

Signing Time Outreach Activities

Play Date

This informal, 1-2 hour event for both children and adults incorporates a multi-sensory approach to learning American Sign Language (ASL) through fun activities, song and hands-on interaction.

Participants

Pre-K and elementary school-age children, accompanied by a parent or caregiver. The program is for children of all abilities who enjoy the association of other children, while playing and learning. Signing Time activities can benefit all children. Participation is not limited to children with hearing impairments or other special needs.

Structure and components

Theme:

Select or create a theme from the Signing Time episode descriptions.

Go to www.signingtimekids.org and click on 'adults'.

Materials:

- Video or DVD of a Signing Time episode
- Signing Time music CD
- Printables
- Crayons, markers, pencils
- Signing Time song sheets
- TV & VCR, or DVD player
- CD Player
- LCD projector for showing the Signing Time Kids website (optional)

Theme-related printables and songs can be downloaded from the Signing Time website www.signingtimekids.org.

Snacks:

Snack time can also be used as an interactive opportunity. See Play Date Example.

Staffing:

- Outreach manager/coordinator to welcome and make introductions
- Signing Time local fans/volunteers (any or all of the following):
 - Someone who knows American Sign Language
 - Someone who can sing Signing Time songs
 - Child Development or Literacy expert

Time:

Weekday morning, afternoon or Saturday morning



Locations:

- Station
- Library
- School
- Community center
- Church function room
- Childcare Centers
- Pre-School Facilities
- Parks

Record the Event:

- Take pictures (digital whenever possible)
- Shoot video footage
- Contact the local newspaper
- Contact the local news stations

Play Date sample schedule (60-90 minutes)

1. Have an activity for children as they arrive i.e.: story, flannel board story, finger plays, or singing.
2. Welcome by Outreach Manager/station representative (once all participants have arrived). Introduce the Signing Time volunteers and explain what they will do.
3. Show a brief clip of a Signing Time video with Rachel Coleman demonstrating words related to the Play Date theme.
4. ASL volunteer helps children & adults practice signs centered around a theme; add one or two new signs. Have children & adults show each other the new signs they've learned.
5. Sing a song, play a game or do an activity that reinforces the signs that were demonstrated.
6. Hand out copies of a printable for children to work on.
Informal Q&A for caregivers with Signing Time fans/volunteers or child development expert.
7. Snack/refreshments for all. Show components of Signing Time website.
Informal Q&A continues
8. Final song or demonstration
Practice of today's signs (optional, depending on group interest)
9. Give adults a "take-away", e.g., hand-out showing today's signs or Signing Time Quick Reference Guide, include Signing Time website and broadcast information.



Play Date Example

Theme: Animals

View: Clip from episode 7 – “Leah’s Farm” or episode 9 – “The Zoo Train”

Show a picture of an animal and demonstrate the sign for that animal; do this with pictures of several different animals. Have adults and children practice the signs together.

Sing: *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*; sign names of animals in the song.

Do one or both of the following, depending on time and interest of the group.

Game: Animal Guessing Game (a great opportunity for the adults to be silly!)

- Do an action of a particular animal, e.g. flap your arms (bird); hop (rabbit or kangaroo)
- Ask children to guess by using the sign for that animal.

Read: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* by Bill Martin, Jr.

Show how to sign “What do you see?” and encourage children to participate by signing the question throughout the book along with the reader.

Snack Activity: Crackers, Juice or Water

Hand out one cracker to each child—showing them the sign for cracker before and after giving it to them. Do the same for juice and water. Staff should sit with the children and when they ask for more, show them the signs for more and please. Have the children show you the sign for what they want more of. Show them the sign for thank you. Continue reinforcing these signs until all the snacks are gone.

Printable: Let children work on this while adults are reviewing the Signing Time web site; this can also be a time for informal Q & A.

(optional) End with a short reprise of “*Old MacDonald Had a Farm*”.

Hand out take-aways for adults.

