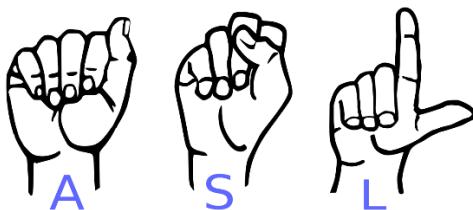




Considerations for American Sign Language (ASL)



On June 10, 2010, [Chapter 285](#), formerly House Bill 345, amended Title 14 of the Delaware Code by inserting subsection 4135 that states, “American Sign Language shall be recognized as and considered a world language for purposes of school curriculum and any course of instruction involving any school district or public school in the State of Delaware.”

Delaware [Regulation 505 High School Graduation Requirements and Diplomas](#) also defines American Sign Language as a World Language: “World Languages means any language other than English that is used by persons around the world for communicating information and ideas and transmitting its cultures, including American Sign Language (ASL), Latin and Ancient Greek.” Therefore, demonstrated proficiency in ASL or courses taken in ASL may count toward fulfilling Delaware’s high school World Language graduation requirement.

Adopted by the State Board of Education in February 2016, the [Delaware World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages](#) embrace ASL by more intentionally including elements of the visual language in each of the three modes of communication:

- **Interpersonal Communication (Standard 1.1)**—Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, **signed**, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.
- **Interpretive Communication (Standard 1.2)**—Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or **viewed** on a variety of topics
- **Presentational Communication (Standard 1.3)**—Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or **viewers**.

According to the [Deaf Resource Library](#), “American Sign Language, or ASL, is a complex visual-spatial language used by the Deaf community in the United States and Canada. It is a vibrant, linguistically complete and natural language used by people of all ages to communicate everyday life experiences, needs, thoughts, and abstract ideas in a visual way. ASL is a language with a rich culture and heritage. Other countries also have their own signed languages, like Mexican Sign Language and French Sign Language (LSF).”

It is important to note that ASL shares no grammatical similarities to English and should not be considered in any way to be a broken, mimed, or gestural form of English. In terms of its syntax, for example, ASL utilizes a topic-comment syntax, while English uses a subject-object-verb syntax. Some linguists note that, in terms of its syntax, ASL shares more with spoken Japanese than it does with English.



ASL and other sign languages are often incorrectly characterized as "gestural" languages. This is not absolutely correct because hand gestures are only one component of ASL. Facial features such as eyebrow motion and lip-mouth movements and other factors such as body orientation are also significant in ASL as they form a crucial part of the grammatical system. In addition, ASL makes use of the space surrounding the signer to describe places and persons who are not present."

Since ASL is a visual-spatial language, the communication modes (Standards 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) involve different skills:

- **Interpretive Communication** (Receptive) means that information is received visually, not through audio means. This category includes receptivity to both signing and fingerspelling.
- **Interpersonal Communication** means that information is exchanged through visual interactivity rather than via audio means.
- **Presentational Communication** (Expressive) means information is being conveyed visually through signs and fingerspelling, not verbally.

The following chart contains the proficiency targets for American Sign Language (ASL) learners who are enrolled in programs that incorporate proficiency-focused practices:

Middle and High School (Grades 6-12) Visual Languages

<i>Course Level</i>	<i>Interpersonal Communication</i>	<i>Interpretive Communication</i>	<i>Presentational Communication</i>
1	Novice Mid	Novice High	Novice Mid
2	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Novice High
3	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate Mid
4	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate High	Intermediate Mid
5	Intermediate High	Intermediate High	Intermediate High

Delaware recognizes that there is no written form of ASL. However, some programs might incorrectly equate Presentational Writing in other languages to Glossing, which refers to a system for writing down ASL sign-for-sign pictorially and including notations to account for the facial and body grammar that goes with the signs. However, whether or not an ASL learner has the ability to gloss has no bearing on that learner's proficiency in ASL. Furthermore, glossing is not considered to be a part of the culture of ASL. Programs should not feel pressure to incorporate an artificial writing element into an ASL program when one simply does not exist for this language. If a school or district has an initiative that emphasizes writing across the curriculum, English can be used by learners in the ASL classroom to write about the language and culture of ASL.

*Source: Deaf Resource Library. "About American Sign Language." March, 2008.
www.deaflibrary.org/asl.html.*



ASL Resources

[Delaware World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages](#)

[ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012](#)

[Delaware Core Practices for World Language Proficiency](#)

[ASL in Delaware](#)

ASL-Specific Can-Do Statements for Communication (Ohio Departments of Education)

[Novice-Low](#)

[Novice-Mid](#)

[Novice-High](#)

[Intermediate-Low](#)

[Intermediate-Mid](#)

[Intermediate-High](#)

[Advanced-Low](#)

ASL-Specific Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication (Ohio Department of Education)

[Novice](#)

[Intermediate](#)

[Advanced](#)

ASL Performance Rubrics

[Presentational/Expressive](#) (Ohio Department of Education)

[Interpersonal](#)

[Interpretive/Receptive](#) (ACTFL)

ASL Authentic Resources

[Leslie Grahn's American Sign Language Resources](#)

[Delaware School for the Deaf](#)

[Resources by AP Theme](#) (Ohio Department of Education)

<https://dpan.tv/>

<https://www.dailymoth.com/blog>

<https://seektheworld.com/>

<https://deafverse.com/>

Colleges and Universities that Accept ASL for WL Entrance requirements

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