

LEADERSHIP COURSE

Jesus and the **INCLUSION MODEL**

Practical suggestions for the inclusion of all children and teenagers in the church

MODULE 4





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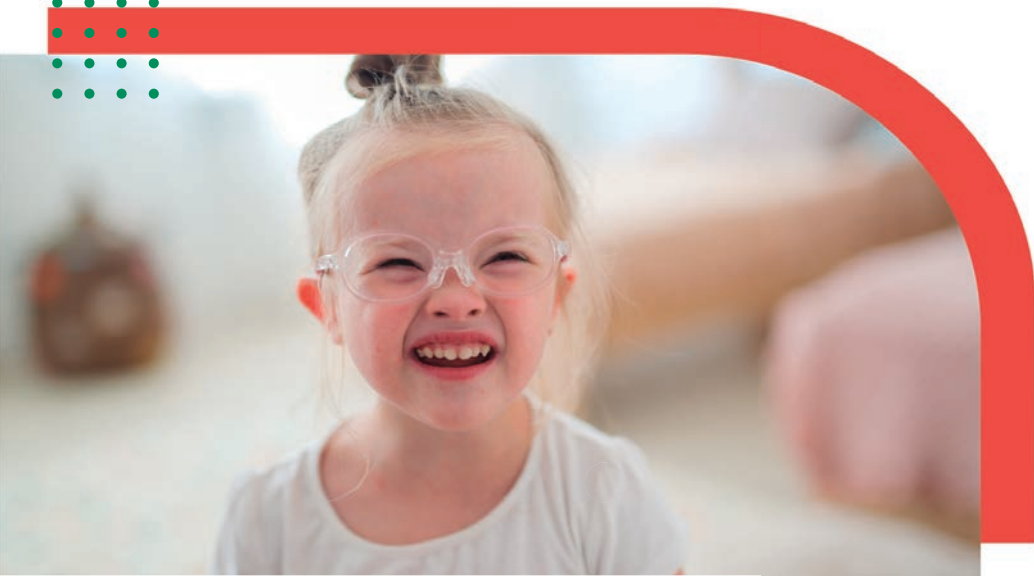
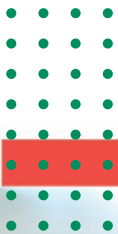
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PART I - THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED PERSON: THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILIARITY, TECHNIQUES AND AUXILIARY RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Dear leader, we congratulate you on your desire to learn and improve in order to be an instrument of salvation in your church and community. In this final module of Level 6 of the Children's Ministries Leadership Course, you will find two highly requested topics, especially by teachers. These are the topics of how to work with children with visual impairment or deafness in the Sabbath School routine. Since these are broad and specific subjects, they will be addressed individually. The first theme is: The Visually Impaired Person: the importance of familiarity, techniques and auxiliary resources.

In general, when it comes to visual impairment, thoughts often turn to impossibilities. However, generalizing a person's limitations and possibilities based on a single characteristic ignores the complexity of human life and limits the power of God. A broader perspective on



individuals as human beings is necessary before focusing all attention on a single aspect of life that is as interesting and valuable as any other.

Did you know that prejudice against people with disabilities is called ableism? In one way or another, all of us exhibit it at some point in life. It comes from the knowledge and experiences each person has had and the way they process this information when relating to the topic of disability (COSTA, 2020).

The victim of prejudice has their existence reduced to a single characteristic, in this case, the disability, and is sentenced to a limited life without opportunities. At the same time, the barriers encountered in various aspects of society clearly express that people with disabilities are unwelcome in most physical, social, religious, cultural, and educational spaces, among others that can be listed. Thus, the problem lies not with the person but in the hostile environment that surrounds them.

That is why this module aims to help you, the teacher, become familiar with and better understand the world of individuals with visual impairments in order to act assertively and proactively in all contexts, especially in the Sabbath School rooms for children and adolescents in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.





1. WHAT IS VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Before any practical strategy, it is necessary to understand a bit more about visual impairment, which is the condition of complete or partial absence of the sense of sight and can be present from the formation of the fetus in the mother's womb (congenital), or acquired later in life. According to their characteristics, individuals with visual impairment may present:

BLINDNESS

LOW VISION

MONOCULAR VISION (Blindness in one eye)

Therefore, visual impairment is not necessarily linked to a total inability to see.

In order to better understand what visual impairment means, it is necessary to know some basic terms about how vision works:

1. Visual Acuity – VA: relates to the measurement of central vision, which is responsible for identifying objects and their details (LOPES, 2014). The Visual Acuity test assesses a person's ability to visually discern the smallest object at a certain distance (ROCHA, 2016).

2. Visual Field – VF: refers to the extent of a person's peripheral vision. It indicates how much they can see around them while looking at a fixed point in front of them (MUÑOZ, 2007).

These measurements are conducted in specialized ophthalmology clinics using devices. The Snellen Test was created by the Dutch ophthalmologist Hermann Snellen and is considered the most effective examination for detecting vision problems (MUÑOZ, 2007).

Individuals with visual impairments may have reduced sensitivity to contrasts, which is the ability of the visual system to detect differences in brightness between two overlapping surfaces, such as a white sheet of paper on a white table. They may also develop low visual adaptation, which is the ability to adjust vision to different lighting conditions.



2. AUXILIARY TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES

It is important to know that a disability, whether visual or of any other kind, should not be equated with illness. A person with a disability can have an overall good state of health and not necessarily be sick. Visual impairment can generally result from a pathology, an accident, trauma, or genetic condition.

The extent of limitations or degree of exclusion experienced by a person with a disability is proportional to the number of barriers encountered that hinder their access. Accessibility is a legally guaranteed right for individuals with disabilities, allowing them to live more independently and exercise their rights of citizenship and social participation (BRASIL, 2015).

Therefore, individuals with visual impairments should be encouraged to seek specialized rehabilitation programs to learn techniques and use available resources to enjoy a more independent life, among other benefits.

Among the types of accessibility resources available for individuals with visual disabilities are:



	<p>Optical aids These are instruments, products, and technologies that are specially developed to assist individuals with visual impairments in their daily lives. They require technical expertise for evaluation and accurate recommendation.</p>	<p>Non-optical aids These are modifications in materials and the environment. They are simpler and low-cost. They can be used in conjunction with optical aids.</p>	<p>1. Digital technologies Electronic resources such as magnifiers and computer and cell-phone programs.</p> <p>2. Other resources Cane for tracking. Orientation and Mobility techniques.</p>
USED FOR	<p>Increasing image resolution. Repositioning the image on the retina. Filtering ambient light using lenses with different colors.</p>	<p>Illumination. Contrast. Magnification. Printed texts in enlarged font. Materials made in high relief.</p>	<p>1. Size adjustment. Adjustment of brightness, color, illumination, contrast. Screen reader programs with synthesized voice.</p> <p>2. Displacement.</p>
EXAMPLES	<p>To assist with long-distance vision: Handheld telescope. Monocular telescope mounted on glasses. Binocular telescope mounted on glasses.</p> <p>To assist with close-up vision: Glasses. Handheld magnifier. Stand magnifier. Telemicroscopic systems. Electronic resources.</p>	<p>Improvements in ambient lighting. Curtains to modify light entry. Sheets with reinforced and enlarged lines for contrasting with the paper. Font and image enlargement. Creation of materials with raised drawings, letters, and details.</p>	<p>1. Screen reader programs for computers and smartphones: NVDA, Jaws, Voiceover, TalkBack, among others. Increased contrast, screen enlargement, font and icon enlargement.</p> <p>2. White cane (for blind individuals); White and red cane (for deaf-blind individuals); Green cane (for individuals with low vision).</p>



2.1 ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY

It is important for the autonomy and safety of individuals with visual impairments to learn Orientation and Mobility (OM) techniques, which involve perceiving the environment and understanding one's current position in a space to navigate. Among the five senses, vision most assists in human orientation and mobility (FELIPPE, 2003).

Therefore, OM techniques aid in organizing movements and utilizing remaining senses to gather vital environmental information. This allows the person to know their location, desired destination, and how to get there. Audition, touch, vision (in situations involving low vision), smell, and proprioception (perception of one's own movement) are used for orientation.

In this context, the Sabbath School teacher should initiate interaction with visually impaired children or adolescents. Approaching by gently touching their shoulder, introducing oneself, and offering assistance are very welcome actions.

When a visually impaired person needs to move:

- 1. Offer to guide** – gently touch their arm for them to hold your wrist, hand (for shorter children), back of your elbow, or shoulder (for taller children or adolescents).
- 2. Walk slightly ahead** – the visually impaired person will follow your movements.
- 3. Alert about obstacles** – such as steps, partially open doors, chairs, or holes.

CAUTION!

- **Never pull the person by hand or cane.**
- **Do not push the person to walk ahead while holding them from behind.**



Fonte: Fundação Dorina Nowill para Cegos. Orientação e Mobilidade. Disponível em: <https://troca-dos-aberres.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Carilha-Orienta%C3%A7%C3%A3o-e-Mobilidade.pdf>

2.2 AUDIO DESCRIPTION – AD

Audio description (AD) is one of the most important tools to help individuals with visual impairments assimilate and understand information from their surrounding environment. The technique of audio description originated in the 1970s in the United States and involves

the practice of describing the visual world to blind or visually impaired individuals.

This should be a common practice in Sabbath School classrooms, as it enhances the learning experience for all children by fostering observation skills, expanding perception and understanding, and describing details that might otherwise go unnoticed even by those who can see (MOTTA, 2015).

2.3 THE BRAILLE SYSTEM

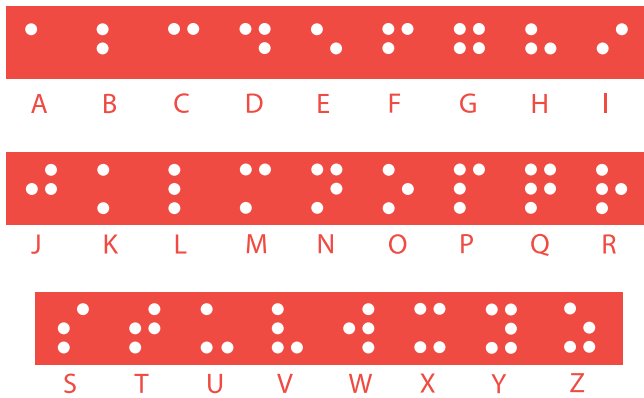
Used by individuals with visual impairment or deafblindness (a condition that affects the senses of vision and hearing to varying degrees and can be congenital or acquired), the **Braille System** is a universal code for tactile reading and writing. It was invented by the young Louis Braille in 1825 and marked a significant achievement for the education of individuals with visual impairment in society.

The dots are numbered from top to bottom, left to right. Please refer to the illustration:



The combination of these six dots forms 63 different arrangements from which the letters of the alphabet, accented vowels, punctuation marks, numerals, mathematical operation signs, musical notes, and symbols from informatics and chemistry originate.

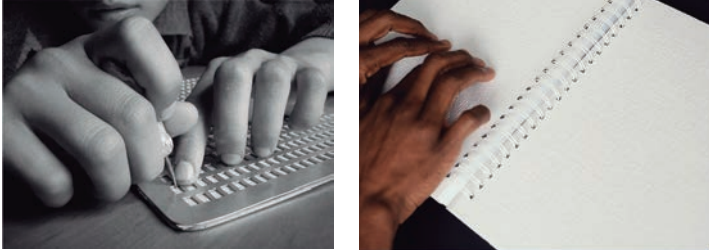
Please see below for the alphabet letters in the **Braille System**:



Even today, Braille is of utmost importance in the written communication of individuals who are deafblind, blind, or have low vision. Listening to readings done by another person, using audio-recorded technological resources, or using screen readers for computers and phones does not provide the same educational benefit as having contact with the written words.

This is even more critical when it comes to children in the literacy phase and adolescents expanding their vocabulary. In this regard, for the study of children and adolescents, it is essential that the Sabbath School Lesson and supplementary books be available in Braille. This is also necessary if parents or guardians who accompany the student in daily Bible study are individuals with visual impairments.

Reading and writing in Braille using the slate and stylus



Source: <https://vidadestra.org/ha-200-anos-louis-braille-desenvolvia-sistema-de-leitura-e-escrita-para-pessoas-cegas/>

2.4 ACTIONS TO INCLUDE THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILD

The teacher should include the blind or visually impaired child in Sabbath School class activities by providing an environment and materials that meet their specific needs. Here are some suggestions from Franco (2018):

Lighting

- Position the child so that direct light does not shine into their eyes, cause glare, or create shadows that hinder reading and writing.
- Avoid side lighting, direct front lighting, direct light on the surface of the material being observed, and light from flickering sources like fluorescent lamps.

Contrast

- Increased contrast enhances visual perception. The most common is black-on-white contrast, but other high-contrast variations can also be used for graphics, posters, etc.

- Use black pens on white boards, and white chalk on dark boards.
- Ensure the board is well cleaned. Writing on an insufficiently erased board affects contrast.
- Use a different color to underline text for emphasis.

Colors

Color perception varies case by case. In general, brighter colors are more easily perceived. However, this is not the case for illustrations, diagrams, and textbooks that use very light tones for children with low vision.

Font and Image Sizes

Often, due to lack of resources, teachers economize by copying activities onto fewer pages. This reduces the size of text and images, not only impacting children with low vision but all children. Consider the following advice:





- Place children at an appropriate distance from the board or teacher displaying Sabbath School teaching materials.
- Allow the child to approach the board, panel, or figure. Let them bring reading material closer to their eyes. This does not harm their vision.
- Use sans-serif fonts (e.g., ARIAL, VERDANA, COLIBRI, HELVETICA) that are not condensed.
- Use block letters (UPPERCASE). Reading cursive handwriting is more challenging for children with low vision (and those learning to read).
- Choose simple graphics with few details, bold lines, vibrant colors, and well-defined outlines whenever possible.
- Always address the child by name. Avoid pointing and saying “here” or “there.” Be specific when referring to object locations or directions.
- If optical aids like magnifiers for close reading or telescopes for board reading are available, make use of them.
- Depending on the child’s specific needs, activities might need to be in a font size larger than 12 or even smaller due to a smaller field of vision. Therefore, it is crucial to communicate with the child’s family to understand their real needs.

Environment and Materials

- Describe the Sabbath School classroom environment to the child. Talk about the decor, colors, and materials used. Whenever possible, allow the child to touch the decorative material, wall hangings, and story-related materials.

- Clear obstacles to ensure the child can move independently, safely, and comfortably in the Sabbath School classroom. The visually impaired child should be informed about the positioning of furniture such as chairs, tables, and decorative objects. Keep objects and furniture consistently placed to help the child orient themselves.

- Whenever possible, especially for children who are already literate, have Braille materials available for them to read independently.

- Create materials with raised surfaces for all children using 3D glue, foam, and recyclable materials. Everyone benefits from developing tactile and fine motor skills (necessary skills for manipulating objects using hands and fingers with precision).



3. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Understanding the laws and technical terms related to visual impairment is important, but nothing is more enlightening and enriching than interacting with individuals who have this characteristic. No one knows their potential and specific needs better than individuals who are deafblind, blind, or visually impaired.

While visual impairment indeed poses significant challenges, not all hardships are related to it. Treating a child with pity due to their disability not only offers no help but also does not change circumstances. The better approach is to proactively seek knowledge to eliminate barriers hindering access to opportunities, allowing the child to grow and contribute to society.

Recognizing the importance of viewing individuals as complete human beings above any characteristic is transformative for all parties involved. There must be a true shift in thinking about people with disabilities, and this knowledge should be shared to empower many to become agents of change.

By collaborating and pooling efforts, the Children and Adolescents Ministries, along with the Adventist Possibility Ministries and the Sabbath School Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, can make a difference in the lives of many individuals with deafblindness and visual impairment. Investing in teacher training and producing materials in Braille and other accessible formats can have a positive impact.





PART II - CHILDREN'S SABBATH SCHOOL: METHODS FOR WORKING WITH DEAF CHILD

INTRODUCTION

Dear leader, we will now explore the second theme of our Leadership Course: CHILDREN'S SABBATH SCHOOL: methods for working with deaf children.

Throughout history, knowledge about the deaf, sign languages, and aspects involving this community has been limited to a few individuals beyond the deaf themselves. Historically, religious environments have played important roles in training sign language interpreters, due to activities connected to churches or courses offered in these spaces (Silva, 2012).

However, general unawareness is often so profound that scholars of these languages and deaf studies, when given the opportunity, dedicate themselves to demystifying prejudices and myths about the subject.

With the advancement of research and the increase in discussions around inclusion, accessibility, and the rights of deaf individuals, sign language, sign language interpreters have occupied diverse spaces in society, including religious spaces, allowing for an increasingly larger participation of deaf individuals in churches.

This is also due to legal provisions that encourage the presence of these activities in such spaces. Among them, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the related document issued by the World Federation of the Deaf stand out, which address, among other things, the definition of sign languages, access to information and education, and accessibility.

The profession of sign language translator and interpreter is already regulated by law in various countries, in line with the importance of having these professionals as means of ensuring communicational accessibility between deaf and hearing individuals, safeguarding the rights and dignity of the deaf.



In this context, the need arises for churches, institutionally, to organize and implement strategies that ensure effective participation of deaf individuals in various evangelism activities and methods to bring the urgent message of the third angel to the deaf community.

In this regard, it is important to note that sign language translation and interpretation activities in religious contexts are not limited to worship services. In order to ensure linguistic rights and equitable access to all activities provided by the institution, these services must be provided in all ministries that involve or interest deaf individuals, such as Pathfinders, Youth Ministries, Women's Ministries, Adventurer Clubs, Sabbath School, among others.

Considering the context of Sabbath School, particularly within the Children's Department, teachers need to consider methodologies and the translation or creation of sign language materials that cater to deaf children.



1. IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

One difficulty that teachers might encounter is knowing how to use the right language for each situation within the context of hearing impairment. Therefore, below you will find accurate expressions and basic concepts that will aid you on this learning journey.

Communicational Accessibility: providing resources, activities, and cultural assets that promote independence and autonomy for individuals who require specific services to access educational activities.

Person with deafness (deaf individual): someone with significant hearing loss in both ears and a user of Sign Language. Interaction with the world primarily occurs through the use of Sign Language. For the deaf individual, their difference lies not in the lack of hearing but in the linguistic distinction of using Sign Language as their first language and the official language of their country as their second language.

Person with hearing impairment: someone with mild to moderate hearing loss who primarily uses the spoken form of their country's official language for communication, rather than Sign Language.





Sign Language: encompasses all linguistic aspects required of a language, such as phonology, semantics, syntax, slang, idiomatic expressions, linguistic variations, etc. Sign Language is manifested in a visual-spatial manner, primarily utilizing hands and body as productive elements. Reality perception occurs through the eyes. Each country has its own Sign Language, so there is not a single Sign Language for all parts of the world.

Sign Language Translator and Interpreter: someone who translates and interprets the linguistic pair of Sign Language and spoken language. In practice, their role involves mediating between deaf users of Sign Language and non-deaf individuals.

1.1 ADVENTIST DEAF MINISTRY

Did you know that in 2008, the General Conference officially established the Adventist Deaf Ministry (ADM)? The work that was previously carried out by volunteers from the deaf community started to

be structured within the institution and guided by the church through all Divisions around the world.

With the establishment of ADM, the church began to support and lead the translation of materials into Sign Language. An example of this is the translation of the Adult Sabbath School lesson and the promotion of evangelistic events for this community in countries like Brazil, where events like “Evangelibras” (a combination of the words evangelism, and “Libras” - Brazilian Sign Language). Similarly, “Hope Channel Deaf” delivers the gospel message to many deaf individuals. These and other projects are now managed by the church’s administrative headquarters.

Consequently, in the years 2019 and 2020, with the implementation of the Adventist Possibility Ministries (APM), ADM became one of the seven branches of this ministry. The expectation is that with the systematization of the work, there will be growth and progress in this ministry.

Many church materials are available in Sign Language on the website: <https://hopechanneldeaf.org/>

The translation of materials into sign languages presents a significant challenge for the global church, as each country has its own sign language.



When it comes to materials produced in sign language for deaf children, such productions are scarce. The Adventist Church still has much to advance in terms of children's materials in sign languages.

Currently, there are not enough sign language translators and interpreters in churches to accompany deaf individuals in different Sabbath School classes within their age group. Typically, deaf individuals are directed to a single class, studying the adult lesson.

In this scenario, deaf children are deprived of studying the lesson corresponding to their age group, which can have detrimental effects on their spiritual journey. However, teachers can apply certain actions and/or methods to include deaf children in Sabbath School and minimize barriers.



2. SABBATH SCHOOL FOR DEAF CHILDREN

The mission of Sabbath School is to be a system of religious instruction, discipleship, and spiritual growth for the local church, preparing people for eternity. This school needs to welcome everyone, which means addressing the specific needs of all, including children.

It is of paramount importance for teachers to gather information about the child's level of autonomy for activity execution, the possibility of family mediation, and the availability of necessary resources.

In addition to necessary activity adaptations, depending on the child's autonomy and the potential for mediation at home, it might be necessary to provide the support of a Sign Language interpreter.

When planning indicates the need for material adaptation, consider that the stages of the translation process require time; collaborate with interpreters from your church to plan activities together. The focus is on providing accessibility resources and strategies that remove barriers to the participation of deaf children in Sabbath School.





The teacher of Sabbath School children's classes should adopt methods and initiatives to include deaf children, starting from the welcome when the child arrives, as well as in activities during the Sabbath School session. Creative solutions for lesson study during the week can also be offered. These actions are crucial to fostering a sense of belonging to the religious community for deaf children.

Sign Languages have their own grammatical structure, distinct from spoken languages. Deaf children who use Sign Language, especially those who have been literate in Sign Language, express themselves through it. Therefore, the ideal scenario would be to have all Sabbath School materials used by teachers translated into Sign Language - either through human translation (interpreters) or, as a last resort, through mechanical translation using applications.



2.1 RECEPTION IN THE CHILDREN'S SABBATH SCHOOL ROOM

Here are some guidelines to receive and promote accessibility for deaf children. However, once these students are integrated into the classrooms, they will likely have specific questions that can be discussed with local leadership, family, church administration, and other involved departments, in order to address these needs as effectively as possible.

People with disabilities historically have experiences marked by prejudice, segregation, or exclusionary processes. Sabbath School is an energetic, dynamic, and creative entity where people who love and enjoy connecting come together weekly. In this regard, welcoming deaf children should be accessible and filled with interactivity, surprises, novelties, and joy.

It is important to greet the deaf child in their language, so the teacher can train the children in the class with some basic greetings in sign language. If this happens during the reception, the deaf child will be motivated to eagerly await the rest of the program.

The reception is where the first impression occurs, and it can be the key to opening the minds and



hearts of the deaf to make Sabbath School an impactful desire in their lives. Below, in Figures 1, 2, and 3, are some examples of sign language greetings to welcome deaf children.

Figura 1 - Deus abençoe você



Fonte: Especialidade de Libras da Associação Paulistana.

Figura 2 - Bom Dia



Figura 3 - Feliz Sábado



Fonte: Especialidade de Libras da Associação Paulistana.

2.2 SABBATH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY GUIDE - STORYTELLING FOR DEAF CHILDREN

Remember that the experience of the Deaf world is primarily visual, so use visual resources to portray the Bible stories and the main lesson topic. Check YouTube for any materials of the week's story in Sign Language, or ask the interpreter in your church to prepare a video material with a summary of the week's lesson to send to your student.

On the YouTube channel Hope Kids:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SabbathSchool/videos>, you can find some music videos and Bible stories in American Sign Language (ASL). These guidelines should be adapted to the reality of each country.

2.3 WORSHIP TIME AT CHILDREN'S SABBATH SCHOOL

During the Sabbath School worship time, the teacher can choose children's songs that have videos with Sign Language translation and teach them to all the children.

Teach step by step, explaining the meaning of the signs. It is suggested to preferably choose songs that include the words Jesus, praise, Holy Spirit, amen, and God, as these words are generally easy to sign, making it easier for children of different ages to learn.

On YouTube, there are projects of Christian children's songs with Sign Language translation from some countries. The teacher can use these moments of worship in the classrooms, making them accessible to everyone.



2.4 ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

Teachers can use the manual alphabet and signs for the words listed below during Sabbath School activities.



Fonte: www.libras.com.br/alfabeto-manual

Some useful words:

Jesus; God; Holy Spirit; Bible; Calvary; Heaven; Seventh-Day Adventist Church; Divinity; Pathfinders; Hope Channel.

Here are some activity suggestions prepared by Dr. Mrs. Keyla Ferrari Lopes that can be carried out with deaf and hearing children of different age groups using Sign Language in the context of Sabbath School.

COLORED ELEPHANT

The teacher should teach the main signs for colors in Sign Language to both deaf and hearing children. If deaf children are already proficient in Sign Language, they can assist in teaching these signs. In a second step, the teacher should make the sign for “colored elephant” in Sign Language, and the children should ask in Sign Language: what color?

The teacher should then show objects of different colors, and the children should sign the colors indicated by the teacher in Sign Language. A variation of this game could involve the teacher making the sign for a color, and the children finding objects of the corresponding color in the room.

Another suggestion is to use a biblical story from the lesson of the week, for example: the creation story, the rainbow in the flood, Joseph’s colorful coat etc. The teacher can use visual aids to interact with colors and signs in Sign Language.

ANIMAL GAMES

Dr. Mrs. Keyla Ferrari Lopes mentions that the teacher should bring images of various animals, research the corresponding signs in Sign Language, and teach them to both hearing and deaf children (remember that deaf children who





use Sign Language can assist in teaching these signs). Examples: lion, dog, cat, monkey, giraffe etc.

Make the sign for the animal in Sign Language and have the children imitate the signaled animal. Show the image of an animal, and the children make the corresponding sign. Create other variations of this game by having children choose an animal image, and their peers execute the sign.

All the activities mentioned above can be illustrated with images and drawings of the corresponding signs in Sign Language to aid the understanding of deaf children and also to spark the interest of hearing children in Sign Language. Remember that these are just suggestions for games and activities; these proposals can serve as inspiration for the teacher to develop new activities and apply them in their churches.

3. THE DEAFBLIND PERSON AND THEIR WAYS OF COMMUNICATING

A person with deafblindness is someone who simultaneously experiences varying degrees of hearing and vision loss, which can be congenital or acquired.

A person with deafblindness is understood to have a unique and singular condition (not multiple) that requires specific needs to be met to ensure equal opportunities.

The main communication systems used by people with deafblindness are:

1. Close-Field Sign Language: Sign language used in a smaller space with variable distance based on the individual's visual condition.

2. Tactile Sign Language: Sign language adapted for touch, performed on the palm of the hand by a guide-interpreter.

3. Tadoma: Also known as tactile lip-reading, this method involves placing the thumb on the speaker's lips and the fingers along the chin to feel vibrations.

4. Handwriting on the Palm: Registering uppercase letters on the person's palm.



5. Haptic Communication: Supplementing oral or sign language with symbols representing various concepts, given on different parts of the body.

6. Tactile Finger Alphabet: The manual alphabet used by deaf individuals but executed on the palm of a person with deafblindness.

7. Tactile Braille: The guide-interpreter uses touches on specific finger phalanges to transmit messages in Braille.

8. Braille: Tactile reading and writing system with raised characters on paper, also used by blind individuals.

9. Enlarged Writing: Messages or texts using large letters in contrasting colors for individuals with low vision.

10. Amplified Speech: Repeating speech using hearing aids or loops, for those with residual hearing.

For users of these communication forms, in-person strategies with the support of a guide-interpreter (proficient in various communication methods for people with deafblindness) are necessary to ensure access to Sabbath School activities and other church events.



4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, through the collaborative efforts of the Children's and Youth Ministries, the Adventist Ministry to the Deaf, and the Sabbath School Department, comes together to engage with and be relevant to the deaf community.

This approach underscores the importance of local task forces, understanding the specific needs in each territory, so that leadership can work towards providing training and teacher development for initiatives involving the deaf, Sign Language translation and interpretation, and other related topics that contribute to creating an accessible church.

As in any process, this serves as an initial guideline, with room for new developments, new guidelines, and the creation of accessible



materials based on the needs of deaf children within the Adventist church. It is believed that there is still much ground to cover.

“There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not exhaust the energies. The grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized. And still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body”
 (White, 2012, p. 54).

The points mentioned here are initial guidelines; it is suggested that practices be tailored to accommodate different profiles of deaf individuals. We recommend that teachers engage with the local deaf community and employ strategies based on the specific needs of each child and adolescent, while respecting the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).



Dear leader, may God continue to bless you, and may you be an agent of change in your church and community!

More resources, please visit our website: Faithfinder.com or scan the QR Code



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