

# **Holiday-Themed ASL Classroom Activities (For ASL Teachers – Levels 1–5)**

## **Thanksgiving Activities**

Gratitude Wall (All Levels): Students sign things they are thankful for using facial expressions and directional verbs. Compile short video clips into a class gratitude reel.

Thanksgiving Feast Vocabulary (Beginner–Intermediate): Teach food-related signs (turkey, pie, mashed potatoes, corn, stuffing, etc.). Each student signs what dish they would bring to a Thanksgiving ASL feast.

Story Retelling (Intermediate–Advanced): Watch an ASL Thanksgiving story and have students retell it using classifiers and role shift.

Deaf Thanksgiving Discussion (Advanced–Level 5): Discuss how Deaf families celebrate Thanksgiving—focus on accessibility, communication, and inclusion.

## **Hanukkah Activities**

Eight Days, Eight Signs (All Levels): Teach one Hanukkah-related sign per day (dreidel, candle, menorah, light, gift, family, celebration, joy). Have students make short sentences using each new word.

ASL Dreidel Game (Beginner–Intermediate): Play dreidel in class and use ASL for all instructions, actions, and results.

Hanukkah Story Retell (Intermediate–Advanced): Students summarize or perform the story of Hanukkah in ASL with classifiers, expression, and role shift.

Deaf Jewish Figures (Level 5): Research Deaf Jewish individuals who celebrate Hanukkah and present short ASL biographies.

## **Kwanzaa Activities**

Seven Principles in ASL (All Levels): Assign each student one principle (e.g., Umoja – Unity) and have them explain it in ASL. Combine videos into a class project.

Kinara Craft (Beginner): Teach color and number signs while labeling the seven candles of the kinara.

Kwanzaa Values Reflection (Intermediate–Advanced): Students sign what each principle means to them personally, using expressive signing and classifiers.

Deaf Culture Connection (Advanced–Level 5): Compare Kwanzaa principles (unity, creativity, faith, purpose) with Deaf community values (collectivism, pride, communication).

## **Christmas Activities**

Holiday Vocabulary Hunt (Beginner): Teach signs like tree, reindeer, Santa, snow, lights, family, gift. Have students sign where they see each item on campus or in decorations.

ASL Carol Challenge (All Levels): Translate a short verse from a holiday song into ASL gloss and perform with rhythm and expression.

Secret Signer (Beginner–Intermediate): Draw names and sign clues describing your person using adjectives and classifiers. The class guesses who it is.

Holiday Traditions Vlog (Intermediate–Advanced): Students record a 1–2 minute ASL video sharing how they celebrate (or choose not to celebrate) holidays.

Deaf Santa Interview (Level 5): Role-play a Deaf child visiting a Deaf Santa. Focus on role shift, eye gaze, and conversational flow.

## **Other Winter Holidays & General Activities**

Winter Signs Bingo (All Levels): Review snow, scarf, mittens, sled, fireplace, cocoa, cold, warm, hat, jacket. Use visuals or ASL-only prompts.

New Year's Resolutions (All Levels): Students sign two personal goals using WILL and FUTURE tense markers.

Holiday Cards in ASL (All Levels): Design holiday cards with QR codes linking to short ASL messages recorded by students.

Inclusive Celebrations Discussion (Advanced–Level 5): Discuss how Deaf people worldwide celebrate holidays differently. Practice expressive ASL and interpreting skills.

**Optional Extension:** Create a class-wide “Holidays Around the World” ASL video project. Each group signs about one holiday and its traditions. Host a Winter Celebration Showcase inviting other classes to view ASL performances.

**Created for:** ASL Teachers (Levels 1–5)

**Purpose:** Encourage cultural awareness, expressive signing, and community connection through holiday themes.