American Sign Language in Story Time

Julianne Dunn
Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center
Bordeaux Branch – Fayetteville, NC
What Inspired Me

• Started Learning sign as a child
• Learned some while at church services
• Elementary School with Signing Classrooms
• Helping Deaf customers at the library
Why Use Sign Language

- Works well with all ages
- Allows for participation and keeps attention
- Adds diversity and culture
- Baby sign language popularity
- Children can sign before they can speak
- Reinforces early literacy skills
- Helps with Special Needs children
Deaf Culture

• Deaf vs deaf
• This is what makes your story time multicultural
• Through Deaf Eyes
Classes and more

- ALA Course with Kathy MacMillan
- Continuing Ed classes at Fayetteville Technical Community College
- ALA Story Time course with Kathy MacMillan
Step 1: Decide Which Signs To Use

• Limit to what you are comfortable using
• Consider starting small and building on your list each week
• Choose signs you can repeat throughout the program
• Choose signs that will be meaningful to your audience
• Be prepared to adapt your list

Steps taken from Kathy MacMillan’s “Liven Up Baby and Toddler Storytimes with Sign Language” webinar through ALA on December 7, 2016.
Step 2 : Learn The Signs

- Books
- Videos
- Websites
- Classes
- Friends/family

Steps taken from Kathy MacMillan’s “Liven Up Baby and Toddler Storytimes with Sign Language” webinar through ALA on December 7, 2016
Step 3: Practice Your Signs

• Practice your sign production
  • Dominant hand moves in sign
• Practice how you will teach/explain the signs
  • Allow enough time for the children to copy
  • Check their signs for accuracy
• Don’t always voice

Steps taken from Kathy MacMillan’s “Liven Up Baby and Toddler Storytimes with Sign Language” webinar through ALA on December 7, 2016
Step 4: Practice Introducing Sign Language In Context

- Call it by name: American Sign Language or ASL
- Acknowledge that is mostly used by deaf people
- Incorporate practical information for parents
Step 5: Provide Follow-up

- Repeat the signs throughout the program
- Provide handouts showing signs or more information about using signs with young children
- Share library materials about signing
- Build your signing vocabulary week to week and repeat/reinforce past weeks’ signs

Steps taken from Kathy MacMillan’s “Liven Up Baby and Toddler Storytimes with Sign Language” webinar through ALA on December 7, 2016
Example: Kathy MacMillan

Caterpillar, Caterpillar
Example: Dawn Babb Prochovnic
Resources

• Kathy MacMillan – [www.storytimestuff.com](http://www.storytimestuff.com) and [www.storiesbyhand.com](http://www.storiesbyhand.com)


• ASL Websites:
  • Lifeprint.com
  • Aslnook.com
  • SigningSavvy.com
Resources - Books

- *Dancing With Words: Signing for Hearing Children’s Literacy* by Marilyn Daniels


- *Little Hands and Big Hands: Children and Adults Signing Together* by Kathy MacMillan

- *Simple Signing with Young Children: A Guide for Infant, Toddler, and Preschool Teachers* by Carol Garboden Murray
Questions?

Contact:

Julianne Dunn
Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center
Bordeaux Branch
jdunn@cumberland.lib.nc.us