

ASL Classroom Voice Policy Toolkit

This toolkit supports teachers in setting, explaining, and enforcing a clear voice-off policy in the ASL classroom.

Purpose of a Voice-Off Policy

- To immerse students in a visual language environment.
- To increase ASL receptive and expressive skills.
- To respect the norms of Deaf culture.
- To help students rely on visual communication strategies.

Voice-Off Expectations (Examples)

- No voicing during instruction, activities, or conversations.
- Students must use ASL, gestures, or writing to communicate.
- Raise hand for clarification or questions.
- Whispering or mouthing words is also discouraged.

Strategies for Enforcing the Policy

- Post clear signage (e.g., 'Voice Off Zone').
- Begin each class with a voice-off reminder.
- Use visual cues to redirect voice use (e.g., point to ear, sign 'VOICE-OFF').
- Create a class contract students sign at the start of the year.
- Incorporate reflective consequences (e.g., journaling about why the policy matters).

Positive Reinforcement Ideas

- Reward 'Voice-Free Days' with extra points or praise.
- Create a visual class tracker (e.g., earn stars for each voice-off class).
- Highlight a 'Silent Superstar' of the week.
- Allow earned privileges for consistent visual language use.

Accommodations & Exceptions

- Allow brief voice use only in emergencies or pre-approved IEP/504 accommodations.
- Use alternative communication strategies for students with limited signing ability (whiteboard, printed visuals, peer support).
- Provide scaffolding tools to help students transition (e.g., sentence starters, vocabulary cheat sheets).

Printable Sign Ideas

- 'Voice Off Zone' door sign
- 'Use Your Hands, Not Your Voice' poster
- 'Silent Signing = ASL Success!' wall reminder
- 'No Talking, Just Signing' desk cards