

Grammar Examples and Practice

Name	Class	Date
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Each section gives you worked examples, then asks you to try it yourself. Work through them in order — the last two sections pull everything together.

1 Sentence structure

Topic-comment

EXAMPLES

I love chocolate.

CHOCOLATE ME LOVE.

The dog is sleeping on the floor.

FLOOR DOG SLEEP.

I will go to school next week.

NEXT WEEK SCHOOL ME GO.

Translate these into ASL using topic-comment structure.

1 I eat pizza every Friday.

2 The cat is on the couch.

3 We will watch a movie tonight.

2 Yes/no and WH questions

Eyebrows up, or eyebrows down

EXAMPLES

Do you want coffee?

YOU WANT COFFEE? *eyebrows raised*

What is your name?

YOUR NAME WHAT? *eyebrows furrowed*

Write how you would ask each of these in ASL.

1 Are you a student?

2 Where is the bathroom?

3 What time is the meeting?

4 Do you like ice cream?

3 Non-manual markers

Negation and intensity

EXAMPLES

I don't like fish.

FISH ME NO LIKE. *shake your head while signing*

I'm really tired.

ME TIRED *exaggerate the expression to show exhaustion*

Use non-manual markers to emphasize each of these. Note what your face is doing.

1 I'm very happy.

2 The weather is too cold.

3 I didn't go to the park.

4 Classifiers

CL:1, CL:3, CL:B

EXAMPLES

A person walking.

CL:1 moving forward in a straight line

A car turning left.

CL:3 moving forward, then left

A book lying on a table.

CL:B held flat

Use classifiers to describe each situation. Note which classifier you chose.

1 A tree falling to the ground.

2 A line of people waiting at a bus stop.

3 A car swerving around obstacles.

5 Role shifting

Becoming each character

EXAMPLES

The teacher told the student to study.

Left, as the teacher: STUDY YOU MUST *stern* • **Right, as the student: NOD**

A child asked their mom for candy, and the mom said no.

Child, shifted one way: CANDY ME WANT • **Mom, shifted the other: NO**

Role-shift to act out each scenario. Note who sits on which side.

1 A customer asking for help in a store, and the employee responding.

2 Two friends planning a trip.

3 A parent telling a child to clean their room.

6 Time indicators

Time comes first

EXAMPLES

Yesterday, I went to the store.

YESTERDAY STORE ME GO.

Next year, I will graduate.

NEXT YEAR ME GRADUATE.

Translate these into ASL, putting the time first.

1 Tomorrow, I will visit my friend.

2 Last week, I saw a movie.

3 Every morning, I drink coffee.

7 Using space

Setting things where they belong

EXAMPLES

My mom is on my left, and my dad is on my right.

Point left for MOM, then right for DAD

The cat is on the couch, and the dog is on the floor.

COUCH CAT IX-ON. FLOOR DOG IX-ON.

Describe each scenario using space.

1 Two siblings standing on either side of you.

2 A car parked in front of a house.

3 A table with a cup on the right and a book on the left.

8 Combining classifiers and space

Putting the two together

EXAMPLES

A person walking across a room and sitting on a chair.

CL:1 for the walk, then CL:V for sitting down

A car driving down a hill.

CL:3 moving downward in an arc

Sign or act out each situation. Note the classifiers you used.

1 A dog running after a ball.

2 A plane flying across the sky.

3 A person walking into a house and closing the door.

9 Translation practice

Translate each sentence into ASL.

1 I love going to the park with my family.

2 The teacher told the students to sit down.

3 The sun is shining, and it's a beautiful day.

4 A bird flew into the tree and built a nest.

5 I want to buy a new phone tomorrow.

10 Storytelling practice

Create a short story in ASL that uses all four of these.

Time indicators

yesterday, tomorrow

Classifiers

CL:1, CL:3

Role shifting

dialogue between two people

Non-manual markers

questions, negation, intensity

EXAMPLE PROMPT

A person drives to the store, sees a dog running outside, and buys a toy for the dog.