

AI in the ASL Classroom

20 Simple, Practical Ways Students Can Use AI as a Research Tool

QUICK RESEARCH & LOOKUPS

- 1 Famous Deaf people** — Students look up a Deaf figure on the fly and share a quick bio with the class.
- 2 Deaf history events** — Ask AI to explain events like the Gallaudet protests or Milan 1880 in simple terms before a lesson.
- 3 Fact-checking in real time** — Verify a claim a student makes about Deaf history or culture during class discussion.
- 4 Sign & word origins** — Look up the etymology of a sign or English word to spark vocabulary discussion.
- 5 Regional ASL variation** — Get quick background on Black ASL or other regional signs when the topic comes up naturally.
- 6 Fingerspelling & sign origins** — Quickly verify a fingerspelling word's origin or whether a sign has regional variants.

STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

- 7 Deaf-owned businesses** — Students research a Deaf-owned business or organization and report back to the class.
- 8 Deaf inventors & scientists** — Research and present on a Deaf inventor or scientist for a cross-curricular tie-in.
- 9 Deaf vloggers & creators** — Generate a list of Deaf-run YouTube channels or vloggers for independent exploration.
- 10 Technology explainers** — Have students ask AI to explain a technology (like video relay services) and present it.
- 11 Statistics for debate** — Look up stats on Deaf education, cochlear implants, or bilingual-bicultural approaches for a debate.

DISCUSSION & CLASS ACTIVITIES

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| 12 | Warm-up trivia — Generate quick trivia questions about Deaf culture to kick off class. |
| 13 | Spontaneous discussion prompts — Generate discussion questions on the fly for a Deaf culture topic that comes up unexpectedly. |
| 14 | Current events summaries — Ask AI to summarize a news article about Deaf community issues for class discussion. |
| 15 | Guessing games — Generate a short list of Deaf actors, athletes, or artists for a “who am I” game. |
| 16 | Etiquette explainers — Get a quick explainer on Deaf culture etiquette (getting attention, tapping, waving) for discussion. |

LANGUAGE & GRAMMAR EXPLORATION

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| 17 | Grammar comparisons — Ask AI to compare ASL grammar rules to English grammar in plain language for a teachable moment. |
| 18 | Idiom translation talk — Look up what an idiom or slang term means conceptually, then discuss how it would or wouldn't translate to ASL. |
| 19 | Storytelling sparks — Ask “what would this look like as a story” to generate ideas for an ASL storytelling assignment. |
| 20 | Historical timelines — Ask AI to generate a timeline of a Deaf historical event for a poster project. |

A note on approach: These ideas position AI as a fast, student-driven research assistant — not a system the teacher needs to configure or maintain. Students look things up, verify facts, and bring findings back to the group, keeping technology in a supporting role while classroom time stays focused on signing, culture, and community.