

Nita's Day

Teacher and Librarian Guide

Sign all day long!

- Little ones are always watching and learning, even before they start to sign back themselves! Use signs in context as you talk about different activities. This helps children develop a sense of security as they know what to expect.
- Signs relating to everyday routines such as dressing, feeding, and diaper changes are all great first signs! Using them regularly with young children gives them tools to start conversations on their own.
- Introduce and repeat signs in context often. For example, sign BOOK before reading a book. This helps children feel more in control of their environment because they know what is coming.
- If you forget a sign, ask the children if they remember it. If they don't, look it up together. Demonstrating that even adults don't know all the answers is a powerful lesson in problem-solving!
- Children won't always make a sign correctly the first time they sign it, just like they won't always pronounce a word correctly the first time they speak it. Keep signing it the correct way and the children will soon learn.
- Ask questions about routines and leave space for the child to answer. Even if the child is not signing or speaking yet, making time for the answer helps young children internalize the back and forth rhythms of conversation.
- Make sure that any books or other resources you select use American Sign Language. There's a big difference between American Sign Language, which is a whole language, and Signed English, which is just a manual code to represent English words. By using ASL, you're showing respect for Deaf Culture and giving the children (and yourself) a chance to become bilingual!

Ideas for Sharing Nita's Day with Children

- Prepare to teach the signs by watching the author's demonstration video at LittleHandsSigning.com.
- Conduct a choral reading in baby storytime by passing out multiple copies of the book so that the adults can read to the children sitting in their laps. Invite the group to read each page aloud together, and then slide open the pages to practice the signs. Choral reading helps keep caregivers engaged with the children, allows you to model and help parents practice early literacy techniques, and builds warm and positive associations for babies with books. It also encourages the adults to practice the signs and makes it more likely they will use them later.
- Take the time to open each page and show the sign, then put the book down to demonstrate it. You may need to explain the signs step-by-step, particularly for toddlers and twos. For example, to explain the sign PLAY, you might say, "Give me two thumbs up. Now put out your pinkies too. Now wiggle your hands to make them play! That's the sign PLAY!"
- Follow up with a signing quiz! Show a sign and have the children and adults identify what it means. Or say the word and ask them if they remember the sign.

Suggested Follow-Up Activities

Share a Rhyme!

Here's a fun activity rhyme that reviews all the signs in Nita's Day:

Early in the morning
I WAKE-UP right,
And get CHANGED out of the diaper
I wore all night.
I put on my CLOTHES,
And have something to EAT.
Then I sit on my POTTY.
It's quite a treat!
In the afternoon
I GO to the park to PLAY.
And I take a BATH
at the end of the day.
My grown-up reads me a BOOK
as we cuddle up tight.
Time to go to BED
and say good night!

Sing a Song!

Sing, sign, and act out this silly song to the tune of "A Bicycle Built for Two":

BATH time, BATH time,
time for BATH time PLAY.
We're getting clean, so
What will wash today?
Wash, wash, wash your toes.
Wash, wash, wash your nose.
Then wash your hands,
Because it's so grand
Taking a BATH today!

Write Together!

Using a flipchart or whiteboard, have toddlers or preschoolers work with you to make a list of things they do in the morning, afternoon, and evening. For example, the morning list might include wake up, eat, put on clothes, and use the potty. As you write down their suggestions, spell each word aloud. This activity encourages letter recognition, text-to-self connection, and logical thinking. When you're done, read each list aloud and share this silly song using items from the list:

(to the tune of "Apples and Bananas")
I like to EAT, EAT, EAT in the morning.
I like to EAT, EAT, EAT in the morning.
(Repeat with other activities and times of day.)

