



Communicate

# Sign it spell it

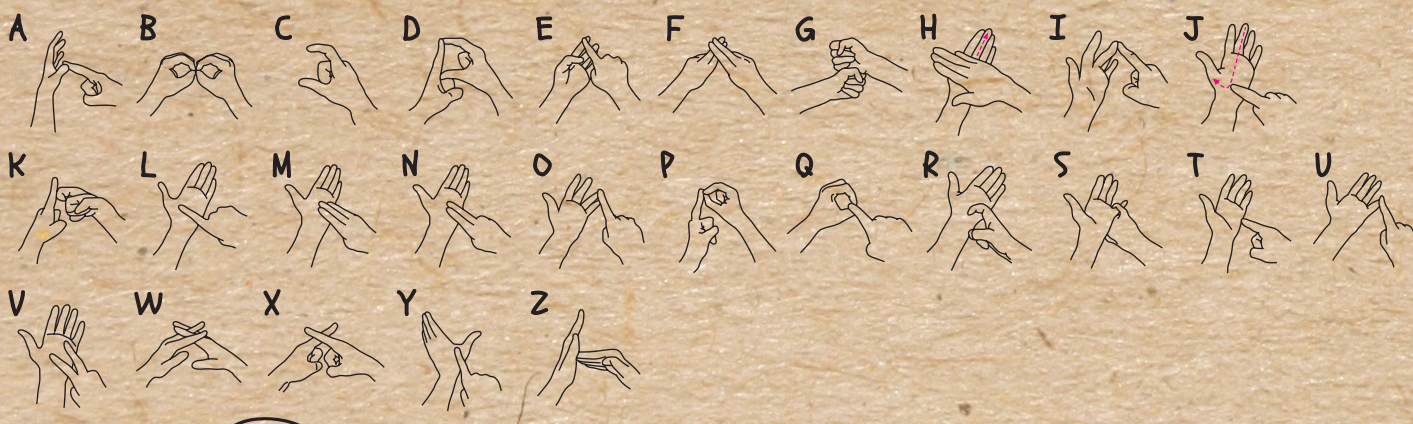
Stage

3

45 mins



Skills builder



## What you'll get out of it

- Explore how to fingerspell in BSL.
- Find out how to introduce yourself in BSL.

## What you'll need

- Copies of the BSL fingerspelling alphabet, 1 between 2

## Aim of activity

Have you ever wanted to learn a new language? Now's your chance! Practise the basics of British Sign Language (BSL) so you can introduce yourself to others and more.



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Girlguiding



# Communicate

## Note to leader

If you're unfamiliar with the fingerspelling alphabet, try to look up videos of the BSL alphabet and how to say your name before the meeting. The activity shows right-handed signing – if you have any left-handed girls, you can look up extra guidance. Have a practice at the alphabet and signs before the activity so you can show the girls.

British Sign Language – or BSL – is a visual language, meaning it's made up of hand signs, facial expressions and body language, instead of spoken words. Thousands of people in the UK use it, mainly those who are deaf or have hearing impairments. This is your chance to give it a go!

## What to do

**1** Practise the BSL alphabet together as one group – your leader will show you the signs. Try to sign and sing the alphabet song as you get more confident.

**2** Can you spell your name? Have a practice.

**3** Try out these signs:

### Name

- Make the guiding salute, but hold your ring finger down too.
- Touch your two fingertips to your forehead, above your eye.
- Move your fingers forwards, turning your wrist, so your fingertips face forwards.

### Me

- Point to yourself.

**4** Now it's time to put the three elements together: 'name', 'me' and your fingerspelling.

## Top tip

BSL has a different structure and grammar to English – this is why you're using the sign 'me' and not 'my'.

**5** Everyone spread out. Watch your leader, and when she waves start moving around the space.

**6** When your leader waves again – stop moving! Find the nearest person to you, and take turns introducing yourselves.

**7** When you're both done, put your hands up so you can see who's finished.

**8** When everyone's finished, start moving again. Watch out for your leader waving and introduce yourself to someone different.

## Try it this way

Feeling confident? Sign a fake name for your partner to guess.

**9** Repeat a third, fourth and fifth time, so you really get the hang of it!

## Take it further

In small groups, take turns to think of a four-letter word and sign it to your group. Can anyone guess the word?