

CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Reviewing Without Boring Students

Making review meaningful, interactive, and fun

Review is one of the most important parts of learning American Sign Language. It strengthens memory, builds confidence, and helps students retain vocabulary and grammar over time. Unfortunately, review can quickly become repetitive if students are simply asked to repeat signs over and over.

The good news is that review doesn't have to be boring. By keeping students actively engaged, you can transform review into one of the most enjoyable parts of your classroom.

Students often need multiple opportunities to practice before new vocabulary becomes part of their everyday communication. Effective review helps them strengthen receptive skills, improve expressive signing, increase confidence, build fluency, and develop long-term retention.

Review isn't repeating lessons. It's creating new opportunities to use what students already know.

Six Ways to Keep Review Alive

Rotate between these rather than working through them in order.

01 Keep Students Moving

Movement increases engagement.

- Vocabulary Relay
- Four Corners
- Vocabulary Stations
- Gallery Walk
- Find Your Match

Students learn more when they're actively participating instead of sitting for an entire class period.

02 Turn Review into a Game

Games naturally increase participation.

- ASL Jeopardy
- Sign Charades
- Vocabulary Bingo
- Mystery Sign
- Partner Challenges
- Team Competitions

The goal isn't winning. It's communication.

03 Partner Review

Students often learn best from one another.

- Quiz partners
- Teach one another vocabulary
- Practice conversations
- Correct each other's signing respectfully
- Create their own review questions

04 Review Through Storytelling

Encourage students to use vocabulary in context.

- Create a short story.
- Describe a picture.
- Explain a daily routine.
- Retell a familiar event.

Communication always beats memorization.

05 Mix Up Your Review

Avoid doing the same activity every week. Rotate between:

- Games
- Partner work
- Group challenges
- Individual practice
- Technology
- Creative projects

Variety keeps students motivated.

06 Use ASLdeafined as a Review Tool

Take advantage of the many resources already built into the platform. Students can:

- Rewatch lesson videos
- Practice vocabulary
- Review illustrations
- Complete lesson activities
- Strengthen receptive and expressive skills

Encourage students to review a little each week rather than waiting until the night before a quiz or test.

Paul's Best Practice

One of my favorite review questions is simply:

"Can you use that sign in a different sentence?"

Students quickly discover whether they truly understand the concept or have only memorized the vocabulary. Real communication always goes beyond memorization.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- ✗ Reviewing the exact same way every time.
- ✗ Correcting every small mistake.
- ✗ Turning review into a lecture.
- ✗ Spending too much time on material students already know.
- ✗ Waiting until test day to review.

Short, frequent review activities are much more effective than one long review session.

Three Quick Wins

- ✓ Review something during every class.
- ✓ Let students teach one another.
- ✓ Celebrate progress instead of perfection.

Reflection

After your next review activity, ask yourself:

Did today's review help students communicate more confidently, or did it simply ask them to memorize?

The answer will help guide your next lesson.

Continue Exploring

Next in the Teacher Resource Series:

- ▶ Building Classroom Community
- ▶ Building Deaf Culture from Day One
- ▶ Classroom Expectations
- ▶ Classroom Management Tips
- ▶ Alternative Assessment Ideas

Review should never feel like going backward. It should help students recognize how much they have already learned and encourage them to keep moving forward with confidence.

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