literacy.

Experts emphasize the importance of practice. It is important to make transitions between the letters of words as smoothly as possible. For example, do not fingerspell *CAT* as *C* pause *A* pause *T* pause. Instead, hold the wrist steady and practice until able to move easily between the letters *C-A-T*.

Two techniques—the Sandwich Technique and the Chaining Technique—are useful in reading to deaf children. In the Sandwich Technique, signs are “sandwiched” between fingerspellings. Individuals fingerspell the word or phrase that appears in the book, then sign the word or phrase, then fingerspell it again (Blumenthal-Kelly, 1995; Humphries and MacDougall, 1997).

In the Chaining Technique, the process is elongated. Individuals point to the word in the book, fingerspell it, sign it, then point to the printed word again.

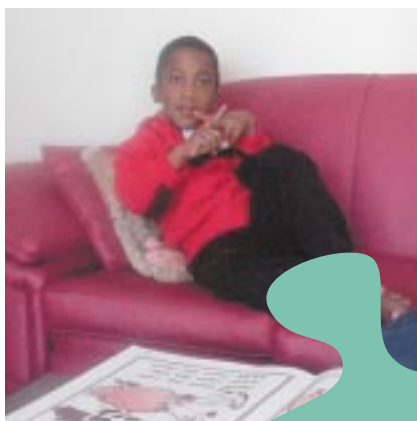
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Participants Reflect on the Shared Reading Project

The Shared Reading Project, sponsored by the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, helps deaf and hard of hearing children learn to appreciate reading by having deaf tutors bring books into their homes to demonstrate to the children's parents how to read with them in American Sign Language. In this article, Cynthia Lomax and Angela McCaskill describe how it felt to participate in this project.

Well on His Way!

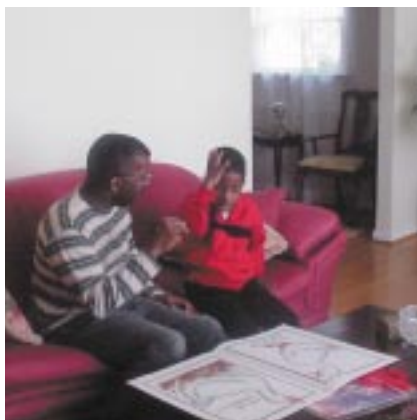


By Cynthia Lomax
and Angela McCaskill

Why did we participate in the Shared Reading Project?

Lomax: When I learned that many deaf and hard of hearing adults read on a fourth grade level, I wanted everything available for my son, Solomon, to improve his chances of becoming a skilled reader. The Shared Reading Project is the beginning of Solomon's journey in reading.

McCaskill: As a parent of two hearing boys, I've had a wonderful experience reading to and with my sons. A majority of deaf children come from hearing parents and they want to read together too, but they simply do not know how. I talk to parents all the time and I can see that they are desperate for help. Many parents lack the sign language skills not only to read to but to communicate with their own children. I wanted to help! Participating enabled me to help two families; my reward is the emotional bonding between the parent and the child and the love they all develop for books.



What was our first meeting like?

Lomax: When Angela appeared at my door, it was wonderful to see a peer—someone just like me, a working mom with two sons...and both of us wanting our sons to achieve academically.

McCaskill: When I arrived at the Lomax residence, I was excited and a little nervous. I did not know what to expect. Both Cynthia and Bill welcomed me. They have two lovely sons, one hearing and one deaf. They introduced me to everyone—even their dog! As soon as we sat down, it was clear that Cynthia was eager to

“A majority of deaf children come from hearing parents and they want to read together, too, but they simply do not know how.”

begin. We talked about the program and what to expect for the next 20 weeks. I brought two book bags and let Cynthia select the one she wanted first.

What happened next?

Lomax: Our first book was *Open Your Mouth* by Joy Cowley. Solomon fell in love with that book. It was a great beginning for us because the signs were not too difficult and it held his attention—which is often hard to do. Angela complimented my signing, which was not good, but my expressions were pretty good. She encouraged me to



sign with Solomon immediately after my introduction to the book. That night was a new beginning for my son and me. I must have read that book ten times. Always with joy.

McCaskill: I worked directly with Cynthia. Bill was involved periodically,

“She encouraged me to sign with Solomon immediately after my introduction to the book. That night was a new beginning for my son and me.”

too. Cynthia was energetic and enthusiastic. She already knew some signs and she picked up others really fast. Solomon was really excited about the story. Most of all, he seemed excited about being read to. You could see Solomon’s eyes light up as his mother signed. Cynthia signed the story exceptionally well with lots of expression!

Now that you have been involved in the project for 20 weeks, how is it going?

Lomax: Solomon is signing very well now and his sentences are much longer. His teacher has noticed lots of pre-reading skills developing. The novelty has worn off. I have to coax Solomon into reading now. He only wants to read at bedtime. I am using large books, and he seems to like them better.



McCaskill: Cynthia has really become good with signing stories, and she is very creative, too. Now she seems more confident in signing. She is involved in her son’s education. She is taking sign language classes at her son’s school, and participating in its family math program. Yet she still finds the time to continue the tutorial sessions.

Lomax: Angela renewed my faith in the education system. She is very supportive, professional, and strict. Patient but tough. She always motivates me when I lose steam.

McCaskill: Cynthia is a loving person and it is obvious that she wants her son to be successful and independent. I am pleased with the progress made so far. Solomon is well on his way! ●

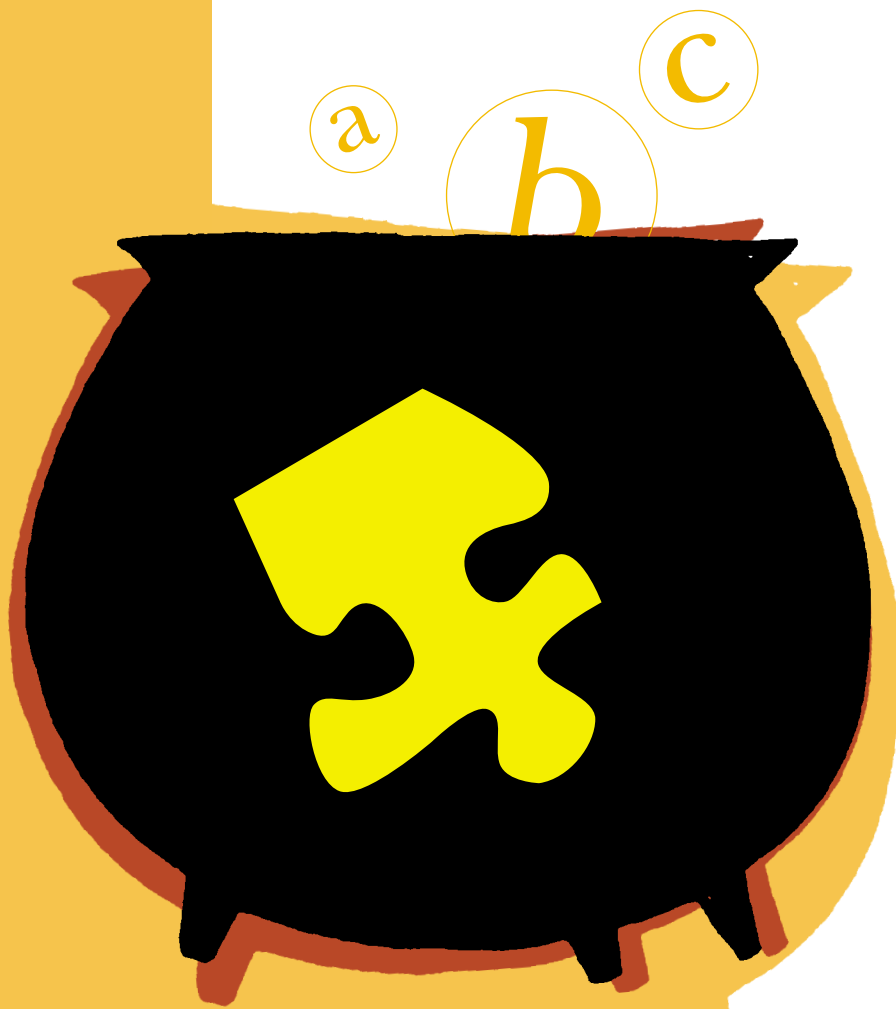
Cynthia Lomax is the mother of a deaf son at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School.

Angela McCaskill, M.S.W., outreach specialist, is a tutor in the Shared Reading Project, Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.

Fun Projects After School

Including Writing

Summer 2000



By Laura Lynn Helms
and David R. Schleper

Language experience—where students work on a project over several days, then dictate their experiences to an adult who translates their words into written English which then becomes material for reading instruction—has been used in classes of hearing students for a long time (Dixon & Nessel, 1983; Nelson & Linek, 1999). It has also been used in classes of deaf and hard of hearing students (Whitesell, 1999; Rangel, 2000).

Most of the time, language experience is pursued in the classroom—but it is also successful when used in dorms and homes.

At the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, we want to see literacy

activities continuing after school, in the evening, and during the weekend. Once or twice a week, we experiment with language experience. Just like Whitesell (1999), we want to “lead from behind,” and encourage our young adult students to share power and authority in the dorms as they refine their literacy skills.

Knowing that the students were studying other cultures, we decided to do a cooking activity that focused on different national cuisine. The students were enthusiastic. We left cookbooks out and let the students take over from there. As they settled on and cooked up a *repas*, they deepened their knowledge of a variety of subjects in an integrated way. These subjects included:

- language arts, especially writing;
- math, especially estimation;
- home economics (how to prepare, cook, and clean up food);
- science (the difference between fresh and frozen meat);

Cooking Up Writing

- social studies, especially other cultures;
- social skills (working together); and
- art, as they designed a book of their experiences.

Great Cook Books

Beatty, T. M. (1999). *Food and recipes of Africa*. NY: The Rosen Publishing Group's PowerKids Press.

Beatty, T. M. (1999). *Food and recipes of the Caribbean*. NY: The Rosen Publishing Group's PowerKids Press.

Beatty, T. M. (1999). *Food and recipes of China*. NY: The Rosen Publishing Group's PowerKids Press.

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Denny, R. (1994). *A taste of Britain*. Austin, TX: Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers.

Denny, R. (1994). *A taste of China*. Austin, TX: Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers.

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Denny, R. (1994). *A taste of India*. Austin, TX: Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers.

Goodwin, B. & Perez, C. (1994). *A taste of Spain*. NY: Thomson Learning.

Illsley, L. (1994). *A taste of Mexico*. NY: Thomson Learning.

McKenley, Y. (1994). *A taste of the Caribbean*. NY: Thomson Learning.

Ridgwell, J. (1993). *A taste of Italy*. NY: Thomson Learning.

Ridgwell, J. (1993). *A taste of Japan*. Austin, TX: Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers. ●

Laura Lynn Helms, M.A., is a coordinator of residence education, and David R. Schleper, M.A., is literacy coordinator, at the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.



1. Mei, a junior at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, is fascinated as she thumbs through cookbooks.



2. Jennie and Fatimah approach their choice of meal by listing the foods they want.



6. Melissa, Cynthia, and Johnny help students vote for their favorite dessert.



10. Chrystal totals up the estimated cost. Students add the cost of D.C. taxes—just in case.



11. A new letter to Laura Lynn is crafted and Jenni, Holly, Noelle, and Selena give feedback on it.

A Multitude of Skills—With a Little Salt



3. With recipes displayed for all to consider, the students vote on the meal they want. The vote is for stir-fry chicken and a drink.



4. Fatimah, with help from the other students, lists the steps necessary in preparing a meal.



5. What's for desert? Students decide another vote is necessary.



7. More lists—all the food must be bought at the same time and Jordan helps to make sure no item is forgotten.



8. Noelle writes a letter to project director and author Laura Lynn, asking if she can advance money for the food purchase; Laura Lynn replies, "Sure, after you estimate how much money you will need."



9. Milly lists the utensils that will be needed and the estimated price of each.



12. With approval advanced, students shop for groceries.



13. Mei and Holly double check the proportions before they get ready to cook.

Language Experience continues on the next page. Photos by David R. Schleper.



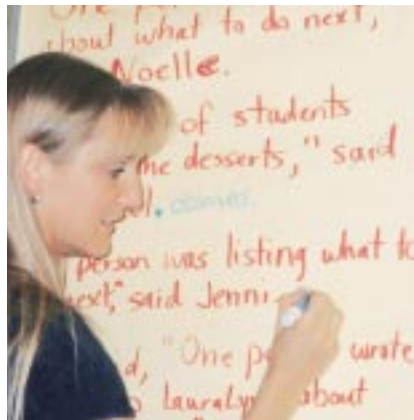
14. Sharlene and Mei cut yellow and green peppers and scallions and get ready to cook.



15. Finally—Stir-fry chicken with peanuts is a delicious treat. And the language experience continues.



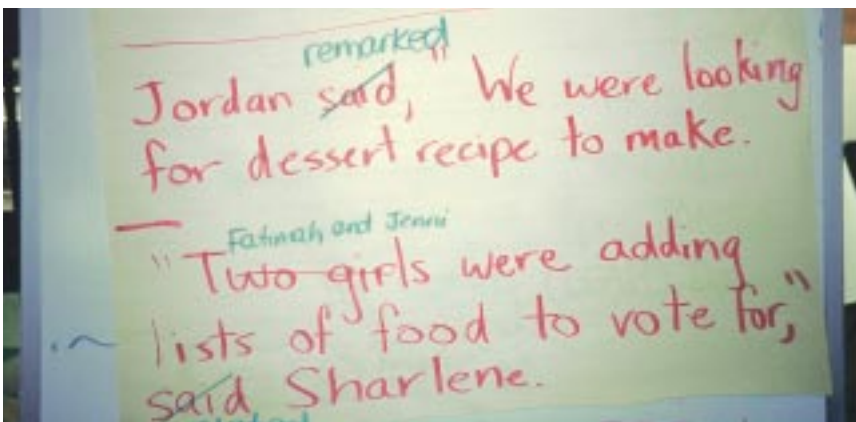
16. Students look at the photographs that were taken as they planned, prepared, cooked, and ate their meal and put them in chronological order.



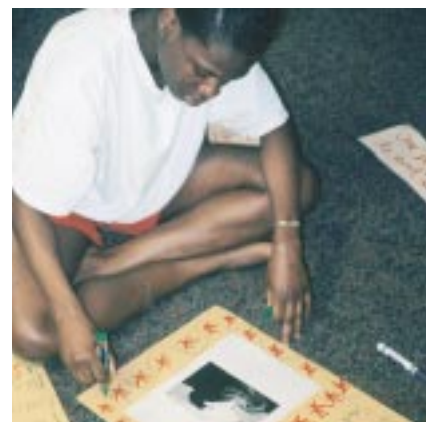
17. Each student uses sign language to explain the events sequenced in the photos. Laura Lynn translates the story into English.



18. How many ways to say "said"? The students brainstorm and check references to list the many different words.



19. As sentences are changed, students see how to improve their writing ability.



20. Ibukun and other students copy the correct sentences on paper, add decorations, and put together a story about their experiences cooking—a story that they can show their friends and read—again and again.

Writing Conversation in the Dorm

By David R. Schleper

Dialogue journals are written chats between a child and an adult. The child and adult take turns writing in the journal about experiences daily. The adult does not correct the child's grammar, punctuation, or spelling, but demonstrates these skills by using correct English when responding (Bailes, 1999; Bailes, Searls, Slobodzian, & Staton, 1986).

Dialogue journals are important for students in school. They are also critical for children and parents at home. The Spring 2000 issue of *Odyssey* showed how parents and children who spoke Spanish and Mandarin used dialogue journals to help the children develop their home language (Schleper, 2000). All parents and caregivers, whether writing English or other languages, can help their children develop languages through daily use of dialogue journals.

Dialogue journals can also be used by students and dorm staff to develop students' writing skills and discuss issues important to adolescents. For example, at the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, they are used by students and dorm staff at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf. Here is part of a dialogue as it developed in a journal:

December 12

Hello anybody!

What am I doing with writing this about? (ha)

There's only 7 more days that I'm going to home in Virginia. Yahoo! What do I want for Christmas? Hmm...Lots of clothes and want new car but it isn't car until next summer. So what do you want for Christmas? Hmm...

—Toni

December 14

Shari or to anybody what I wanna 4 Christmas well, I would like a ring with Topaz cuz me birthday in November. Well, if you had a Christmas gift you got give it up, haha! Just kidding! Any way have a good Christmas.

—Cathy

December 15

I just woke up and had a nice little surprise: a little bag with cookies and kisses. What about you? Well, there's just five more days to go. I can't wait!!! I want tons of clothes, books, and money. Oh, also my family!!! Have a merry Christmas.

—Carla

The dialogue journal helps all of the students practice writing. At the same time, it gives them an opportunity to discuss important concepts for teenagers.

Toni, Cathy, and Carla were anxious about going home for the holidays but also excited to see their families. The journal allowed them to express their feelings and practice their writing.

With children in the homes with parents and caregivers, or with students and dorm staff, dialogue journals help children of all ages develop writing as well as share or address personal issues. I encourage adults to use journals with children daily.

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- Schleper, D. R. (2000). Dialogue journals...for students, teachers, and parents: Meeting students where they are. *Odyssey*, 1(2), 11–14. ●

A Role for Parents in Leading Children to Literacy





By Lillian Buffalo Tompkins

Guided reading and writing—the transitional stages between adult-led shared reading and writing and the learner’s demonstrations of independent reading and writing—are essential components of a balanced literacy program. Within a balanced literacy program, teachers facilitate and guide learners in developing personal meaning-making strategies that lead to reading and writing independently.

Guided Reading

Routman (1991) calls guided reading the heart of the instructional reading program. In guided reading, the learner is encouraged to think critically

about a reading selection and to respond to the text in personal ways. Adult-child and child-child discussion encourages the learner to appreciate and enjoy literature and to make discoveries of personal insights. The way the learner approaches guided reading—usually done aloud for at least some passages with a guiding adult—allows for emphasis on descriptive passages or settings and for the discovery of particular points of learner interest. The adult provides support to the reader’s ideas and notes the strategies he or she is employing. As Routman (1991) explains, guided reading is a time of teachable moments—where the adult and the young learner stop to examine a concept or feature of the text and the adult provides the learner with new strategies that later lead to independent reading skills. The guiding adult facilitates the young reader in noting and discussing particular concepts and vocabulary in the context of the reading selection at hand, in relating concepts and vocabulary to the learner’s life experiences, and in linking them to other books, stories, and authors. In short, the adult guides the learner in establishing meaning-making connections with the text.

When guided reading is individualized, the learners select reading materials themselves, establish their own pace in reading, and conference with the teacher one on one. In these conferences, the teacher may ask the learner to read aloud passages, retell a story, or answer questions in order to assess comprehension. On the spot

teaching of learner-focused strategies is an important part of the guided reading process. When done in small groups, guided reading promotes the sharing of critical thinking and literate interactions that evolve from an in-depth discussion of a book (Routman, 1991). As part of a balanced reading program, guided reading is done at the learner’s instructional level; that is, the difficulty of the text challenges the reader to go beyond his or her current independent level, thus moving the learner along on the developmental scale.

Cooper (2000) explains two kinds of guided reading: observational and interactive. In observational guided reading, the text contains a minimal number of new concepts and skills, and the text is usually short and read in its entirety. The teacher introduces the text, and as learners read, encourages them to make predictions. The teacher observes and coaches the learners in the use of particular strategies. In interactive guided reading, the teacher carefully guides, directs, and coaches the learner through the reading of a meaningful chunk of text by asking questions, giving prompts, or helping the learner formulate questions that he or she then tries to answer while reading. At the conclusion of the reading, the learner dis-



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AlphaKids Guided Readers

(Ages 3 and up)

Houghton Mifflin and Sundance Publishing
Littleton, Massachusetts, 1999

Editor's note: Levels 1, 4, and 7 of the AlphaKids Guided Readers series were reviewed.

In moving beyond shared reading, and reading aloud to and with their young children, what can parents do as next steps in supporting emergent and developing literacy skills?

The *AlphaKids Guided Readers* series from the Houghton Mifflin Company in cooperation with Sundance Publishing is designed to provide age-appropriate reading materials and helpful guidance for parents on steps to take after the shared reading stage.

The *AlphaKids Guided Readers* come in seven boxed sets from Level 1 (for ages 3 and up) to Level 7 (for ages 5 and up), and each set provides five individual reading books that are attractively illustrated with colored photographs or drawings. Each set is structured around a theme that appeals to the interests of young readers, and the consecutive sets contain increasingly challenging vocabulary, language patterns, and length of sentences and books.

A parent guide for each set gives brief and easy-to-follow hints and suggestions for specific steps parents can take in before-, during-, and after-reading activities that

supplement the reading selections. Included in each Parent Guide is a three-question comprehension test the parent can dictate to the child to assess the need to re-read the selection or the child's readiness to move on to a new book or to the next level in the series.

The books within a level or set can be read in any order. Each book addresses specific content or skills (i.e., Level 1 addresses colors, families, opposites, action words, and body parts/the five senses; Level 7 addresses animals, steps in a process, traditional tales, sending messages, and past-tense verbs).

Additionally, each Parent Guide contains a Make-a-Book kit that includes pre-formatted fill-in-the-blank templates for a structured writing extension activity to accompany each book.

Although the parent guides do not provide background reading theory to explain why the suggested hints and activities are important to the guided reading process, they do offer parents a framework of ways in which they can support the content that their children are likely to be learning about in school. The Parent Guides also give tips on how to make reading and writing activities outside of school continuous and fun. Parents who have been comfortable in reading to and with their children may already be intuitively including extension activities such as those suggested in the parent guides. For other parents, the leveled sets of books and the parent guides provide support for those who feel the need

for ideas on how to facilitate literacy development at home.

A potential drawback of this series is that the guides are quite directive rather than facilitative, in terms of what parents should do, and offer little or no suggestions as to what might be developmentally appropriate responses to expect of—or to encourage from—the child. While a teacher would select or design strategy-building lessons and appropriate follow-up activities depending on each learner's responses, the guides promote a one-size-fits-all approach to reading development. For example, in each of the five "before reading" sections of the guide for Level 4 (ages 4 and up), the parent is instructed to provide a sort of synopsis of the story based on the cover illustration, telling the child the main content of the story and the response of the characters, rather than encouraging the young reader to make his or her own predictions, which can be discussed and judged for accuracy after reading. Further, there is little discernable difference between the before-, during-, and after-reading activities in Level 1 and Level 7. There is no indication of what strategies or skills are being conveyed to the child; the strategies all belong to the parent. It should also be noted that leveling by age may be misleading, since a younger reader may be reading for a higher level text, and an older but beginning reader may need a lower level than the designated age suggests.

cusses with the teacher the answers to questions or predictions as well as other points. The teacher also encourages the learner to reflect on the strategies used and how the strategies have helped the learner to construct meaning (Cooper, 2000).

Guided Writing

As in guided reading, the purpose of guided writing is to guide learners, to respond to them, and to extend their thinking about the processes of com-

posing text. The teacher's role in guided writing is that of facilitator, guiding learners toward discoveries about what they want to say and how to say it meaningfully with clarity, coherence, interest, style, form, and individual voice. In guided writing, teachers are supportive rather than directive, suggesting rather than prescribing. Ownership of the writing remains with the learner (Routman, 1991).

Guided writing follows and builds upon the learner's opportunities in

shared writing to see writing demonstrated, in shared contexts that included the demonstration of topic selection, drafting, responding, editing, and other mini-lessons done by the teacher. Malik (1999) notes that in the use of mini-lessons during guided writing, the teacher can help learners build their written language skills by encouraging the elaboration of details and by addressing content, grammar, and mechanics in the writing process. The teacher asks questions about the



In the *AlphaKids Guided Readers* reading texts, each leveled set contains a Make-a-Book Kit that serves as the guided writing activity. The format is the same regardless of the level. The child creates a book from the template of cut-out pages provided in the Parent Guide.

In Level 1, there is space above the given fill-in-the-blank formatted text for the child to produce his or her own illustration, assuming that the child will produce an illustration based on the given text. However, this would be an artificial application, since the natural process for a child of this age is to create an illustration and support it with text, often scribbled but representative of meaning to the child.

In Level 7, the illustrations are given and the child is directed to manipulate cut-out blocks of given text to create the book. Further, in the book kit for Level 1 there is a puzzling inconsistency: the blurb on the box claims that the stories in this set contain no "return sweeps" or sentences/lines of text

that continue on a second line. However, in the book template there are not only sweeps but blanks (to be filled in) that end one line with the text continuing on a second line. In consideration of these points, it may be more appropriate as a guided writing follow-up to the guided reading selections to encourage the child to produce and illustrate a piece of writing of his or her own creation and then to talk about the process, rather than to be limited to the particular formats of the kits.

Overall, despite some theoretical drawbacks, the *AlphaKids Guided Readers* kits provide visually appealing sets of materials that parents can utilize as is or adapt in support of literacy development in their young readers and writers.

—Lil Tompkins

learner's writing, encourages the learner to talk about writing, and helps the learner to become aware of his or her responsibility for the correct use of syntax. As with all language instruction, the role of guidance in writing is to lead the learner toward independence.

Resources

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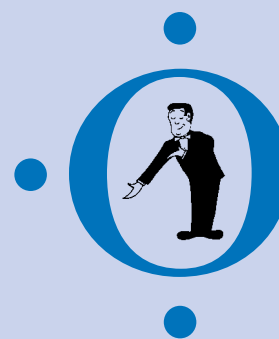
Lillian Buffalo Tompkins, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Department of Education at Gallaudet University. She has eighteen years of experience as a teacher and administrator in residential schools for the deaf. She welcomes comments about this article via e-mail: Lillian.Tompkins@gallaudet.edu.

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Calling Up Literacy



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BONNIE NEELEY.

By Bonnie M. Neeley

When the phone rings at our house, it also flashes. The flashing light alerts my eleven-year-old daughter, Becca, that the phone is ringing and she answers it. Because Becca is deaf, she places the telephone receiver into a coupler and begins to type her message.

When the phone is for Becca, it is most likely her best friend Lindsay calling to chat or to make plans. Lindsay is also deaf. She and Becca have been friends since preschool.

After my husband and I learned that Becca was deaf, one of the first things we did was purchase a TTY, a special telephone that allows deaf people to type their messages instead of speak them. We took to heart this quote: "In a culture where written language is prominent and readily available, basic literacy is a natural extension of an individual's linguistic development, given adequate environmental conditions" (Fillion and Brause, 1989). We knew that deaf chil-

OPPOSITE: Mother and daughter, Rebecca with her mother author Bonnie Neeley on the steps of their home.

dren are natural language learners, and we believed that frequent and meaningful use of the TTY would translate into valuable literacy experiences.

We decided to introduce our daughter to the TTY when she was in preschool. We purchased and used our TTY for phone conversations with deaf friends, and kept it in an accessible location in our home. At this age, Becca would observe us and her older sister using the TTY. We would tell her who we were calling and interpret the conversations for her.

When Becca was in preschool, our family moved to the neighborhood where Lindsay's family lives. Each girl enjoyed having a signing playmate nearby and frequently visited each other's home.

each other and began to take turns typing back and forth. They learned that the symbol "GA" for "Go Ahead" served as a way to signal the other to take a turn. These conversations looked like this:

Becca: sdkdhtpwerndsflksdferewunGA
Lindsay: alkhdfhaweroyuhaefnbdhfsafb
sdjouhgrerawrhwerlwherbwkwjkh
fjbsdfgGAajskjdsfkjhsdfkjhwernbfnGA

Sometimes one of the girls would take a very long turn and the other would become bored and hang up. Her friend was left happily typing, unaware that the "message" was not being received on the other end until she finally signaled "GA" and received no response.

We tried to provide frequent

During first grade, the girls assumed more responsibility for their phone calls. Their language, spelling, and keyboard skills gradually improved. At age six, Lindsay called from our house to ask her mother for permission to join us at the local swimming pool:

Mom: GRETta HERE GA
Lindsay: LINDsAY HERE GA
Mom: HI HOW ARE YOU GA
Lindsay: FINE CAN I GO SWIMING (sic) (long pause)
Mom: YOU FORGOT TO SAY GA
Lindsay: GA

Early in their friendship, both sets of parents began to model using the TTY for phone conversations about the girls' play arrangements. For example, if Lindsay wanted to play with Becca, her mother used the TTY to call our house while Lindsay stood by watching. After answering the phone, we summoned Becca to watch the conversation.

Becca and Lindsay soon expressed interest in using the TTY themselves. They learned how to cradle the telephone receiver on the TTY and to turn it on. Because they could recognize numbers, they were able to dial with assistance from a parent or sibling who signed the correct sequence of numbers.

They frequently asked to "talk" to

demonstrations for our daughter. This most often took the form of typing the message, then reading it back to Becca. A typical exchange between my husband and daughter looked like this:

Becca: (signs) "Lindsay bike."
Chuck: (types) PLEASE BRING YOUR BIKE, (signs) "It says 'please bring your bike.'"

This operation did not always run smoothly. There were misunderstandings and frustrations, especially when we became too intrusive. We tried to follow our daughter's lead and learned to balance between offering guidance and allowing her to learn from her

own successes and errors.

In kindergarten, as Lindsay and Becca's emerging literacy skills continued to develop, they began to type and read familiar words during TTY conversations. At first they typed their names at the beginning of the conversation. Then they learned to type "here." This was an easy word because the "e" and "r" are adjacent on the keyboard. They also learned to hit the spacebar between words. Soon Becca could independently dial Lindsay's house and upon seeing an answer type, "Becca here GA."

During each call Becca wanted me to pause and allow her to read for herself what words she could recognize. If I forgot or was unaware that she knew a word, I would be scolded!

During first grade, the girls assumed more responsibility for their phone calls. Their language, spelling, and keyboard skills gradually improved. At age six, Lindsay called

from our house to ask her mother for permission to join us at the local swimming pool:

Mom: GRETTA HERE GA

Lindsay: LINDSAY HERE GA

Mom: HI HOW ARE YOU GA

Lindsay: FINE CAN I GO SWIMMING (sic)
(long pause)

Mom: YOU FORGOT TO SAY GA

Lindsay: GA

Mom: I THINK IT WILL BE FUN FOR YOU
TO SWIM YES YOU CAN GO WHO WILL
GO WITH YOU Q GA

Lindsay: REBECCA

Mom: WHO WILL DRIVE YOU Q GA

Lindsay: CHUCK GA

Mom: THAT IS FINE YOU NEED TO GET
YOUR PLUG FOR YOUR EAR GA

Lindsay: YES

As Becca and Lindsay gained more skills, our involvement in their conversations dwindled to occasionally spelling or reading an unknown word.

By third grade, Becca began to use the relay service to phone her hearing friend, Willie. Relay services, now the law in the United States, allow a deaf person to call another caller who does not have a TTY by using an operator as an intermediary.

Willie had a habit of beginning most sentences with "Wulp" as in: "Wulp, you can't come over now 'cause I'm bare naked." The relay operator typed everything Willie said, and Becca called me to the phone to translate "Wulp" and "bare naked." "Bare naked" was easily interpreted, but "wulp" presented a challenge. The best I could do was explain that Willie meant "well" and sometimes hearing people use that word to begin relating a thought. A few months later I noticed Becca finger-spelling "well" during signed conversations. She also incorporated this into written sentences.

Lindsay and Becca eventually used the phone and the TTY like other girls

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their age. They ordered pepperoni pizza and even made an occasional prank call. The TTY has been a wonderful tool. It provides young deaf children with a meaningful way to learn the power of the printed word. It's definitely something our family could not have lived without.

Six Years Later

Becca Still Lets Her Fingers Do the Talking

It's been six years since I wrote "Calling Up Literacy" and Rebecca, as she now prefers to be called, is seventeen years old. As I recently reread the article, I thought of how we have continued to use the TTY and how electronic print has afforded her so many opportunities to practice reading and writing for very real purposes.

Besides using it to connect with friends or to call me at work to tattle on her big sister, Sarah, Rebecca has used the TTY increasingly as her connection to the world in general. Beginning at age twelve, when she used the relay service to call the veterinarian to determine if her pet lizard was "really dead" and not just hibernating, the TTY has provided her with a means of navigating the world through print.

Recently, I got a call at work from Rebecca. She said she had been shopping and found the snow boarding pants she wanted on sale. The clerk at the store told her they were going fast, so she asked me to stop on the way home from work and pick up a pair for her. At the store, I surveyed the available choices and used my cell phone and the relay service to call Rebecca and describe them. When I got home, she determined that the purchased pair were the perfect color (they match those of her boyfriend), fit, and price for her limited budget. Oh, the power of the wireless word!

Over the years we have also added other technology aids. We found that



caller ID is a great accessory for a deaf/hearing family. When the phone rings it flashes, but it also displays the caller's identity. With caller ID, Rebecca also knows the identity of the caller. A headset added to our "hearing" phone has also proved helpful by making our hands free when we have need to interpret or sign during phone calls.

We also recently discovered wireless communication through two-way alphanumeric pagers. We were lucky enough to find a used pager and service in our area at a reasonable price. Rebecca uses the pager to send and receive messages from voice and TTY phones and through e-mail. Pager communication provides a new challenge for us. Where we previously encouraged Rebecca to expand her language, with the pager we try to condense communication to only the most vital information. I can foresee that

this may prove interesting when we page Rebecca to remind her of her curfew and she tries to negotiate a later hour.

Her years of experience using the TTY helped Rebecca smoothly switch lanes onto the digital information highway. The Internet has become her preferred mode of electronic communication. While attending our state's school for the deaf and she has developed friendships with other deaf teens throughout the state. On weekends and holidays she stays in touch with her school friends by visiting on-line. She also uses the Internet for school projects, shopping, travel, and entertainment information.

The new technology and the TTY provide a medium to use literacy skills to access the world and to gain some very valuable growing-up experiences.

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The first part of this article was printed originally in the 1994 fall issue of Talking Points: Conversations in the Whole Language Community (6, 2). It is used with permission. ●

Bonnie M. Neeley, mother of Rebecca Neeley, lives on Bainbridge Island, Washington.

TOP: Rebecca today, second from left, with her friends from the Washington State School for the Deaf. **ABOVE:** Rebecca Neeley, 9 years old, left, and her deaf friend and TTY pal, Lindsay.



Technology Provides the Motivation, Students Provide the Writing



BEGIN

By Joyce Barrett
and Rosemary Stifter

Getting kids to practice writing is a challenge for teachers and parents. Modern computers can be great motivators. Computer technology can make the process of revising and editing much less painful. Software that provides graphics and color is more interesting to work with and enables final creations that look lively and professional.

For the youngest kids, look for programs that spur the imagination with pictures and settings for stories. For older kids, look for software that is used in the business environment.

Here are some programs to help you and your students get started.

Inspiration Education Edition

<http://www.inspiration.com>

This is a powerful visual tool that helps children and young adults develop ideas and organize thinking. Easy to use, it enables users to focus on ideas. Use this software before writing a story or research paper, or to plan a project or even a family vacation. Reluctant writers can work with adults to use graphic organizers that provide a non-threatening way to get started.

Kid Works Deluxe

<http://www.knowledgeadventure.com>

Children in grades K–4 glean unlimited opportunities to express themselves with pictures and words. Kids can create multimedia books, stories, and poems by using the word processor and paint programs. Non-writers can

select pictures and then change them into words.

My First Amazing Diary

<http://http://www.dk.com/us/>

Designed to engage young learners in grades K–3 in writing and self-expression, this program is extremely interactive. Children should spend hours writing about their favorite topic, “Me”!

Storybook Weaver Deluxe

<http://www.learningcompany.com>

This software lets children in grades 1–6 create their own books with numerous backgrounds and an extensive library of clip art. A child-friendly word processor includes a spell-checker and thesaurus and allows kids to write in English or Spanish.

ABOVE: Computers are powerful visual tools enabling students of all ages to explore print and write creatively.

Amazing Writing Machine

<http://www.learningcompany.com>

This is a creative writing, illustration, and story-starter program that invites children in grades 1–5 to express their thoughts, ideas, and opinions in five forms: story, letter, journal, essay, and poem. It is easy to illustrate with painting tools, rubber stamps, and clip art.

Imagination Express

<http://www.edmark.com>

Theme packs with illustrated backgrounds and hundreds of stickers enable students to create interesting stories or multi-media production. The program includes a small section called Story Ideas which are movies—unfortunately not captioned—of students giving practical ideas for writing.

Student Writing Center

<http://www.learningcompany.com>

An excellent word processing program for older children grades 5–12, this includes such features as a bibliography maker, grammar tips, graphics and pre-formatted letters, journals, signs, and newsletters.

PrintMaster Gold Publishing Suite

www.learningcompany.com

or Print Artist 4.0

<http://www.knowledgeadventure.com>

These well-known desktop publishing tools will motivate your children to create greeting cards or invitations using thousands of original ready-to-print designs. Both programs are recommended for grades 3 and up.

Microsoft Publisher

<http://www.microsoft.com>

The newer versions of this program include wizards for making postcards, banners, flyers, signs, brochures, cards, calendars, and even Web pages. All you need is a little imagination. This program is recommended for grades 5 and up but can be used with younger ages.

Microsoft Word

<http://www.microsoft.com>

or AppleWorks

<http://www.apple.com/appleworks>

These word processing programs can be used by students in grades 4 and up for drafting and editing their writing. These programs have several tools, such as a spell checker and thesaurus. In Word, parents can help children in the editing process by inserting comments to their writing that look like Post-it notes or by highlighting grammatical mistakes for later correction.

Microsoft PowerPoint

<http://www.microsoft.com>

This presentation software can be used by students in grades 4 and up. Graphics, short movies, words, and animations can be included in presentations for school, activity groups, or family. Visual programs like this help bridge the gap between a hearing and deaf/hard of hearing audience.

Focus on Grammar

<http://www.exceller.com>

An interactive drill and practice grammar program for high school students and adults, this was originally created for foreign language speakers who are learning English. We have found it to be helpful for deaf and hard of hearing high school students who want to improve their understanding and use of English grammar.

Except for a single listening component, most parts of the software are fully accessible to deaf students. There are four different levels sold on separate CDs—basic, intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced. If during writers' workshop, students discover specific grammar problems, they can use this program for review and practice.

Rosemary Stifter, M.A., is an academic application specialist at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School at the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University. Stifter has worked as an elementary and high school teacher and technology specialist in a program for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Joyce Barrett is an academic application specialist at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf at the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University. Barrett has worked as an adult education/GED/ESL teacher and as an educational consultant for a computer software company.

Using the Internet

The World Wide Web is a wonderful resource. Kids are excited by the idea of making web pages and publishing their work on the Web for a prospective audience that can come from anywhere in the world.

Web Workshop 2.0

<http://www.sunburst.com/schoolhouse/webworkshop>

This is a Web publishing program designed for younger children. The whole family can create a Web page and each family member can create a page about himself or herself. Add photos or try your hand at drawing with the easy-to-use paint tool.

Send your Web project to Web Workshop and it will be published on the Web.

Netscape Composer

<http://www.netscape.com>

A Web page development program included with Netscape Communicator, this can be downloaded for free. It is very simple to use for grades 5 to adult.

Visit Clerc Center

Clerc Center One Stop Source is a resource library of Web links. To find Web links related to *Writer's Workshop*, go to <http://clerccenter3.gallaudet.edu/>, click on **Other Resources** and then **Literacy**. Under Literacy you will see **Writers' Workshop** with Web links to help you find more information.

Software to Go is a clearinghouse for software evaluation information among parents, educational programs, and agencies concerned with the educational needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Go to Clerc Center homepage at <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>, scroll down to the section entitled **Information Systems and Computer Support** where you will find a link to **Software To Go**. ●

Journals in Home and School

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By David R. Schleper

During the school day, children and their teachers can use a written log or journal to record, explore, and reflect on personal responses to science (Schleper, 1999), math (Hartman, 1994; Schleper & Paradis, 1990), social studies, Deaf culture (Weinstock & Schleper, 1993), and instructional themes (Welsh-Charrier, 1991). The adult reads and responds to the students' journals regularly. Both the children and the adults monitor individual development and progress.

During the evening hours, children and their parents, caregivers, or dorm staff can also use other journals and logs to help the children develop their writing abilities.

Journals or logs that are kept on

individual topics help children frame their observations or responses by allowing them to focus on one topic. Children can then focus more on the elements of writing, such as grammar or spelling, and concentrate on improving their abilities in those areas. Over time, the children gain confidence in their writing abilities and become comfortable with writing tasks.

Working in the Dorms

At the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center's Model Secondary School for the Deaf, staff and members of the campus community teach classes related to their individual interests, skills, and talents every Wednesday afternoon. Students can select from 15 to 20 special topics each quarter. Some examples of topics include sports safety, biographies about deaf people, golf, making a Web page, basic astronomy, and boat building.

Students apply what they learn in Special Topic classes to real-life situations. For example, one Special Topic

class included a student project to place fish aquariums in every residence hall. Students researched how to establish and maintain healthy aquariums, and learned about which fish are compatible with each other, water temperature, pH levels, fish diseases, and salt water tanks. Students continue to be responsible for the maintenance of the aquariums, solving problems such as caring for sick fish, feeding the fish, and cleaning the aquariums.

Every evening the students take care of the aquariums. During that time, a log is kept for students to write what they are seeing, or what they are working on related to the aquariums.

For example, Rita writes in her journal about her recent experience. She talks about going to the residence hall, getting a hose to clean the tank, discussing it with Mary, cleaning the tank, scrubbing the filter, and making the tank ready for the fish.

This kind of task-related writing helps young adults become more comfortable with writing and document the



changes over the year. The same idea can be used in homes with different children and young adults. Parents and children can set up a log to document how the dog learns tricks. They can have a journal about house plants, where the children make notes of how often the plant is watered, given sun, and so on. They can create journals using e-mail to discuss books they read

together. The more journals and logs set up, the more likely that the children and young adults will become more comfortable about writing.

In the world of work, people use writing daily. Technicians must keep maintenance or repair logs. Medical personnel must keep regular patient records. Secretaries must keep a record of each phone call. Journals and logs help children realize the central part that writing plays in everyday life.

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David R. Schleper, M.A., is literacy coordinator for the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University. He welcomes comments about this article. david.schleper@gallaudet.edu.

LEFT: Observing and writing about nature can be done in the home or in the dorm.



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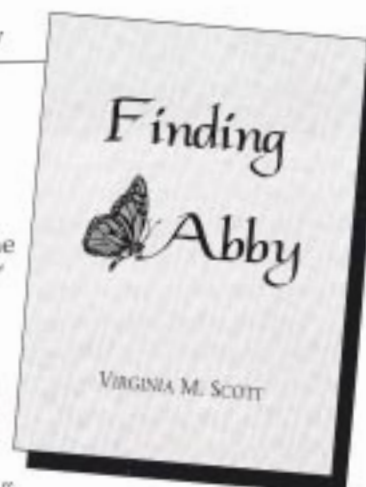
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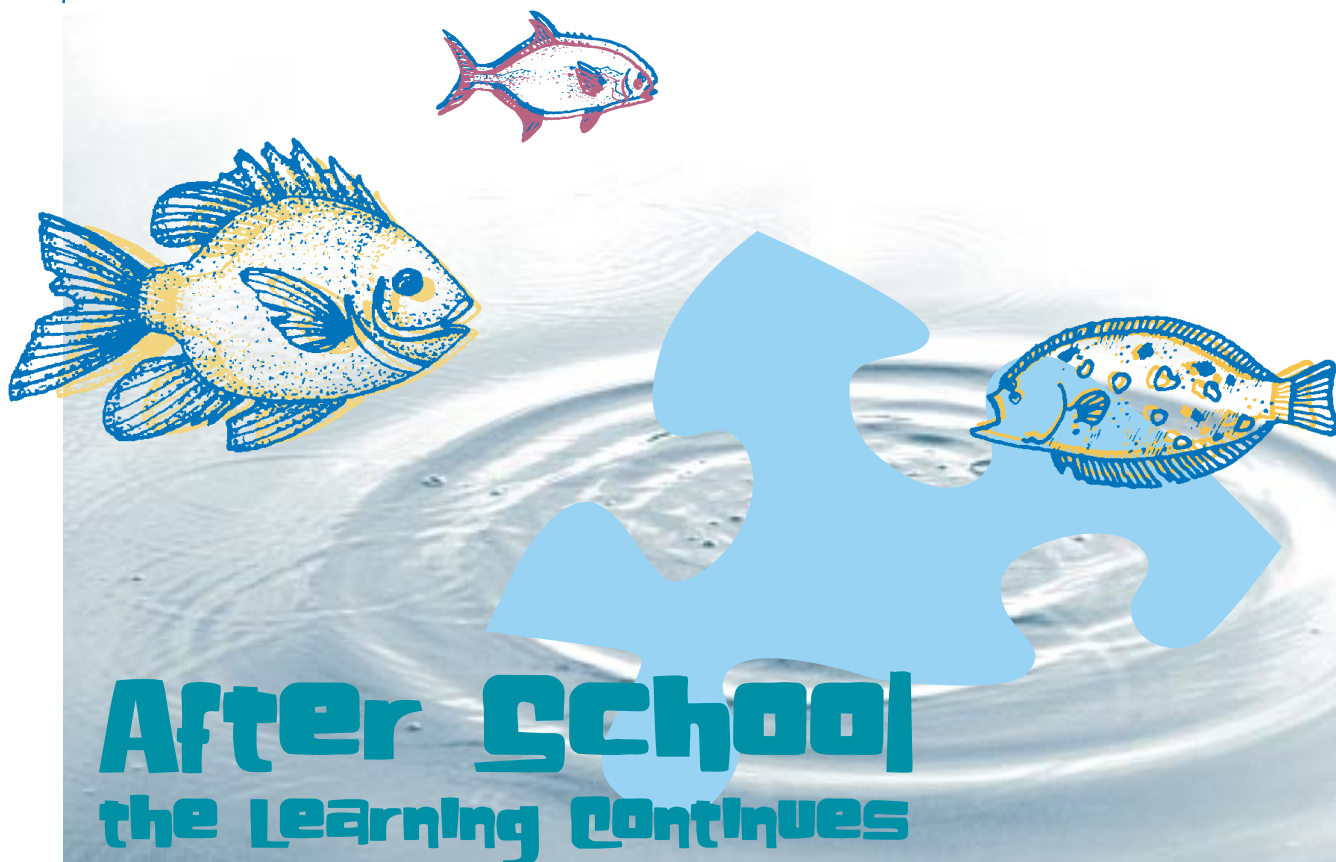


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By Frank Turk

Tenzin Chopak, who grew up in India after his family fled Tibet and then moved recently to Washington, D.C., reflected on his mural.

"I chose to paint fish because I like their color and shape," he said. "I didn't bring the book with me to paint. I closed it up and just went ahead."

The mural, a bright confluence of blues and pinks in a representation of life beneath the ocean, adorns the walls of the Eagle Center, the student

snack bar, the game room, and the informal lounge in the residence hall at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf where Tenzin is a sophomore.

Tenzin has lived in the United States for four years. He was a commuter student at P.S. 47 and Lexington School for the Deaf in New York before his father's job with the federal government brought him to Washington, D.C. Tenzin enjoys—and appreciates—school with the unique perspective of a young man who knows what it is like to grow up in a country where deaf children are not educated.

"Education is important to me," he said in what has become fluent American Sign Language. "Education and English—I want them."

As a result, when the administration



approved the idea of painting a mural on the Eagle Center wall, Tenzin was a natural choice to do it. A skilled artist, he was also an eager reader and a willing researcher.

Before painting, Tenzin and another student surveyed the other students

lively colors and natural shapes.

I asked Tenzin to explore his topic and artistic talent further by doing extra research on weekends when he went home. I called his mother, explained what we were up to, and asked for her support. She gave it. The

As we infuse *Literacy Opportunities* into our day-to-day after-school program, we build research and printed English into all of the students' tasks.

for a suitable topic for the mural. The students agreed with Tenzin that there were enough representations of the eagle—the school mascot—on the walls throughout school and dorms and that underwater life would be an exciting picture for their Eagle Center walls. After he received the opinions of the other students, Tenzin drafted a proposal and submitted it to school administrators who enthusiastically approved it.

Many students pitched in to apply the initial coat of base paint. Then Tenzin took over. As the project advanced into the sixth week, it was evident that something special was happening. Everyone remarked on the

next Monday, Tenzin returned with a written summary of his findings.

Our involvement in something of this magnitude has a number of important effects. Too often “dorm time” is dismissed, but residential students—like their day school peers—spend most of their day outside of the classroom. Nevertheless, dorm staff often feel like the “forgotten ones” in the school. Academics and learning are too often forced exclusively into students’ classroom hours. We’ve networked and made ourselves visible and become part of students’ literacy development. It has served to remind everyone of the valuable role that dorm staff can play.

As we infuse literacy opportunities into our day-to-day after-school program, we build research and printed English into all of the students’ tasks.

Tenzin’s comments seem to confirm that we are on the right track, both in appreciating the importance of our after-school program and in insisting that it be infused with literacy opportunities. Tenzin said he likes the residential school experience, and he credits it with enabling him to improve his English.

“Living in the dorm has led to easier communication,” he said. “School is not so separate. The ease in communication has led to writing...I feel more comfortable with writing.”

Tenzin’s efforts are just one example of the efforts we make to nourish our students’ development of literacy in our after-school program. Students run the snack bar and keep its books. They handle the repairs to our campus bikes and produce on computers posters that advertise special school events. We also pursue overnight hikes and camping—a memorable experience for everyone.

These activities not only develop our students’ literacy skills but also are critical for their self-esteem. As visitors react to Tenzin’s mural, the pleasure and pride are evident on his face. Art has always been his passion. Our program gives him the chance to let his skills shine—and to use his interest in art to nourish his skills in reading and writing. We provide this emphasis on literacy within the empowering environment in a residential school.

Check out Literacy in Action, co-curricular activities on the Web at <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/studentlife/co-curricular/index.html>. ●

Frank Turk, Physical Education, Health & Recreation, is coordinator of co-curricular activities at the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.

ABOVE: Tenzin talks with author Frank Turk, coordinator of co-curricular activities at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf.



RESEARCHING UNDERWATER LIFE... PAINTING FISH... AND TRYING SOMETHING NEW

By Tenzin Chopak

Editor's Note: This is Tenzin's original note—the first draft of what could easily become a Writer's Workshop.

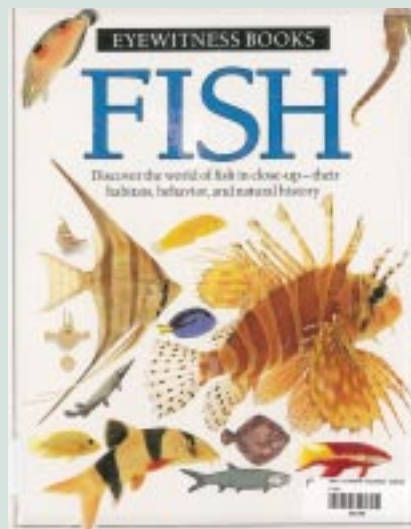
I have not had much practice in drawing or painting any animals. But now is the first time to draw to paint fish. I have always drawn art that involves space, model body, comics, and engines. Mostly this is what I used for subjects for art and not much with animals. I did not want to copy from the books about fish gallery that to arts on the wall in the Eagle Center. So before beginning to draw, I studied arts in the fish books at Library.

I was studying in fish the shape, plants, and colors. I felt it is not easy for drawing these because fish have many different colors also shape. If I did not yet study any about fishes, I would draw the fish like two grade. I would not be perfect with any fish shape and colors.

So I admit try something new. I thought I will draw lousy art of the fish. But most of the teacher and students that their said WOW! Because I already learned before about 2D, 3D,

and shadow. Those very important. If I not study in 2D, 3D, and shadow, the art picture would be lousy! I had new practice in any animals use what I already practiced in 2D, 3D, and shadow. Then I admit to study in any fish or plants. I was thinking plan 2D, 3D, and

shadow that match to add the fish. Because I studied books about fish, I did not have very hard time to paint art on the wall in Eagle Center. ●



TOP: Tenzin Chopak in front of the mural he researched, conceptualized, designed, and painted at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf. ABOVE: Books that provide Tenzin information about the shape, color, size, and names of the ocean's fish.

A Family Embraces Books With a Daughter



By Donna Venturini

Our goal from the beginning was not only that Meghan would learn to read, but that she would also enjoy reading. We never focused on just one method. Instead we tried different varieties of the different methods. When Meghan enjoyed what we did, we kept doing it, but when she did not enjoy it we would stop. We found different ideas from magazines, books, and talking with teachers.

Our home is full of books. Our whole family enjoys reading and our different tastes can be seen in our books. We have baby books, picture books, easy readers, Caldecott books, Newberry books, ALA Booklists, and Horn books. We have fiction, fact, historical, science fiction, fantasy, horror, self-help, and cookbooks. We buy books at stores and pick them up at garage sales and swaps. Meghan and her sister and brothers buy

books through the Scholastic and Troll book clubs at school. We give books as gifts.

As soon as our children could spell their names, we got them each a library card. We fill a shopping bag with books on our visits to the library. During the summer, we use the library's reading incentive program, counting the number of books read and getting prizes based on that number.

We were really not sure how we would transition from picture books to chapter books when Meghan was first learning to read. With the help of the Shared Reading Project, we got some good hints. At first we read along with Meghan. At school she was reading *Charlotte's Web* and her teacher really made her feel confident that bigger books could be read.

At home we started with *The Boxcar Children* because I remembered loving that book's mystery and excitement when I was Meghan's age. We would read a little each night and then talk about what we read. For example, we talked about the ages of the kids and how Meghan was the same age as one of the characters. The next night we

would review what had happened before starting on the next chapter. It was also a time when Meghan and I were alone together. There were no interruptions allowed! I would not answer the phone or let the other children interrupt us. That was really hard to do with four kids! Sometimes Meghan would get started reading the chapter without me so I would ask her what had happened so far and then we would go from there. I would use a lot of expression with my comments about events in the story and would encourage Meghan to do the same.

I am interested in genealogy and often talk about my grandparents and how things were different when they were children. This sparked Meghan's interest in history, so we got *The Little House in the Big Woods*. It was a wonderful story. If there was something that was hard to explain, such as using a pig's bladder for a balloon, I would go to the library to find information on pig's anatomy and show Meghan so that she could visualize the idea. We followed the series next with *Farmer Boy*, which had a lot of emphasis on food. So we tried some of the recipes and to this day the kids still eat their pancakes with butter and brown sugar for a special treat just like in *Farmer Boy*.

As we read this series, we would pull out maps and follow the trail of the Ingalls family. Each day, we would make various comments about the story. We would talk about how Laura had only one doll and then we would count how many dolls Meghan had. If I happened to be washing clothes, I would say how happy I was because I did not have to do the wash outside or that I did not have to make my own soap.

As time went on, Meghan grew more comfortable reading. Still I would read the same chapter that she was reading and then we would discuss it. For a time, Meghan was curious about why children misbehave so much, so we found *A Christmas Pageant* to read. It was funny and I would make remarks like, "Aren't you happy that Alice is not with you!" or "Did you get

that bruise from one of the Herman Kids?" or "You'd better not start swearing!" We would talk about how it must be hard not having a dad at home and having a mom who had to work a lot.

Of course this meant that I had to read a lot of children's books. But the children's books today seem better than children's books when I was growing up, so I didn't feel it was a burden. When Meghan would get fixated on the same genre, I would add a different book to her pile and start reading it. Then I would tell her a little about it to catch her interest. Many times her older siblings would join in the conversation since they also would read the book. Some books were easier reads than others, but I never felt a book was too young for her. We often revisited books that we had already read and that now felt like old friends. We learned something new each time. When picking out books, I would look for a synopsis to see if they had something that would interest Meghan. Her brothers and sister also recommend books. I've always felt that if the book received an award, there must be something good in it.

Although Meghan has been reading on her own for a while now, I still read the books she is reading—especially when she likes them. We launch constant searches to find out who in the house has which copy and try to steal a few minutes with the book before someone else lays claim to it. Some books are "skim reads," as we seek out specific information. But if a book becomes a favorite, as *Harry Potter* was, it is important to read it all so that when the discussions take place we really know what we're talking about.

Meghan also had a journal that she kept on her bed stand. She would write something and then her Dad or I would write back before the next night. We wrote about the cats and their amusing behavior or why we had a good or a bad day. Sometimes my husband did a weather update so Meghan could pick out appropriate clothes. Sometimes he wrote about cur-

rent events and what they meant. When she visited her grandparents, they kept up the diary, writing questions, thoughts, concerns, and plans throughout the day. It was especially nice because when we came to pick her up, Meghan's diary provided a good idea of what had happened during her visit. Now we are working on our family history, matching up family stories with pictures and putting together a scrapbook.

We also subscribe to a different magazine for each of our four children. We end up reading each other's magazines of course, but each child gets to have at least one subscription that comes in his or her name. Right now we have *National Geographic*, *American Girl*, *Jump, Jr. National Geographic*, *Taste of Home*, *Boys' Life*, *Cat's Health Newsletter*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Kids Discover*.

The daily newspaper is also important. We share our favorite comics usually at the breakfast table or at the bus stop. Ann Landers is also read in the morning. We don't always read the whole paper with Meghan, but if there is a story she would be interested in, we point it out. Also, her grandparents send articles for her to read that they cut out of their local paper.

When we cook, we read recipes, decide what we should make, and find out if we have all the ingredients needed.

We don't limit television, but we try not to watch it too much. We always have the captions on and if there is a show that isn't captioned someone interprets it for Meghan. We rent movies based on books read and discuss how they are different from the books.

Meghan constantly sees all of us reading, so she knows that we value and enjoy it immensely. The whole family reads, so reading is not just an activity that she pursues by herself. In our house, reading is a family affair. ●

Donna Venturini is the mother of four children, including Meghan, who is a student in the 6-7-8 team at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School in the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.

Making It a Game

Literacy and Learning Through Play

By Barbara C. Brinks

Perspectives Around the Country

Barbara C. Brinks, M.Ed., has taught kindergarten through 12th grade and is currently a doctoral candidate in Special Education-Administration at Gallaudet University.

Play is for everyone at every age. There is evidence that hearing children develop some of the basis for literacy skills from play, however research on how play affects young deaf children's early literacy development is very limited (Ewoldt, 1990). Though the nature of early language development has been controversial for young deaf children, most believe that play provides opportunity for the cognitive and linguistic development that contributes to literacy. This occurs in a variety of ways:

- **Developing linguistic and other symbolic processes.** Lev Vygotsky, a theorist on thought and language, noted that when there is environmental support, the child increases his or her linguistic skills. Through play, teachers and parents can encourage children to understand the language of everyday events.
- **Channeling emotions, expressing feelings.**



PHOTOS BY GOODMAN/VAN RIPER.

Play provides a way of releasing emotions, and expressing feelings such as curiosity, excitement, shyness, fear, anxiety, and anger. Involvement in roleplaying and mini dramas helps children develop emotional values.

- **Developing positive self-esteem.** This occurs as children achieve control over their environment, even when it is imaginary. In play, a child is free to experiment and develop problem-solving skills.
- **Promoting physical development and coordination.** Running, catching and throwing, and thinking while active are all important skills to develop.

Reading—An Important Form of Play

Reading with children is a primary form of play. Research done by Lartz (1993) and Lartz and McCollum (1990) shows that the quality and quantity of questions that occur during reading interactions with deaf children seem to be different than those that occur with hearing children. Lartz (1993) found that hearing mothers asked fewer questions of deaf daughters during storybook time than they asked of their hearing children and speculated that this was because the mothers adjusted their questions to reflect what they perceived as the delayed learning of their daughters. Lartz and McCollum (1990) in research on deaf and hearing twins also found that hearing mothers asked

fewer questions of their deaf daughters than their hearing daughters in reading. They speculated that this was due partly to the perception of delayed language development; partly to aspects



of visual communication that the hearing mothers had not mastered, i.e., how to handle interaction when the deaf child looks away; partly to the longer length of reading time needed for reading to the deaf twin than for the hearing twin; and partly to the mother's lack of knowledge in using gestural communication. Swisher (1992) implied that parents could facilitate better communication skills with their young deaf children by observing the children's nonverbal communication behaviors rather than initiating conversations. Mather (1987), in an article about eye gaze and communication in a deaf classroom, found that lack of appropriate eye gaze causes breakdowns with turn-taking between deaf children and their teachers.

TOP: Through play, teachers and parents can help children understand the language of everyday events. ABOVE: Reading—an important form of play.

Ten At Home Literacy Strategies for the Very Young

The strategies below may help parents and caregivers promote early literacy skills with deaf and hard of hearing children.

1. Play table games and cards.

Checkers, Boggle Up, Candyland, and other games build on problem-solving skills and memory. In playing games, children also learn how to follow directions and develop turn-taking skills. Card games, such as Old Maid, help children to develop thinking, decision-making, and word recognition skills, as well as reinforce concepts of numbers, colors, and letters.

2. Choose a family night to watch a captioned film or videotape. It is important to discuss the movie after it is over. This helps children develop basic reading skills, communication skills, social skills, and moral values. Asking appropriate questions in appropriate ways also helps them to develop better pre-reading skills.

3. Encourage children to cut out and sort coupons. Newspapers and magazines carry a variety of coupons for groceries. Have children cut out the coupons and place them into categories. This develops eye-hand coordination, and helps children learn about numbers and money and how to group materials into categories.

4. Establish a family job chart. Assign chores to everyone in the family. This helps children develop better sequential skills, self-esteem, responsibility, cooperative skills, and organization skills.

5. Set up a playhouse using either old sheets or a big box from an appliance store. Organize the whole family to help decorate the playhouse with left-over paints or wallpaper. Create different plays with your deaf child relating to what he or she has seen and learned. Purposes include developing social skills, creativity, self-esteem, visual communication skills, and learning to follow directions.

6. Go to the library. Make it a practice to go weekly or twice a month and borrow books relating to what the child

learns at school. Take the whole family. Make sure that the children have their own library cards.

7. Have a routine family reading time. Ask the child questions about what is happening in the pictures of storybooks. Purposes include developing a sense of belonging, prereading strategies, and reading appreciation skills.

8. Establish a family journal. Two or three times a week, encourage your child to sit down and contribute to a pictorial record of the family. Children can draw and label pictures that reflect what they did during the day. Guillaume (1998) states that early drawings serve as helpful tools to see what the child has learned from his or her hands-on activities and reading experiences. Have each family member take turns talking about what the child has drawn. Give high praise! This enables children to develop cognitive and better turn-taking skills, and to better prereading and prewriting skills.

9. When going out for a short or long trip, take a camera. Later, ask the child to explain what the photos are about. Write descriptive sentences for each photo. Put the pictures together for story time. Ewoldt (1988) verifies that repeated readings are especially important for the deaf child. Children will develop familiarity with the nature of narrative and storytelling, develop memory and skills in creative expression, word recognition, and receptive and expressive language. The pictures will be an excellent resource for the family journal.

10. Take a visual gestural communication workshop. This workshop is a fun activity for the whole family! The same purpose might be achieved by asking a deaf family to come play a Pictionary game. This will help you and your child to develop facial expressions and social and communication skills, including eye contact and receptive language skills.

As shown above, play is not just fun. It is a critical part of each child's cognitive and linguistic development. Parents who make sure that their

home promotes play will help the entire family communicate better, and the children, hearing and deaf, to begin to develop literacy skills.

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Literacy, Information, and Jobs

Students Tap into the Computer Revolution



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CARA SENTERFEIT.

By Cara Senterfeit
and Erik Drasgow

Perspectives on the Country

Cara Senterfeit, MLIS, is a teacher of deaf and hard of hearing middle school students at Crayton Middle School in Columbia, South Carolina.

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Computers are an integral part of everyday life. They are in homes, where people use them for communication, entertainment, and finances. They are in the community, where people use them for buying groceries at

the supermarket and for getting money from automated bank tellers. They are in schools, where students and teachers use them to explore a variety of topics. They are also in most workplaces across America, where people use them for all aspects of business and industry. In sum, computers are everywhere and their application to daily life is expected to increase (Van den Besselaar, 1997).

As teachers, we need to embrace the integration of computers and computer technology in everyday life. We must prepare our deaf and hard of hearing students for the technical world of today and tomorrow. Here are some suggestions for using a computer in your home and classroom.

To Increase and Improve Literacy

Deaf students and all people today need to be literate because the use of print is a prerequisite for functioning

in a technical, information-intensive society such as the United States (Paul, 1993). Basic literacy is comprised of reading and writing. Both of these skills can be improved by a variety of computer activities. Here are some examples:

- **When teaching reading.** The computer can be an individualized guide because programs offer instruction and hands-on practice at a variety of reading levels and therefore can match the many reading levels within a class of deaf students.
- **For prereading activities.** Teachers can type questions into PowerPoint before students begin reading and then ask students to read and answer the questions, using the mouse to continue to the next question.
- **For individualized instruction.** As the teacher works with one student or a group of students, other students can guide themselves through reading passages using pre-created questions and directions in the PowerPoint presentation. This enables students to select reading material that matches their individual interests and to work at their own pace. This is especially good for students who are easily distracted or who have short attention spans.
- **For facilitating the writing process.** Students can write sentences on the computer, allowing revisions to be made in two ways. In the first way, students print out their sentences, the teacher provides feedback, and then the students modify their work themselves. In the second way, the teacher and student sit together and discuss the improvements. Teachers can motivate students to make revisions by having them print each revision in a different font. This makes the assignment fun and makes the ongoing process of writing an enjoyable experience.
- **For building confidence and skills.** Each interaction with the computer requires students to navigate through toolbars, menus, and files.

These skills, essential for today's workplace, include word processing, navigating, reading, and problem solving. The simple process of using a computer to type a report or play an educational game introduces and teaches basic computer skills without teaching targeted skills in isolation.

To Increase Communication Skills

Computer access to the World Wide Web can also increase communication via on-line e-mail. Each student in my class has a "keypals." Keypals are like penpals, only they correspond by using computers and e-mail instead of by



using pen and paper. The benefit of keypals is illustrated by the experience of one of my students. This student began e-mailing with simple short answers to her keypal's questions. As the communication continued, her responses not only increased to fill the screen, but they also included complete sentences and self-created questions for her new friend! You can find your own keypals at <http://www.kidlink.org/english/general/overview.html>.

E-mail has also helped my students learn that research does not stop inside our school. For example, a student was doing a science project about caffeine. We searched her textbook, the library, and the World Wide Web

to find the answer to a question about caffeine, but were unsuccessful. Finally, we looked on Yahoo!igans! Under the science categories, we found a science expert who welcomed questions about science from students. We e-mailed him a question and within two days, the student had her answer.

Much of what I find for students is located through Yahoo!igans!. This site is one of the safest sites around for children and all of their linked sites are safe, too. Even if your only Internet access is the library, you can get free e-mail from Yahoo! Check out <http://www.yahooligans.com>; <http://www.yahoo.com>; and

<http://www.hotmail.com>.

To Increase Access to Information

Recently, I began to teach about famous African American South Carolinians. I began by finding pictures on the Internet and by using them in the first lessons. At one point I mentioned artist William H. Johnson. I tried to explain his quirky sense of style, but had no luck in getting the idea across to my students. We quickly moved to the computer and found some of his work. My students were able to examine his work themselves, and they ended up explaining his style on their own.

The Internet can also be used to

OPPOSITE PAGE: Van Gogh and his painting are accessible to students everywhere with a touch of the keyboard. ABOVE: Working at the computer students explore the world—or buy groceries.

diversify leisure and entertainment options. How often do we as educators say, "I wish I could pack up my class and take my students to Paris"? We recognize that on-site exploration of important cultural centers is of matchless educational value. Although no experience will replace a real trip, pictures of the Louvre, the Statue of Liberty, or the Great Barrier Reef will help the students imagine the places. Our state museum is terrific but the Internet opens doors of museums around the world.

Students explore places outside of our commuting range through museums and through writing to keypals. These fun activities introduce deaf students to new communities that they can explore without any communication barriers. Additionally, my students



able with the computer, the likelihood of their getting a higher paying job increases (Van den Besselaar, 1997).

Collateral Benefits

There are also numerous collateral benefits to using a computer in your

classroom. These include:

- Students are excited to use the computer and thus teachers can use it as a reward.
- Students associate literacy with fun, and they are eager to finish their work so that they can have free time on the computer. As a teacher, it is exciting to see students hurry to finish their assignments so that they may be rewarded with reading.
- Teachers can use the class computer as a grade book, using a spreadsheet program like Excel. I average grades and put them into a simple report card in Microsoft Word. Of course, I am careful to establish a password for these files to keep them private.
- Teachers can easily type and archive material. Tests may be developed, individualized, and changed from year to year. Quick notes to parents are easily generated and saved for documentation.

The progress a student can make using the computer is illustrated by the following example. At the beginning of the year, one of my students had so little computer knowledge that she held the mouse upside down. Through working on educational games on the Internet, she developed skill and confidence. She now searches the Web by herself and recently completed a report for her mainstream social studies class about "Bloody Mary," Queen of England, with much of her material coming from Internet searches. Like this student, most students will gain confidence and skill as they repeatedly use the computer and search the Internet—and, perhaps, just as important, they will have fun learning.

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@ A few of my students have learned the basics very quickly, so I have begun to teach them Web page design, which is also becoming a much sought-after job skill.

love to use reward time on the computer to surf and find out information about their favorite stars and new movies, or to find and play educational games.

Their entertainment is learning!

To Acquire Marketable Computer Job Skills

In most jobs, computer skills are essential and every activity on the computer increases marketable job skills. These skills include report writing with word processing programs, data analysis with spreadsheets, and the use of menus, toolbars, programs, and files. We address these skills in a variety of contexts to teach skills not in isolation but in meaningful contexts. A few of my students have learned the basics very quickly, so I have begun to teach them Web page design, which is also becoming a much sought-after job skill. As your students become more comfort-

TOP: Students use computers eagerly.



Washington State's Shared Reading Video Outreach Project

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NANCY HATFIELD.

By Nancy Hatfield
Perspectives Around the Country

Nancy Hatfield, Ph.D., is director of Training and Early Childhood at Washington Sensory Disabilities Services, a statewide project funded by Washington's state education agency. More information is available about this project at www.srvop.org.

In Walla Walla, a small farming community in the southeast corner of Washington state, Vanessa, Monica, and Jose squirm impatiently as the adults resolve technical difficulties with a computer and a large-screen television monitor. Suddenly Jose jerks to attention, his face transformed. "LOOK!" he signs, elbowing Monica in the stomach and pointing excitedly to the television monitor.

The students recognize the face on the monitor.

"Howie! Howie!" they chant excitedly.

Howie Seago, deaf actor/director and teacher, signs back: "Hi, Jose! Hi, Monica! Hi, Vanessa! Want to read a book with me?"

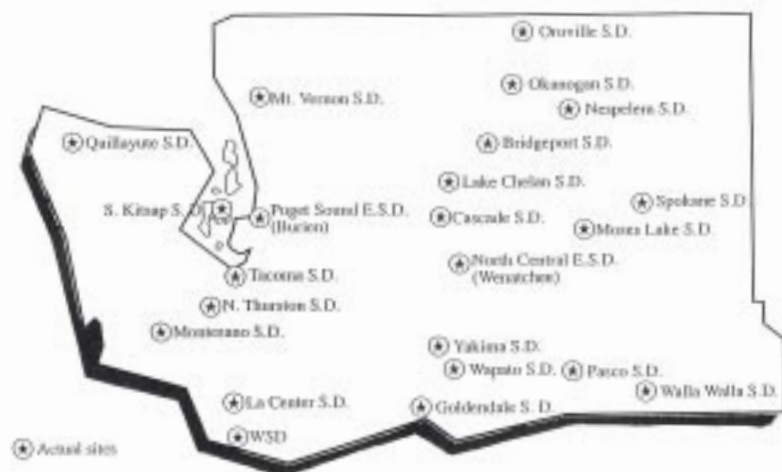
The response is enthusiastic and positive. For the next 30 minutes, the attention of all three first graders is glued to the television as Seago leads them through the book *I Like Me*.

The event is part of the Shared Reading Project as it has been adapted for delivery to deaf children in rural parts of Washington state. Developed by David R. Schleper and Jane K. Fernandes of the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, the Shared Reading Project

ABOVE: Howard Seago entertaining with print and stories.

WASHINGTON STATE

Shared Reading Video Outreach Project: 1999-2000 Sites



uses deaf adults to help hearing parents learn to read and explore books with their deaf children.

In Washington, coordinators are using the latest in video and internet technology to adapt the project through the new "K-20 Network" that uses interactive video technology and connects more than 300 school districts, colleges, and universities across the state. The pioneering Shared Reading Video Outreach Project provides both Internet access and training via K-20 live interactive videoconferencing to enable isolated deaf children living in remote areas to see, interact with, and learn from skilled deaf adults and other deaf children.

The project has enabled more than 170 deaf children between the ages of two and ten years old, their families, and school staff to enjoy reading books with Howie Seago and other deaf tutors through interactive videoconferencing.

Evolution of a Project

In 1997, Deaf Connection, a nonprofit community organization in Seattle, was

one of the five outreach sites funded by the Clerc Center, then Pre-College National Mission Programs, to implement the Shared Reading Project. Deaf Connection coordinated the participation of 17 families in the Puget Sound region under the leadership of Chris Opie, president of Deaf Connection, and Howie Seago, deaf actor/director and project coordinator.

The response to the project was overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Families in other parts of the state clamored for the program in their own communities. But the difficulties in implementing the project in rural areas where there are often few deaf adults and limited funds made expanding problematic. As director of Training and Early Childhood at Washington Sensory Disabilities Services, I recognized the potential of Internet technology (the K-20 Network) for distance delivery of training, as well as for assessments and direct services to children. As workers dug trenches crisscrossing the state and installed T-1 lines for the soon-to-be-launched K-20 Network, I listened to parents involved in Seattle's Shared Reading Project, read up on grant opportunities for

technology projects, and met with Seago and Opie.

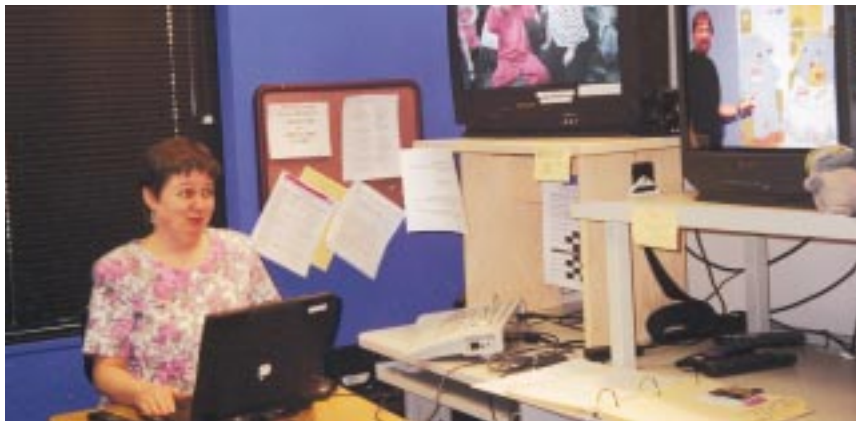
All of us were initially skeptical. Our main concern was: Could the Shared Reading Project, which relies on personal connections between deaf tutors and hearing families of young deaf children, be sustained when participants were hundreds of miles apart? Could personal connections be made and maintained through the technology of computers, television, and fiber-optic cables?

As we worked to develop the grant proposal, Seago, Opie, and I targeted 10 sites and expanded prospective participants to include general and special education teachers, paraeducators, speech/language pathologists, other professionals, and deaf students themselves. Eight sites were rural school districts. We knew that the educational staff and parents in the small communities could benefit from learning to read to young pre-readers and emerging readers—and improve their signing in the bargain. Two sites, Spokane and Tacoma, were relatively large day programs for deaf and hard of hearing students. We believed that the staff at the larger sites might learn from participation and function as a resource to the other sites.

We planned to schedule training with parents in the evenings and educators in after-school sessions. Once he had trained their parents, Seago would read with the children, having them take turns reading pages, asking questions to gauge their comprehension, and providing them with exposure to a deaf adult language model.

At the same time, I worked with technology specialists at the Puget Sound Educational Service District, the proposed project base, to plan utilization of desktop videoconferencing equipment. Grant funds were included to purchase the same basic set of equipment for each site to ensure compatibility. Each site received a new computer, a large-screen television monitor, a pan/tilt/zoom camera, a Zydacron® videoconferencing system,

TOP: Deaf children tune in from the indicated school districts to read with Howard Seago.



a VCR, an audio mixer to allow recording, a sturdy rolling cart, and miscellaneous other items.

Sites scheduled to be linked first to Washington State's K-20 system received desktop videoconferencing equipment compatible with T-1 lines. Sites that would be connected later were provided with a videoconferencing system compatible for use with ISDN lines, with grant funding to support installation and ongoing costs for those lines. All K-20 videoconferencing was free of charge for those who connected to the K-20 Network. In 1998, the Shared Reading Video Outreach Project was awarded \$482,000 in state and federal funding.

In late September 1998, an in-person introductory kick-off conference was held in centrally located Wenatchee, Washington, to demonstrate desktop videoconferencing, allow school district participants from around the state and from the Clerc Center to meet each another, and provide an overview of the project. Then the real work began!

Connecting!

Based on previous experience, we believed that people participating in distance learning must first establish a personal connection before trying to relate to one another via technology. Consequently, we devoted the months of October and November to traveling around the state and visiting schools. Seago met each deaf child individually and conducted a bookreading session

for his or her classroom and sometimes the entire school. For many of the deaf children in rural areas, Seago was the first deaf adult they had ever met.

He enlisted participation of school district administrators on several occasions. For example, the children in one East Wenatchee elementary school were delighted to see their principal read and act out a page from *I Went*

Based on previous experience, we believed that people participating in distance learning must first establish a personal connection before trying to relate to one another via technology.

Walking, reacting with excitement to such lines as, "I saw a pink pig looking at me."

During the visits with educators, Howie trained interested staff members on Schleper's "15 Principles for Reading to Deaf Children." In the evenings, parents and family members were invited to the school to meet Howie, learn about the Shared Reading Video Outreach Project, and participate in a bookreading session.

At the same time, John Reeg, director of network services at Puget Sound ESD, supervised the purchase and installation of videoconferencing equipment for the sites. Reeg also developed a training package to instruct both the designated technolo-



gy contact person and the site coordinator, who was usually a teacher, in operating the desktop videoconferencing equipment and troubleshooting technical problems.

Seago then worked out production procedures, fine-tuned details, and reassured anxious participants. He made sure that the camera in each remote site was appropriately placed to

simulate eye contact between himself and his audience and figured out how to conduct bookreading sessions so that participants could read the print and see the pictures on their television monitor.

In the beginning, he relied on "big books" with text re-typed, enlarged, and pasted over the original English so that children and adults could more easily read it. He balanced the book on a music stand, keeping pages open with large magnets. Within several months, however, he and the technology specialists figured out how to use additional equipment and put himself "in the book," much the way a television weather forecaster is superimposed in front of a weather map.

TOP LEFT: Teamwork and technical expertise keep the project exciting. TOP RIGHT: Students see Seago sign each page of exciting books.



By January 1999, most sites were ready. Special evening sessions were planned for the largest group of non-English-speaking Spanish family members, with interpreting provided from American Sign Language to spoken Spanish. Troubling questions remained, the biggest ones concerning the deaf children: How would they respond? Would they believe they could converse with the man on the television screen? Would they remember “Howie,” as they called Seago when they met him several months previously? Would they be quickly bored?

The first children’s bookreading session was conducted with Monica, Vanessa, and Jose—and these concerns were quickly put to rest. The enthusiasm of the Walla Walla children was soon to be seen again in the children of Bridgeport, Ferndale, Leavenworth, Tacoma, Spokane, and Wenatchee. School district administrators from other areas learned about the project and begged to join. In response to their requests, two unplanned sites were added. Fathers who rarely signed and had never attempted to read to their children attended presentations to learn to sign the popular children’s books included on the Shared Reading book list that they then took home to read to their children. In a further adaptation of the Shared Reading Project, our center bought the books for parents so that they could take

them home and read them over and over to their children. Children who had never shown any interest in reading began to ask their teachers and parents to read to them. They sought out new books as well as those brought home by their parents.

Special sessions were scheduled prior to the bookreading to allow the participating deaf students to meet each other, with Seago acting as facilitator. When a videoconference was convened between Forks and Aberdeen, two remote communities on the Olympic Peninsula, three deaf boys from nine to 11 years old leaned forward in their chairs as they eagerly discussed what sports they liked to play and what color their bicycles were. Then one boy offered a description about his Makah tribe’s successful hunt for a gray whale. “I touched the whale,” he said eagerly, “and it felt ewwww, yucky!”

In the first five months of training, 252 videoconference sessions were conducted. Eighty-eight deaf children and an uncounted number of their hearing peers, 127 parents, and 105 educators attended. Thanks to continued support from Washington State’s Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (Special Education and Learning Technologies Departments) and private foundations, the number of participating sites and deaf children was doubled for this school year. At this time, evalu-

ation measures changes in individual children’s reading skills, using tools published in another Clerc Center product: *Starting With Assessment: A Developmental Approach to Deaf Children’s Literacy* by Martha M. French.

The impact of the Shared Reading Project model continues to grow as local communities implement it and adapt it to their needs. Gallaudet University’s initial \$25,000 investment in Washington state has grown exponentially to support an infrastructure that can serve an ever-expanding audience of deaf children, their families, and educators—regardless of where they live. Children like Vanessa, Monica, and Jose in Walla Walla and other rural communities can continue



to learn from deaf adults, as well as access services, through the magic that technology provides. As more states implement telecommunications networks and high quality videoconferencing becomes available through the Internet, the refrain “Look! It’s Howie! Let’s read!” may reverberate not only in Washington but throughout the United States. ●

TOP: Students come to Seago and Seago comes to students—all through technology. **RIGHT:** For some students Seago was the first deaf adult that they had ever known.



Involving Families

in Their Children's School Lives

Recommended Practices to Emerge from National Forum

**By Randall Gentry
and Margaret Hallau**
Perspectives Around the Country

Randall Gentry, M.A., is the former director of the National Deaf Education Network and Clearinghouse. He now works as a technical communicator in the private sector.

Margaret Hallau, Ph.D., is director of the Office of Exemplary Programs and Research at the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. The authors welcome comments about this article to: Margaret.Hallau@gallaudet.edu.

The Office of Exemplary Programs and Research (EPAR) at the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center is distilling Recommended Practices for Family Involvement based on the National Forum on Family Involvement held at Gallaudet University.

The forum was held as part of the Clerc Center work with schools and programs throughout the United States to identify and describe best practices in educating deaf and hard of hearing children. An initial step in identifying best practices is to document experiences from programs that share common goals. Identifying and discussing these experiences and practices across different educational programs and methodologies forms the basis for recommended practices. With systematic evaluation, recommended practices may later be identified as best practices.

Participants were selected to participate in the forum through the Clerc Center's Partners for Progress program. Through Partners for Progress, the Clerc Center sought applications from diverse programs throughout the country and submitted applications for review by outside educators and parents. The parents and educators identified

Shared Reading Book Bags



"My son liked learning about different cultures through the stories. He thought it was all neat...Wonderful choices of books."

—Mother of a deaf child

**The more titles you buy,
the more you save!**

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\$130 Set of 10 book bags

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GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center

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- Storybook
- Activity guide for fun story-related ideas
- Bookmark with tips on reading

The Shared Reading book bags are designed to teach parents, caregivers, and teachers how to read to deaf and hard of hearing children using American Sign language (ASL) and how to use strategies to make book sharing most effective.

Chose from 50 culturally diverse, fun, and predictable children's storybooks that children will love to read again and again.



For a list of available book bags or to place an order, contact: (202) 651-5340 V/TTY; (202) 651-5708 (Fax); or e-mail Marteal.Pitts@gallaudet.edu.

For more information about the Shared Reading Project, contact: David Schleper at (202) 651-5877 (V/TTY), or e-mail David.Schleper@gallaudet.edu.

representative programs that developed based on information about family priorities and needs. These programs obtain information directly and regularly from the families and provide each family with the skills and strategies it needs to enable the deaf or hard of hearing child to interact as a full participant in that family.

During the four-day forum, participants shared information and experiences. They felt that a significant outcome of a program must be empowerment of the deaf child as a member of the family. In order to accomplish this, parents need open and unbiased information on a range of topics so they can make informed decisions. They need knowledge and skills, such as how to participate effectively in their child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. To work successfully with parents, program representatives need to view parents as partners, and this attitude needs to be reflected in everything that is done at school. Extended family members need to be included in a structure designated for different family members, with particular attention on involving the fathers. The design of the program needs to be flexible and include components such as ongoing assessment, literacy, and communication. Deaf staff members from a variety of cultural backgrounds, functioning as equal team members, are an important program component.

At the conclusion of the forum, the participants described how empowering it had been to share their experiences and acknowledged how challenging it would be to capture the essence of the discussion into recommended practices. The recommended practices appear to be the kind of activities that most programs would look at and say "of course we do that." The perception of the participants was that the commitment of a program to honestly view parents as equal partners makes the critical difference in involving families.

In order to address this concern, EPAR implemented a three-step process

to convert the work of the participants into Recommended Practices. At the conclusion of the forum, first forum discussions were transcribed and a transcript was sent to the participants for their review. Based on the reviews, EPAR compiled a summary of information that the forum participants felt reflected the practices used at their schools and programs. Extensive feedback from participants was solicited as EPAR sought to preserve the voice, experiences, insight, and feeling of

There are different levels of involvement with clear pathways in place so parents can step right in with various opportunities for different family members, including dads, siblings, and the extended family.

participants and generalize them into a format that could be made available for others.

A draft of six practices have been reviewed by the forum participants and by Clerc Center family educators. Once finalized, these practices, and the information synthesized from the forum, will be widely disseminated. The process is expected to be completed during the summer.

Family Involvement

A Selection of Recommended Practices

The following working drafts are three of the six Recommended Practices for Family Involvement and the activities and attitudes that result from each practice "in action."

PARENTS AS EQUAL PARTNERS

In a program where parents and program staff work collaboratively as partners, the program staff are positive, flexible, resourceful, and accepting. Parents and staff are viewed as equal in what they bring to the table. Together, parents and program staff make decisions about program planning and design. Communication between program staff and parents is informal, frequent, appropriately personal, and two-way.

Practice in Action:

- Parents are involved in all aspects of planning and implementing school wide programs. Professionals are encouraged to consciously "move out" of the role of the expert and acknowledge the expert in each parent.
- Parents need opportunities to become involved at the school in a variety of roles, beyond that of "observer." The program should develop creative ways to involve par-

ents and extended family members, especially grandparents.

- Food, child care, and transportation are high on the list of things that encourage families to become involved at school and are also high on the list of those strategies that involve input from families in the design of family-school activities.
- Parents need a variety of kinds of information—for example, information about interpreters and the IEP process—in an accessible format.

PROGRAM STRUCTURES

There are different levels of involvement with clear pathways in place so parents can step right in with various opportunities for different family members, including dads, siblings, and the extended family. The program offers flexible locations, meeting times, and times to make contact. Respect for cultural differences and sensitivity to differing abilities is evident. Program structures encourage parent-to-parent interactions. There are extensive opportunities to work and play together and learn from each other.

Practice in Action:

- Staff meet with families on weekends, nights, and over parents' lunch hours.

- Parents volunteer for a range of activities, including raising funds, serving in the Parent Teacher Associations, organizing Girl Scout Troops, and participating in workdays. They serve as family advisors, work on parent/teacher committees, and organize discussion groups.
- Parents take sign language classes, attend Family Learning Weekends, as well as workshops for extended family members, and participate in deafness-related organizations.
- The program should have times when the dads can get together with the child and also meet with other dads in a support groups that meets at times that the dads are available.

FAMILIES FROM DIVERSE CULTURES

The program is accepting of different cultures. It finds ways to involve parents from different cultures in ways that meet the families' needs. A non-judgmental attitude and openness are important, especially in terms of making cultural connections. Coordination of language services for spoken, signed, and written information is needed to ensure appropriate delivery of information to families that do not use English.

Practice in Action:

- Trust is built through one-on-one connections. Parents also need opportunities to share their culture with program staff.
- Cultural differences are explored and celebrated through class and family activities. "Sharing of culture days" develop cultural sensitivity and language access.
- Programs need to examine what "involvement" means and vary expectations according to family needs.
- Trilingual interpreters (English, American Sign Language, and the language of the family) are especially effective. All materials are translated into the family's primary language. Parents are free to choose the language of interaction, either their home language or English.

Forum on Family

Eight Participating Schools

Parents and educators from the following programs participated in the National Forum on Family Involvement at Gallaudet University:

- Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind Statewide Programs in Early Childhood Education and Technical Assistance to Schools Programs, Tucson, Arizona.
- Foothill/Pasadena Special Education Local Plan Agencies and TRIPOD Deaf and Hard of Hearing Programs, Burbank, California.
- Hawaii Services on Deafness American Sign Language Training for Families Program, Honolulu, Hawaii.
- Hearing, Speech & Deafness Center, Seattle, Washington.
- Lexington School for the Deaf—The Ready to Learn Program, Jackson Heights, New York.
- Los Angeles Unified School District Deaf and Hard of Hearing Parent-Infant Program, Encino, California.
- Louisville Deaf Oral School, Louisville, Kentucky.
- Tennessee School for the Deaf Parent Outreach Program, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Priorities for a Nation

Literacy, Transition, Family Involvement

The Clerc Center has embraced each of these areas as critical in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children and teens. As research, collaboration, and public input are developed and sought around the nation, focus continues on these vital areas.

Partners for Progress

Systematic Process Facilitates Clerc Center National Collaboration

Schools and programs collaborate with the Clerc Center through Partners for Progress, a process managed by EPAR. Partners for Progress makes special efforts to include programs serving traditionally underserved students, defined by the federal government as students who:

- are lower achieving academically,
- come from homes where the primary language is a language other than English,
- have secondary disabilities,
- are members of diverse cultures, or
- are from rural areas.

Through an inclusive process that ensures participation of parents and professionals who represent different communication and educational methodologies, Partners for Progress:

- identifies critical needs in the Clerc Center priority areas of literacy, transition, and family involvement;
- develops Requests for Collaboration (RFCs) based on these critical needs;
- facilitates review of RFC applications by a group external to the Clerc Center; and
- implements the collaboration.

The next round of RFCs will be in 2001. For more information, check the Clerc Center Web site at <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>. Go to

Exemplary Programs and Research and click on **Partners for Progress**. ●



The Clerc Center has established three national priorities, families, literacy, and transition.

News

KDES Recycled Art Creations

Featured in Gateway's Annual Report

Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (KDES) students found a unique way to recycle computer boxes—and their creativity was rewarded when Gateway Corporation selected their work for inclusion in its annual report. In recognition of the artistic efforts of the teachers and students, Gateway is also making a generous donation of 28 personal computers for use with students in the early childhood programs and the 1 and 2 team.

Under the supervision of art teachers Phil Bogdan and Wei-Min Shen, and Team 1 and 2 teacher Barbara Kaufman, KDES students spliced, sliced, slicked, and sculpted the distinctive black and white spotted cow boxes into fabulous works of art. The art—birds, pandas, fish, a praying mantis,

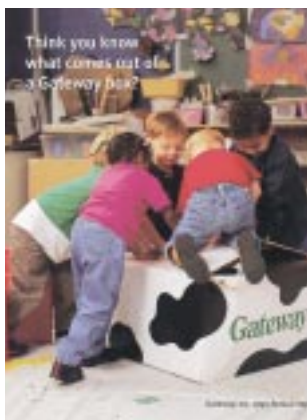


PHOTO COURTESY OF GATEWAY, INC. 1999



PHOTO BY PHIL BOGDAN.

and more, all courtesy of Gateway cardboard—bedecks the school entranceway and classrooms. Team 1 and 2 created a school bus large enough for students to use as a reading nook in their classroom.

Gateway not only featured the KDES students on its annual report cover; it also made the artwork a theme. The annual report letter from Gateway CEO Jeff Weitzen compares the vision of the company to the vision of the children, "Like us, these young builders see the [Gateway] box as just the means to an end, a path to a greater destination that's limited only by imagination."

Gateway requested that the giraffe the children made be shipped out to California to be photographed at various locations at Gateway headquarters. "How do you ship a nine-



PHOTO COURTESY OF GATEWAY, INC. 1999

foot giraffe?" Bogdan wondered. With help from a professional shipping company, he figured it out.

The giraffe arrived safely. KDES has since donated it to Gateway. So now a charming example of our students' creativity has found a permanent home in California. To see artwork from the collection, visit the Clerc Center Web site, <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>, and click on the cow box icon.

Gallaudet to Host Convention for the American Society for Deaf Children

Gallaudet University and the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, will sponsor the American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC) biannual convention on the Gallaudet campus from July 12–16, 2000. ASDC is a national advocacy organization for parents of deaf and hard of hearing children.

"Holding the convention at Gallaudet will give parents a sense of what is waiting for their children when they come of college age. The children, their parents and families will meet with deaf and hard of hearing professionals who have come from all walks of life and found their 'home' at Gallaudet," said Deborah DeStefano, admissions director for Gallaudet University and co-chair of the ASDC convention.

The convention will feature presentations, children's activities, exhibits, family events, and tours to important Washington, D.C. landmarks. For more information, contact Gallaudet University's College for Continuing Education at 202-651-6060, 202-651-6041 (Fax), or via e-mail: conference.cce@gallaudet.edu.

TOP: KDES students proudly display their giraffe created with recycled Gateway boxes. **LEFT:** Gateway's 1999 Annual Report features KDES art. **RIGHT:** The KDES nine-foot giraffe gets ready for its cross-country safari.

T-errific

Formal Party Opens Learning Opportunities

The classroom was bedecked in flowers, and a teapot and china cups rested on each table. The little girls, like some of their mothers, donned wide brim hats. The little boys, their hair combed into position, tried to hold very still.

All wore broad smiles.

"A tea party is a chance for learning," said Kendall Demonstration Elementary School communication specialist/speech pathologist Bettie Waddy-Smith. One lesson was literacy as the preschoolers studied the program that was decorated as gaily as their room. Another lesson was about the ceremony itself. "I'm a little teapot...short and stout..." sang and signed the students in a rendition of the children's song.

But perhaps the most important lesson was appreciation of individuality. While their families watched, each student donned a golden crown and told another why he or she was special.

"You have a nice shirt," said one.

"I like your smile," said another.

Then came the party sandwiches—some with pizza topping—cookies, juice, and tea.

"It's nice to get together," observed Carri Harrington-Matthews, mother of Breanna Harrington and one of the invited family members.

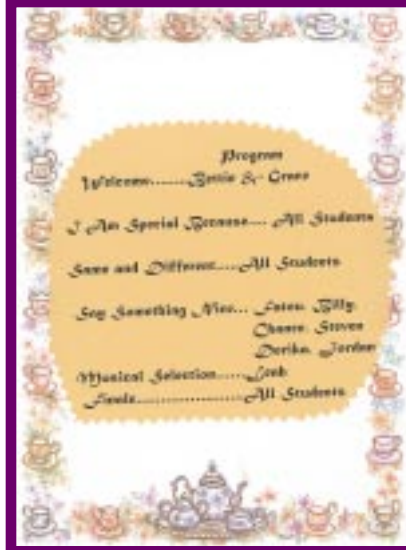
The party was a collaborative effort of Waddy-Smith, counselor Grace Walker, and movement specialist Marcia Freeman.

"I like the cookies the best," said four-year-old Kelly Doleac.

Hewlett-Packard Donates Equipment for Science Programs

Hewlett-Packard has donated over \$43,000 worth of computer equipment to three science projects at the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. The equipment supports the following projects:

- **S*OAR-High** (Science* Observing and Reporting in High School) is a distance education collaboration between science classrooms for deaf and hard of hearing students. In this project, students and teachers at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD), the Indiana School for the Deaf, and the University High School in Irvine, Calif., collaborate on-line to study earth systems science. They are using coursework developed for the World Wide Web by MSSD teacher/researcher Mary Ellsworth. The equipment enables them to interact with each other via on-line discussion groups, collaboration software, and videoconferencing.



Tea party program.

- **Project SPACE** offers Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (KDES) teachers an opportunity to design a technology-based science course that integrates multimedia equipment, on-line research and data collection, and communications and visual technologies, and prepares selected students from grades 6–8 for astronaut training this spring at the U.S. Space Camp® in Alabama. It is headed by KDES teacher Monika Barglow.
- **The biotechnology project** is headed by Del Wynne, junior team science teacher/researcher. She is implementing a biotechnology component into her chemistry class. This will be the first step in developing a student-directed science curriculum, providing teacher and students access to extensive and empirical science research and integrating modern technology with secondary science curriculum. The Hewlett-Packard equipment provides the technology necessary to begin infusing hands-on biotechnology-oriented computer software and Internet-based research activities.

"These projects demonstrate that the Clerc Center is developing innovative science education curricula for deaf and hard of hearing students," Jane K. Fernandes, provost, Gallaudet University, said. "We are fortunate that the two schools continue to receive substantial support from the corporate community, and are deeply grateful to Hewlett-Packard for this valuable gift."

Software to Go

Clearinghouse Now On-line

Software to Go, a system for sharing evaluations of software related to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals, is now on-line. Parents and educators of deaf individuals can search the database for information about various software, and also input reviews of software that they have found

useful for their children, students, or clients. Registered reviewers add and edit the evaluations.

"We are looking for reviews of commercially available software; that is, software products that anyone can easily purchase for use in their homes, schools, or organizations," said Ken Kurlychek, electronic information specialist for the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. "These include shareware and subscription Web sites (e.g., Encyclopedia Britannica), but not freeware or out-of-print products."

The purpose of the database is to provide evaluation information that focuses on the specific needs of deaf individuals.

Visit the *Software to Go* site at: <http://clerccenter2.gallaudet.edu/stg/index.html>.

Clerc Center Hosts National Training for the Shared Reading Project

The Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center hosted 21 representatives from 14 schools and programs around the country in a one-week training program, *The Shared Reading Project: Keys to Success Training for Site Coordinators*. The training program is the culmination of a yearlong process of instructional design, curriculum development, video design and production, materials design and production, and trainer preparation. The course was pilot-tested in the fall, and revisions were made based on the pilot.

The Shared Reading Project (SRP), a nationally acclaimed program that helps to promote early literacy and share the joys of reading using sign language, brings together deaf tutors with families of young deaf and hard of hearing children.

"*The Shared Reading Project: Keys to Success* training course is of special interest to educators, administrators, and parent leaders," said Janne Harrelson, director of the Clerc Center's Office of Training and Professional Development. "The course is designed to prepare site coordinators to establish the SRP at their own schools or programs." Participants in the program receive extensive print materials as well as a set of instructional videotapes that will be useful to them in setting up the SRP at their respective sites.

The Shared Reading Project: Keys to Success will also be conducted at the Gallaudet University Regional Centers throughout the coming year. For more information, contact outreach specialist Angela McCaskill in the Office of Training and Professional Development at 202-651-5855 (TTY/V) or via e-mail: training.clerccenter@gallaudet.edu.

ABOVE RIGHT: MSSD sweeps Fourth Annual National High School Academic Bowl. Winning team: (left to right) Bo Acton, coach, Janice Warshaw, coach, Latoya Plummer, senior, Bellamie Bachleda, junior, Robert McConnell, sophomore, Jonathan Chanin, junior, Darlene Tropp, senior, Mike Peterson, coach, Dusan Jaksic, coach.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL PETERSON.

MSSD Students Sweep National Academic Competition

Record Number of Teams Compete

Rob McConnell, Bellamie Bachleda, Jonathan Chanin, Latoya Plummer, and Darlene Tropp from the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD) won first place in the Annual National High School Academic Bowl for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students. The MSSD team scored a decisive victory over their opponents, the Shawnee Mission East

"The competition has become serious business for the students and schools."

High School from Kansas, in the championship match at Gallaudet University.

Coaches for MSSD's team were Bo Acton, Janice Warshaw, Mike Peterson, and Dusan Jaksic.

The Deaf High School Academic Bowl is open to teams of students in schools and programs for deaf and hard of hearing students.

"The competition has become serious business for the students and schools," said Bernie Palmer, who coordinates the competition. "The Academic Bowl began as a pilot program in 1996 with five local schools, and expanded to a national competition in 1997 when 12 teams were involved. We've witnessed growth to 35 teams in 1998, 43 teams in 1999, and 55 teams in 2000!"

Gallaudet University and the J. Willard Marriott Foundation have supported the Academic Bowl. The regional competitions are coordinated by the Gallaudet University Regional Centers. For more information, visit the following Web site: <http://www.gallaudet.edu/admweb/wh/bowl20.html>.

Literacy Training Program and Workshops

**Opportunities Sponsored by the Gallaudet University
Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center**

The Clerc Center offers exciting training opportunities to advance the literacy of deaf and hard of hearing children.

The Shared Reading Project

Keys to Success

This five-day training program is designed to prepare site coordinators to establish a Shared Reading Project in their own schools or programs. Of special interest to educators, administrators, and parent leaders, this course is based on the highly acclaimed program that matches deaf tutors with families, and arranges regular visits to family homes where tutors teach parents and caregivers effective strategies for reading books with their children. This training program teaches participants to:

- use the 15 Principles for Reading to deaf children;

- recruit, hire, and train deaf adults to be tutors;
- teach families how to participate in shared reading;
- work effectively with parents, caregivers, educators, and tutors; and
- plan for and manage the Shared Reading Project budget, personnel, and evaluation.

DATES

August 7–11, 2000

St. Augustine, Florida

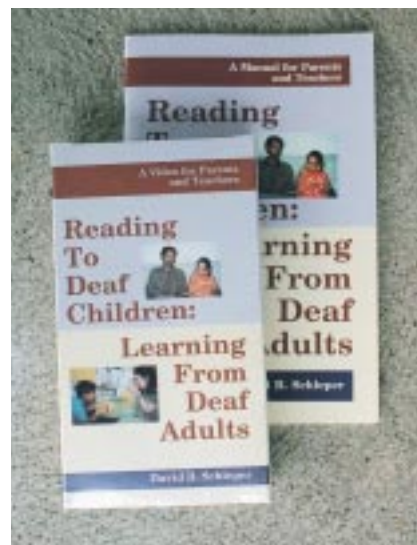
November 13–17, 2000

Haverhill, Massachusetts

Reading to Deaf Children

Learning from Deaf Adults

This effective workshop teaches the techniques known as “the 15 Principles for Reading to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children.” These principles were developed through research that



identified the successful strategies that deaf adults use when reading to deaf and hard of hearing children. Highly interactive, the workshop is available in a three-hour or six-hour format. Participants learn to recognize and apply the 15 principles, practice the principles, and gain new skills that can be immediately applied with their own children in the home or classroom. This workshop is of special interest to parents, caregivers, and educators. It is available on request from the Clerc Center and offered regionally through the Gallaudet University Regional Centers.

Read It Again and Again

Coming in Fall

This three-hour workshop teaches participants to incorporate a wide array of learning activities in reading the same book to children over successive days. Reading the same book again and again deepens children’s understanding of text and provides opportunities

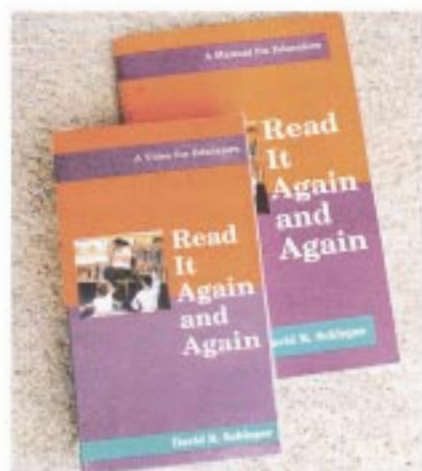


ABOVE: Shared Reading Project: Keys to Success participants receive a wealth of materials such as those shown above.

to improve their reading and writing skills. This workshop is of special interest to educators.

For More Information

To request more information about any of the training programs offered,



to schedule a workshop at your school or program, or to add your name to the mailing list for future training events, contact:

Gallaudet University
Laurent Clerc National Deaf
Education Center
Office of Training and Professional
Development
800 Florida Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002-3695
Phone: 202-651-5855 (V/TTY)
Fax: 202-651-5857
E-mail: training.clerccenter@gallaudet.
edu. •

LEFT: The printed manual and video set for teachers and parents may be ordered directly from the Clerc Center.

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Upcoming Conferences and Exhibits

July 9–13, 2000

19th International Congress on Education of the Deaf and 7th Asia-Pacific Congress on Deafness, Sydney, Australia. Contact: ICED 2000 Congress Secretariat, GPO Box 128, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia; 61-2-9248-0868 T, 61-2-9262-2277 V, 61-2-9262-3135 F; iced2000@tourhosts.com.au.; www.iced2000.com.

July 12–16, 2000

17th Biennial Convention of the American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC), Washington, D.C. Contact: Krista Walker, Gallaudet University Conference Management, 202-651-6060 T/V, 202-651-6074 F; conference@gallua. gallaudet.edu; www.deafchildren.org/conv00.htm.

July 19–23, 2000

RID Region III Conference, Louisville, Ky. Contact: Linda Kolb Bozeman, 502-859-3379 V/T, 502-859-3373 F; lboze@mis.net or jimkolb@aol.com; www.kyrid.org.

July 29–August 4, 2000

National Convention of the American Association of the Deaf-Blind, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: Joy Larson, AADB Program Manager, 301-588-6545 T, 301-588-8705 F; aadb@erols.com.

July 30–August 6, 2000

18th Annual Black Deaf Advocates Convention, Houston, Tex. Contact: Willie L. Woodson Jr, willie.woodson@aries.dhs.state.tx.us.

August 7–11, 2000

Shared Reading: Keys to Success, St. Augustine, Fla. To be held at the Gallaudet University Regional Center, Flagler College. Contact: Chachie

Joseph, 904-829-6481 x216 V, 904-829-2424 T/F; chachiejos@aol.com.

August 26, 2000

Reading to Deaf Children Workshop, St. Augustine, Fla. To be held at the Gallaudet University Regional Center, Flagler College. Contact: Chachie Joseph, 904-829-6481 x216 V, 904-829-2424 T/F; chachiejos@aol.com.

September 22–23, 2000

DeaFestival 2000, Des Moines, Iowa. To be held at the Polk County Convention Center. Sponsored by the Iowa Association for the Deaf. Contact: DeaFestival Committee, 515-963-1114 T, 515-244-2297 x333 V, 515-243-5879 F; DeaFestIA@aol.com; www.deafestia.org.

October 12–14, 2000

NHS 2000: International Conference on Newborn Hearing Screening Diagnosis and Intervention, Milan, Italy. Contact in Europe: Dr. Ferdinando Grandori, Center of Biomedical Engineering, Polytechnic of Milan, Piazza Leonardo da Vinci 32, I-20133 Milan (Italy); +39-02-2399-3367 F; NHS2000@biomed.polimi.it. Contact in USA: Dr. Deborah Hayes, The Children's Hospital, 1056 East 19th Avenue, B030, Denver, CO 80218; 303-861-6424; 303-764-8220 F; Hayes.deborah@tchden.org; http://www.biomed.polimi.it/NHS2000.

October 13, 2000

Reading to Deaf Children Workshop, Haverhill, Mass. To be held at the Gallaudet University Regional Center, Northern Essex Community College. Contact: Michael Wallace, 978-556-3701 T/V, 978-556-3125 F; michael.wallace@gallaudet.edu.

November 8–10, 2000

New York State Association of Educators of the Deaf (NYS AED) Conference, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. Contact: Gordon Baker, 315-337-8400 x402; gbaker@mail.nysaed.gov.

November 13–17, 2000

Shared Reading Project: Keys to Success, Haverhill, Mass. To be held at the Gallaudet University Regional Center, Northern Essex Community College. Contact: Michael Wallace, 978-556-3701 T/V, 978-556-3125 F; michael.wallace@gallaudet.edu.

December 7–9, 2000

16th Annual DEC International Early Childhood Conference on Children with Special Needs, Albuquerque, N.M. To be held at the Albuquerque Convention Center. Contact: DEC Conference Office, 703 Giddings Avenue, Suite U-3, Annapolis, MD 21401; 410-269-6801, 410-267-0332 F; office@gomeeting.com or pfaff@gomeeting.com.

Spring, 2001

Shared Reading Project: Keys to Success, Fremont, Calif. To be held at the Gallaudet University Regional Center, Ohlone College. Contact: Pam Snedigar, 510-659-6268 T/V, 510-659-6050 T, 510-659-6033 F; psnedigar@ohlone.cc.ca.cs.

International Reading Association Convention, New Orleans, La. Jane K. Fernandes and David Schleper will present on the Shared Reading Project. Contact: Candice Chaleff, 16 La Salle Avenue, Cranford, NJ 07016.

March 9–11, 2001

IMPACT/Cal-Ed Conference, Riverside, Calif. To be held at the Riverside Convention Center. Contact: Zibby

Bayarsky or Shelly Gravatt, California School for the Deaf—Riverside, 3044 Horace Street, Riverside, CA 92506; 909-782-6501 T, 909-782-6510 V, 909-782-4915 F.

May 24–28, 2001

Immersion, Innovation, Intent: ADARA (Professionals Networking for Excellence in Service Delivery with Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing) 2001, Monterey, Calif. Contact: Frank Lester, Conference Chair, 2001 Monterey ADARA, P.O. Box 421606, San Francisco, CA 94142-1606; 510-794-2522 T, 510-794-2407 F; cadara2001@aol.com.

July, 2001

3rd International Conference on Higher Education and Disability, Innsbruck, Austria. Contact: Gayle Gagliano, Conference Director, or Naomi Moore, Conference Coordinator, University of

New Orleans, Box 1051, New Orleans, LA 70148; 504-280-5700, 504-280-5707 F; ggagliano@uno.edu.

July 29–August 5, 2001

19th Summer World Games for the Deaf, Rome, Italy. Contact: USA Deaf Sports Federation, 3607 Washington Blvd., Ste. #4, Ogden, UT 84402-1737; 803-393-7916 T, 803-393-2263 F; deafsports@juno.com; www.usadsf.org.

2002

46th Biennial National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Conference, Washington, D.C. Contact: Anita B. Farb, NAD Headquarters, 301-587-1789 T, 301-587-1788 V, 301-587-1791 F; nadinfo@nad.org.

July 8–13, 2002

Deaf Way II, Washington, D.C. Contact: GUKCC 3117, Gallaudet University, 800 Florida Avenue, NE, Washington,

DC 20002-3695; 202-651-6112 T, 202-651-6064 V, 202-651-6113 F; info@deafway.org; www.deafway.org.

July 29–August 4, 2002

National Convention of the American Association of the Deaf-Blind, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: 301-588-6545 T, 301-588-8705 F; aadb@erols.com.

2004

7th International Congress of Hard of Hearing People, Helsinki, Finland. Contact: International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH); cshaw@compuserve.com.

Want to Know More About the Clerc Center?



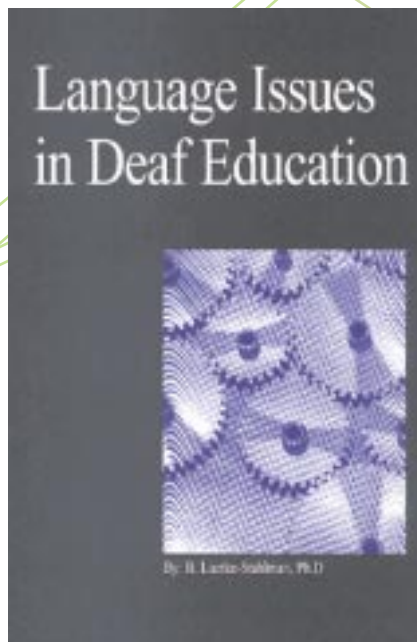
A new information packet about the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center is now available for educators, parents, and professionals. This information packet:

- Highlights the national mission role of the Clerc Center in furthering the achievements of deaf and hard of hearing students.
- Gives detailed information about the national demonstration schools: Kendall Demonstration Elementary School and the Model Secondary School for the Deaf located on the Gallaudet University campus in Washington, D.C.

For your free copy, call the National Deaf Education Network and Clearinghouse at 202-651-5051 (TTY/V) or fax 202-651-5054.

To Be or Not to Be— Monolingual or Bilingual

By Jean F. Andrews



***Language Issues
in Deaf Education*
by Barbara Luetke-Stahlman**

1999, Butte Publications
Hillsboro, Oregon

Readers familiar with Dr. Barbara Luetke-Stahlman's work will quickly recognize her central thesis in *Language Issues in Deaf Education*, that is, deaf children can learn English through using signed English and spoken English. Dr. Luetke-Stahlman lays out her argument by defining language and listing its components and stages of acquisition; she gives readers instructions on how to take a language sample, describes the pragmatics, semantics, and syntax of English, and gives general communication and language teaching tips to educators. Her textbook has a "workbook feel" with study questions, flow charts, and boxes that often interrupt her narrative but nonetheless provide useful visual aids to the reader.

Dr. Luetke-Stahlman promotes a monolingual approach to language teaching—both for communication and English instruction. She has added a bimodal dimension to her monolingual focus that includes signed English, fingerspelling, speech, and writing, and this, to her credit, constitutes a big improvement over the monolingual/unimodal (oral/aural) language teaching that has historically frustrated, confused, and angered many of the deaf adults who have suffered through them. Yet the monolingual/bimodal approach does not go far enough. It does not necessarily provide deaf children with the cognitive and linguistic base they might otherwise achieve bilingually.

Why do I think the monolingual/bimodal approach falls short? Those who work with deaf colleagues and students and have friendships with deaf adults beyond the

"Hello, how are you?" stage know that most deaf adults are daily users of two languages (bilingual), not users of only one language (monolingual). Deaf adults use American Sign Language or a contact variety of sign language with other deaf adults. They use sign language interpreters at school, in business, at the doctor, and on other formal occasions. And they use written English on the TTY and in notes, letters, and e-mail to both deaf and hearing persons. So why would we limit young deaf children at school to a monolingual approach focusing only on English?

Perhaps because, by and large, educators and parents are afraid of the effects of using American Sign Language. Many hearing people erroneously believe American Sign Language will interfere with a child's learning of speech or written language. Further, they often think the deaf child will rely too much on signs and refuse to learn English, and that a deaf teacher will negatively affect their children's speech and language development. These fears emerge in Dr. Luetke-Stahlman's book on page 29 where she omits including deaf adults on a school's sign language committee. On page 22 and 23 she states, "It is difficult, however, to find adults who truly understand and use ASL," and "Some people feel that school personnel should sign ASL because it is the natural language of all deaf children. This is a difficult position to understand." Dr. Luetke-Stahlman's comments underscore fears that many hearing educators have.

It is easy to see how those who advocate the monolingual focus using

signed English are comfortable to many hearing educators because these artificial systems use speech and follow English word order, the language in which most American hearing people grew up. But the monolingual/bimodal approach raises more questions than it answers. I do not think the gains in literacy, as signed English proponents claim, are based on deaf children seeing English on the hands. I think that literacy achievement is dependent on teachers emphasizing reading and writing activities in the classroom. Children make gains in literacy when parents have more resources to provide summer and after-

...literacy achievement is dependent on teachers emphasizing reading and writing activities in the classroom.

school tutoring, and have more books in the home.

In the mainstream public schools in Texas where I supervise university practicum students, most of whom are deaf, I observe that while many of the hearing teachers use signed English and speech, most deaf children are not understanding them. And even though these public schools seldom employ signing deaf teachers as language models, the children take the initialized English signs they are taught and put them in ASL-like phrases and sentence structures using visual-spatial organization patterns. For example, they use directional verbs, point for pronouns, and set up people and places in space for ongoing linguistic reference (Singleton et al., 1998; Wilbur, 2000). When our university deaf practicum students take over a class, it is often embarrassing for the veteran hearing

teacher to see how attentive the deaf children become—because the deaf teacher has engaged the deaf students in a more visual communication rather than that of coupling speech and sign.

Another example that shows the limitations of the monolingual/bimodal approach is during a “read-aloud” session. If you ask a deaf student to read a passage from a storybook and sign each word in an English sentence, many can do this sign-each-word task easily. But if you ask this student to tell you in his or her own words what the sentence means—many cannot. They simply do not have the English language base to comprehend signed English. Granted, signed English as an educational tool does work for some students but these are usually the hard of hearing or postlingually deaf students who already have an English knowledge base. The average prelingually deaf student remains lost and confused. If signs in English order are used as a bridge to the child learning to read and write, then first the child must understand the concept behind the signs. Even though it has been quoted that the lexical vocabulary of American Sign Language and Signed English overlap approximately 90 percent (Wilbur, 2000), I don’t think Signed English is always the best vehicle to explain a concept because English grammar is often incomprehensible to deaf students through the air. Further, explaining a concept in American Sign Language requires more than lexical signs, and includes nonmanual aspects, such as facial expression, head tilts, and body movements.

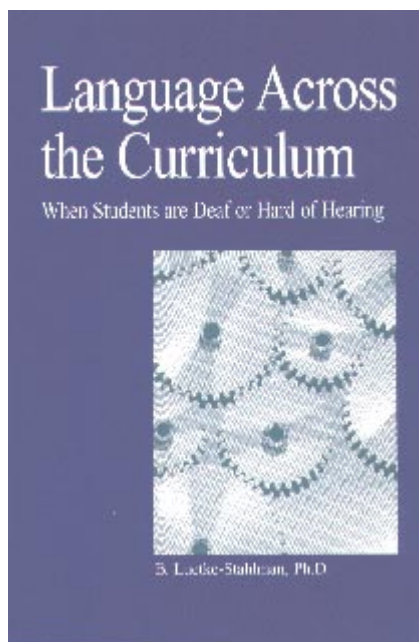
While Dr. Luetke-Stahlman’s monolingual/bimodal approach to language teaching carries us past the limitations of the monolingual/unimodal (aural/oral English) approach, her approach does not allow the full spectrum of cognitive and linguistic potential that teaching two languages bilingually—American Sign Language and English—can.

However, bilingual advocates must do a better job to allay the fears of the speech and hearing professionals and other monolingual/bimodal (Signed English) and unimodal (oralist) educators. Bilingual supporters need to provide better explanations about the American Sign Language/English bilingual approach and discuss how this approach is not just about sign language but also includes quality English teaching—reading, writing, and speech and listening skills where appropriate. But encouraging monolingual supporters to rethink their language beliefs will not be easy as bilingual approaches challenge common sense assumptions of how we acquire and learn second languages. This means treating deaf children’s dual languages—American Sign Language and English—as the assets they are.

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Language Across the Curriculum
by Barbara Luetke-Stahlman

1999, Butte Publications
Hillsboro, Oregon

Language Across the Curriculum Omits Questions in the Closet

By Jean F. Andrews

Dr. Barbara Luetke-Stahlman is by and large an optimistic writer who presents *Language Across the Curriculum*, a companion volume to her *Language Issues in Deaf Education*. I sense in the author's tone that English language learning is an inherently hopeful activity if we can just provide the appropriate instruction. Dr. Luetke-Stahlman provides readers with skill development sections on reading and writing, computer skills, spelling, math word problems, science, and social studies—all of which are clearly described. She essentially follows a top-down approach introducing whole stories through read-alouds of narrative texts and following up with solid and consistent skill development. She provides readers with many resource lists of publishers, software companies, and other useful agencies. Her book has an overall "can do" attitude with language curriculum issues.

But like the family "skeletons in the closet" stories that we feel uncomfortable telling even our closest friends,

How do we tell parents that signing will not hinder their deaf child's speech or written English development?

this book omits several language issues across the curriculum that need to be addressed and aired for all to ponder. Relative to language, for example, how do we tell parents that signing will not hinder their deaf child's speech or written English development (Wilbur,

2000)? And how do we explain to parents that the grammatical structures from American Sign Language that seep into their deaf child's written English language are a normal part of the development that all children go through in learning a second language? What about the increasing numbers of older deaf immigrant stu-

How do we tell parents when the interpreter is their child's only friend?

dents who come to the U.S. with little formal education, perhaps indigenous sign language or home gesture system and no English? How do we teach English grammar with its linear-sequential form to children who are thinking in a visual-gestural form? Can we use signs as a bridge to learning English, and if so, which strategies work and which strategies don't work?

And what about socialization in the mainstream? How do we explain to parents that many deaf adults as children suffered from painful loneliness in public schools because few persons could communicate with them? How do we tell parents when the interpreter is their child's only friend? How do we tell parents that hearing children often make an attempt to learn some signs initially but, except in rare cases, seldom learn enough to have meaningful conversations with deaf children? And how do we explain to parents that many deaf adults have had negative experiences as children with poorly

continued on page 60

Mom's Notes Lead to Child's Literacy



When preschool teacher Nancy Topolosky saw the note from Brennan's mother, she was quick to capitalize on the opportunity to bring her young preschooler a bit closer to literacy.

"I read the note to him," she says. "He recognized his own name and

his sister's name. Then he asked me where his mommy and daddy's names were. Then he wanted to know where my name was."

Topolosky obliged. She turned over the paper and wrote out all the names again. First her name, *Nancy*, then *Kelsey*, the name of Brennan's sister, then *mommy* and *daddy*. Brennan noticed that his name and Nancy's name had the same last letter -y.

"You're right!" Topolosky circled each of the letters. Then she pointed out the *an* that appeared in her name and Brennan's name. They talked a little about capital and lower-case letters before Brennan proceeded to bedeck the paper with letters large and small. When Brennan confused the *D* in *Daddy* with the *B* in *Brennan*, Topolosky wrote both letters in both

cases clearly for him to compare.

At three and a half, Brennan, like most of the deaf students in his parent/infant preschool class at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School on the campus of Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., recognizes his own name in print and writes it every morning. Whatever squiggles and symbols he produces are deemed appropriate for the day and time. Nevertheless, as Topolosky's files show, Brennan has moved steadily toward mastering the fine art of printing a readable version of his own name. ●

ABOVE: At three and a half years old, Brennan writes his own name and that of his sister.



September 29, 1999

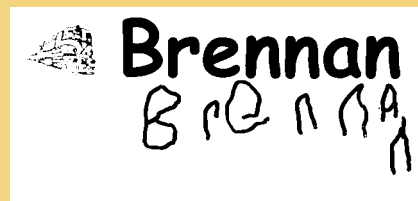
Evolution of a signature. Brennan's understanding of how to write his name changes as the school year progresses.



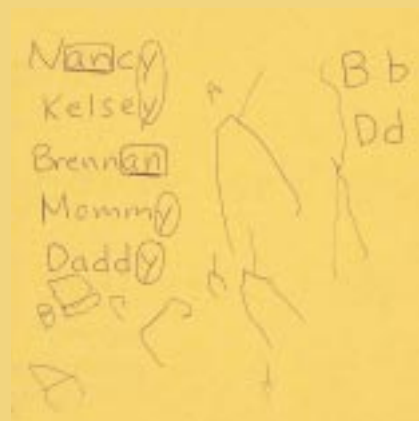
November 18, 1999



February 22, 2000



March 29, 2000



The morning note and Topolosky's spontaneous mini-lesson.

Questions in the Closet

continued from page 58

trained and non-certified interpreters and that their academics suffered? These are the realities that books like *Language Across the Curriculum* rarely address, but issues parents need to know about.

And what do we tell parents and teachers about the cochlear implant? Can the implant promote speech, language, and reading development? How do we tell parents about the physical risks of the implant, such as facial nerve paralysis, scarring, repeated surgeries needed to upgrade the processor, and the limitations that the implant imposes on physical activities? How do we reconcile the expense of the implant to parents who cannot afford one? How do we tell parents that cochlear implant research is often done by the manufacturing companies and some of the audiologists who rec-

ommend them consult for implant manufacturers? How do we explain to parents that hearing aids or cochlear implants may raise hearing thresholds on an audiogram, but that these devices may not provide benefit in terms of functional hearing for the prelingually deaf child? And how do we explain to the parents that their deaf child may never learn to speak intelligibly, but this does not mean he or she cannot learn to think, read, write, and live an independent and productive life?

Many of these questions cross the minds of experienced educators but they are reluctant to bring them up to parents and new teachers. Why? Because some of the questions are painful; some await long term longitudinal study but have no easy answer. Still these questions need to be openly

discussed with parents and teachers.

So, yes, let's provide deaf children with all the English language skills that Dr. Luetke-Stahlman presents so well in her text. But let's also tell parents and teachers more. Let's bring these skeletons out of the closet. In the long run, such openness is in the best interest of young deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. ●

Issues in Access: Creating Effective Preschools for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Hearing Children

By Gail Solit, M.A., and Angela Bednarczyk, Ph.D

Issues in Access shares the work of Project Access, a federal training grant that resulted in the creation of preschools in which deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing children could grow and learn together.

Gallaudet University's Child Development Center (CDC), recognized for its years of experience and collaborative study in developing its own innovative integrated school program, worked throughout the U.S. to provide support and training to other sites

that wished to provide this much-needed service to parents of deaf or hard of hearing children in their local areas.

A follow-up to the authors' earlier book and video, *Access for All*, this new book clearly describes the issues, goals, challenges, and common themes that emerged in the widely varied venues that were undertaking this work. Chapters elaborate on the needs of parents, staff, and the children themselves, as well as on the collaboration between agencies necessary for a successful integrated preschool.

Issues in Access, \$25.95 (Text and Appendices)

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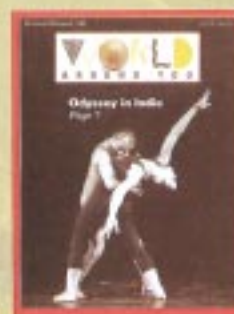
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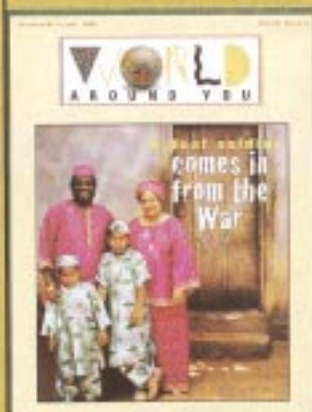
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