

MA2 Notes

WH Face – p 42

You have used the WH-Face to ask *what is your name?* Use the **WH-Face** instead of the Question-Maker when you are uncertain, unclear, or asking a question using the signs ***who, what, where, when, why*** (see page 64). Use culturally-appropriate techniques to interrupt or gain attention, or raise your hand in class. Make sure you have **eye contact** before asking for clarification.

Deaf Culture Minute – p 43 What is the ASL sign for *You're welcome?*

You can sign ***thank you*** back to the person who thanked you, or nod your head and smile. Nodding is more **casual** and should be used with friends and family. Many languages say *you're welcome* this way.

I Want to Know – p 45 Isn't ASL just gestures or making "pictures" in the air?

Some people believe ASL is a simple language of **gestures** like *don't do that*. Using some gestures does not make ASL any **less** of a language than English, which also uses gestures. Some signs resemble the meaning behind the sign (like *book*). These are called **iconic signs**, but most signs are not iconic. How are the signs *door* and *lights* **iconic**? Can you think of the sign for *window* using the same handshape as *door*?

Labels and identity – p 48

Minority groups are often **labeled** by the larger, surrounding community who are uninterested in how the group **identifies itself**. This is especially true with individuals considered disabled or handicapped. The Deaf community has been labeled "**deaf-and-dumb**" and "**deaf-mute**" in addition to handicapped, disabled, or abnormal. Over the years the Deaf community has worked to **educate** hearing people about the negative connotations of many labels, preferring that a **positive** view of deafness and Deaf culture be **respected**.

You may have seen the term **hearing impaired** on TV or other media referring to deafness. Many people in the Deaf community prefer to sign **deaf** instead of hearing impaired due to the **negative** connotations of "impaired" and "broken." Strangely, hearing people consider this term more polite than saying "Deaf." Deaf people are **proud** to be Deaf, and prefer to be called **Deaf!**

Hard-of-hearing refers to those individuals who have some degree of deafness and can use a spoken language, though hearing and speech skills vary from person to person. Many hard-of-hearing people consider themselves to be **culturally** Deaf, meaning they fully participate in the Deaf community.

Deaf people form a **cultural** and **linguistic** minority whose language and experiences are **unique**. When a group of people who share a language and come together to offer mutual **support** in pursuit of common goals and interests, a **community** is formed. Over time, a **culture** develops from this community. **Deaf culture** is the shared experience of deaf people that has its own **values**, social **norms** (ways of doing things), a unique **history**, and a rich **tradition** of storytelling and poetry passed from generation to generation. The common bond in Deaf culture is the experience of being **deaf** and the use of American Sign Language.

Accent Steps – 50

Have you noticed **differences** between signs in Master ASL and those your teacher uses? Maybe a Deaf person has taught you some signs that closely resemble the signs you've learned in this book but aren't the same. As you meet Deaf people you will encounter **slight differences** between signs, called **variations**. There are certain signs that vary from **region** to region, with some differences more well-known than others. In many ways, these sign variations resemble regional differences in spoken languages: Do you say *soda, pop, or cola*? The answer depends on where you live and your own **preference**. The same variation between signs is seen in ASL. Be sure to use the sign variation preferred by your **local Deaf community** unless you want to sign with an accent!

Deaf Definition - p 52

The rise of the **Deaf Pride** movement in the 1980s has introduced a distinction between deaf and Deaf, with the **capitalized** form used specifically in referring to deaf persons belonging to the community also known as **Deaf culture** that has formed around the use of American Sign Language as the preferred means of communication. With deaf the capitalized and un-capitalized forms differ in meaning. Only persons who are **self-identified** as belonging to Deaf culture are appropriately referred to as Deaf.

Deafness may be caused by **illness**, **heredity**, **damage** from exposure to loud noise, or **age**, and may occur from damage in the inner, middle, and outer areas of the ear.

What is Deaf Culture – p 53

In this **cultural model**, deafness is not considered to be an overwhelming handicap or disability but instead is part of one's **identity**. Because deafness in this context is an accepted - and **positive** - way of life for a large group of people, Deaf is capitalized to distinguish those persons who are deaf and use American Sign Language from the **medical model**. In other words, deaf individuals who use American Sign Language, identify themselves as part of the deaf community, and are **proud** to be deaf are Deaf!

While many Deaf people use hearing aids or other technological equipment to improve their hearing or perception of sound, most Deaf individuals do not feel the need to be **fixed** or **cured**. Many Deaf people are **proud** to be deaf and of their achievements and successes despite not hearing. The Deaf culture has responded to and adapted to the needs of the "**hearing world**," a world that **respects** the Deaf community more than ever.

Now that you understand the difference between Deaf and deaf, it is important to understand the meaning of **culture**. As defined by the American Heritage Dictionary, culture refers to the **beliefs**, **behavior** patterns, social **organizations**, and **products** of a particular group of people. While Deaf culture is comprised of people from all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds, the common and unifying trait is **deafness** and the use of American Sign Language. From this bond and the needs for mutual **support**, developed a community sharing **goals**, **ideals** and **expectations**, a rich body of literature and the arts, and a way of living that **celebrates** deafness as a fulfilling way of life. This way of life is called Deaf culture.

Did you Know – p 60

Deaf people use **visual signals** for doorbells, the telephone, fire, or smoke alarms. There are even visual signals **activated** by crying babies! The Deaf community has adapted many listening devices to serve visual purposes, and manufacturers now include visual options in a range of products. If you have a silent **vibrate option** on your cell phone, thank the Deaf community who advocated for the alert! Nowadays, visual alerts for public smoke and fire alarms are **required** by federal law. can you find any examples of visual signaling devices in your **school**, office, or home?

Eyes on ASL – p 64

Unlike English sentences, WH-Signs **don't** occur at the **beginning** of a sentence. Who may occur at the beginning, as long as it also occurs at the end.