



PIONEERS Co-Op

637 W. Ganson Street, Box B, Jackson, MI 49201

Voicemail: (517) 888-4328 Email: OfficeAdmin@pioneershess.org

Website://pioneershess.org

Overview of ADVANCED SIGN LANGUAGE (Grades 8-12)

Tutor: TBD

Text: *ABC – A Basic Course in American Sign Language* – 2nd ed. (ISBN: 978-0932666420)

Course Description: Think visually. American Sign Language (ASL) is understood by seeing it because all information in ASL is visual. How you make the sign is important, but just as important, are the facial expression and body movements you use when signing.

American Sign Language is the language of the American Deaf community. I hope that once you have a taste of the excitement of communicating with your hands, you will never lose your appetite for learning more about signing. To deaf people, the picture of communication painted by vowels and consonants, pitch and loudness pales in comparison to the vibrant images that jump off the fingers and hands, face and body of a person signing.

Being able to communicate with your hands should not be a surprise because you have been doing it for years. For deaf people, signing is necessary for communication. Consider how much gestural and nonverbal communication you encounter in your everyday conversations. A stare (“Don’t do it”) or an affectionate smile (“I am comfortable around you”) conveys information. ASL courses in high schools and colleges are booming. The television and movie industry has discovered the value of including deaf actors and actresses in films.

Deaf people create new signs as necessary to accommodate changing lifestyles and the influence of technology. Signs of recent origin are *credit card*, *computer*, *disk*, and *network*. Creating new signs is a part of ASL’s evolution. It is also a part of deaf culture.

ASL is a visual-gestural language. It is visual because we see it and gestural because the signs are formed by the hands. How signs are formed in space is important to understand what they mean. The movement of the head and facial expressions help shape the meaning of ASL sentences. Handshape, orientation, location, and movement describe a sign. The handshape is the shape of the hands when the sign is formed. The handshape may remain the same throughout the sign, or it can change. If two hands are used to make a sign, both hands can have the same handshape or be different. The orientation is the position of the hand(s) relative to the body. The location is the place in the sign space where a sign is formed. The movement of a sign is the direction in which the hand moves relative to the body. Signs are used to create in space images that convey our thoughts to other people. Two or more concepts can be simultaneously expressed in ASL.

Topics we will cover include:

- Analyze ASL language structures and signs
- Classifiers
- Create ASL sentences and write the English translations of these sentences
- Deaf Culture
- Directional Verbs
- Facial expressions and gestures
- Mastering signing dialogues
- Vocabulary

Grading Scale

90-100%	=A
80-89%	=B
70-79%	=C
60-69%	=D
Less than 60%	=E

Student Evaluation: Students will receive a percentage grade each semester based upon the following:

Class Participation:	50%
Quizzes/Tests:	50%



PIONEERS Co-Op

637 W. Ganson Street, Box B, Jackson, MI 49201

Voicemail: (517) 888-4328 Email: OfficeAdmin@pioneershess.org

Website: [//pioneershess.org](http://pioneershess.org)

5/2/25 orj

**Pioneers Co-op is a cell group of the PIONEERS Home Education Support Services, a 501C-3 non-profit educational ministry*