

STAR School Video Transcription

(Navajo) One of the things that we think is important in our children's learning that brings in using various modalities is it's not just in their receptive learning, it's in their expressive learning. I believe that there are children who just do so much better if they can express themselves in something other than just the standard verbal approach. (children singing: light a candle that shines all the way around the world) Sign language has been infused in this classroom...

Sign language has been infused in this classroom, I have not experienced it in other classrooms that I've worked in. So for me it's really neat to see it happening. For peace in my heart, peace in my mind, for peace in my body

(Woman speaking Navajo)

Oh, this has been a lot of fun for me cause when I came to the STAR School, of course, I didn't know any sign language. This has been something that I've learned as I've been here and so, um, its its doable. Definitely.

(children talking, background)

We use the Signing Time curriculum, uh, which has been fantastic for me learning and for them.

With both hands and wiggle them down. Weather. Weather. Wiggled down.

It is already organized for us with themes of vocabulary. So one week we'll learn about farm animals or vegetables or fruits and then we can take that and integrate it as we're using those themes in our classrooms. The videos are really interesting to the children. They've got songs that practice the signs and [4:00] the videos actually give the children, um, a great chance throughout to practice the signs over and over again.

And the videos actually give the children um a great chance throughout to practice the signs over and over and over again.

Circle it against your palm, seasons, seasons

In the classroom it obviously helps with language development. We're learning new vocabulary all the time and we do our best to pair sign language with it. Um as we're reading uh stories in our literature curriculum we, the vocabulary that we've pulled out, we also teach the sign right along with it so they've got an extra anchor.

It helps them attain a certain um depth of their understanding of language. It just adds to what we're already doing with our speech and with our actions.

It helps them attain a certain depth of their understanding of language. It just adds to what we're already doing with our speech and our actions. It's important that they understand. If they understand with their body, they can typically understand it with their mind. It helps them attain a certain depth of their understanding of language. It just adds to what we're already doing with our speech and

our actions. It's important that they understand. If they understand with their body, they can typically understand it with their mind.

Children Chatting.

Children Chatting. Soft Even a kitty is soft. Even a blanket is soft. A Rabbit and a kitty are so soft too.

The way we use sign language in our classroom is to spell. To spell out words.

Children Chanting.

Using sign language to learn their spelling words, they really have to think about the letters, how to make the letters with their hands, plus think about how its spelled, plus think about the order of the letters. So when you see them working with the sign language and trying to spell their words, you see their eyes moving to the corners of the of their head and you see them really concentrating.

I have one student who has a little bit of a speech delay and--and articulation difficulties and part of what he's doing, uh, to work on that is starting with sign language. So they started, um, building complete thoughts, complete phrases. "I like my hamburger. I like my shirt," um, in sign. And so he was first able to make these complete thoughts in sign and it eventually, uh, carried over into his spoken-- his spoken language.

Some of these children, of course they're three year olds, so their verbal skills aren't real strong, some of them so it's very helpful for them.

(children singing: sing peace around the world, sing peace around the world)

one day my husband and I we were traveling with Dominic and he was signing to us and we didn't know what he was signing and he kept going like this to us and I said, "Charles what is he saying?" and he's like, "I don't know, what does that mean?" And of course we didn't have our--our other daughter Madison who was-- who knew some of the sign language and we didn't have any of them with us so we just went ahead, just you know, we didn't know what to say. We just kept asking him what it what does it mean and we didn't know what it was so finally he got the water bottle. And that's what he wanted was water and I guess this meant water.

What I have seen so impressive is they're using sign language with their parents. So that their parents who sometimes don't understand that they really do get a concept or they really do understand what the parent is saying. If the parent's willing as so many of ours are to gradually pick up sign language then the parents can see that the child really does understand something. So, uh, the conversation then comes to a whole different level.

He uses it everywhere. When we're at home and I'm like telling him when we're eating dinner and he has to be quiet and he always puts his hand up like that.

Learning to communicate, um, with more than just words is really important.

While she was sleeping, she dreamed that she could fly. When she woke up, she was a butterfly.

For me, personally as a teacher, I would say, the best thing that sign language has done in our classroom is ensure that when I'm working with a child or when, when, um, there's a group of children working with one another, all they have to do is, just, you know, just use their sign languages.

If they can, need to use the bathroom or get a drink of water, they can do that from across the, um, classroom without a single word said. So it keeps it, it keeps our classroom in still, in like that calm, quiet, but there's still communication going on.

So during our lunch time, we sit quietly for 10 minutes so that they can focus on eating. And we ask them to use sign language during that time.