

Twenty project ideas built around the five parameters. They are grouped by the parameter each one puts under the microscope, so you can pick a project for whatever you are teaching this week. **The tag on each card tells you what students actually produce.**

All five parameters together

Projects where students have to manage handshape, palm orientation, location, movement, and non-manual markers at once.

1 Five Parameters Poster

Students build a poster covering all five parameters, with visual examples of signs and diagrams showing how each one works.

Poster

2 Parameter Video Tutorials

A short tutorial video for each parameter, demonstrating and explaining how changing it changes the meaning of a sign.

Video

3 Parameter Charades

Charades in pairs or small groups, with each round focused on one parameter — handshape only, then movement only, then facial expression.

Game

4 Emoji Translation

Students choose a set of emojis and produce the matching ASL signs, tracking handshape, location, palm orientation, and the facial expression that carries the meaning.

Build

5 Storytelling Through Parameters

Students write a short story and perform it in ASL, considering how handshape, location, and movement shape the flow, and using facial expression to carry emotion.

Performance

6 Sentence Diagramming

Students diagram ASL sentences, breaking each sign down into its five parameters.

Analysis

7 Sign Transformation

Students take one sign and deliberately change a single parameter at a time, recording what happens to the meaning.

Analysis

8 Flashcard Set

A set of flashcards, each showing a sign with all five parameters broken out, so students can check their own execution.

Build

9 Personalized ASL Dictionary

Students collect 20 to 30 signs that matter to them, documenting all five parameters for each with a video or written description.

Portfolio

Handshape

10 Handshape Sculpture

Students make 3D models of ASL handshapes, label them, and present what each one is used for.

Build

11 Handshape Matching Game

A matching game pairing handshapes with meanings. Students then demonstrate each sign correctly, adding location, movement, and palm orientation.

Game

12 Sign Language ABC Book

An alphabet book with an ASL sign for each letter, documenting handshape, location, movement, and palm orientation on every page.

Build

Palm orientation

13 Palm Orientation Scavenger Hunt

A classroom hunt for signs with different palm orientations. Students demonstrate how turning the palm changes the meaning and explain why it matters.

Game

Location and movement

14 Movement and Flow Sequence

Students design a short fluid sequence of signs, focusing on smooth transitions, use of location, and appropriate body shifting.

Performance

15 Everyday Gesture Study

Students document everyday gestures such as waving or pointing, then examine how those movements carry over into ASL signs.

Analysis

Non-manual markers

16 The Role of Non-Manual Markers

A short skit built to show how much non-manual markers carry — the same sign shifting meaning with eye gaze, facial expression, and body shifting.

Performance

17 Non-Manual Markers Poster

A poster on eye gaze, head tilts, and facial expression, with illustrations or clips showing how expression turns a statement into a question.

Poster

18 Facial Expression and Emotion Skit

A skit demonstrating how facial expression and body language change a sign — how ANGRY shifts with different expressions, or what eye gaze adds.

Performance

19 Movie Scene Reinterpretation

Students take a short scene from a film or show and reinterpret it in ASL, using non-manual markers for tone and emotion.

Performance

20 Song Interpretation

Students interpret a song in ASL, using facial expression, eye gaze, and body shifting to carry the emotion behind the lyrics.

Performance

Why these work

These projects cover the technical side of ASL, but they also give students a creative reason to notice how the five parameters work together. Students build fluency while seeing that meaning in ASL lives well beyond the hands.