

January Bell Ringers

New Year, New Challenge

20 BELL RINGERS · BEGINNER THROUGH LEVEL 5

Start class. Start signing.



MONTHLY FOCUS

Reconnect • Recall • Goals • Confidence • Vocabulary • Receptive Skills • Expressive Growth • Personal Challenge

TEACHER NOTE

January is about restarting without starting over. Students reconnect with what they already know, rebuild confidence, review skills that need attention, and begin taking more responsibility for their own growth. Use these in order, jump around, repeat favorites, or adapt them to your current lessons. Make them yours.

HOW DIFFERENTIATION WORKS

Most activities include Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, Advanced Plus, and Level 5 options. Some are intentionally marked **All Levels**. Teachers may move students up or down as appropriate.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

ASLdeafined provides a strong starting point while leaving space for teacher judgment, student contribution, and classroom creativity.

WHAT'S INSIDE

20 BELL RINGERS

1	Welcome Back, Hands!	ALL LEVELS	11	Beat Your Own Score	ALL LEVELS
2	What Do You Remember?		12	New Year, New Skill	
3	Snow Day!		13	Receptive Detective	
4	My ASL Goal		14	Make It More Visual	
5	Fingerspelling Wake-Up		15	One Minute, No English	
6	Three Things Changed	ALL LEVELS	16	Student Challenge	STUDENT CHOICE
7	Build It Back		17	Fix the Breakdown	
8	Winter Without the Word	ALL LEVELS	18	Something I'm Better At	
9	Yesterday — Today — Tomorrow		19	60-Second Challenge	
10	Teacher's Choice	TEACHER CHOICE	20	My Next Step	MONTHLY REFLECTION

1

Welcome Back, Hands!

ALL LEVELS

No notes. No pressure. With a partner, communicate three things you remember how to sign. Then add three more.

TEACHER NOTE

Don't correct immediately. The goal is simply to get students signing again.

2

What Do You Remember?

LEVELED

Without looking at previous lessons:

BEGINNER	Recall 5 signs.
INTERMEDIATE	Recall 8 signs and use 2 in context.
ADVANCED	Recall 10 and create several connected thoughts.
ADVANCED PLUS	Recall vocabulary from different topics and connect them naturally.
LEVEL 5	Give a spontaneous short response using vocabulary learned earlier in the year.

Then: check what you remembered.

3

Snow Day!

LEVELED

SCENARIO

"You wake up and discover everything outside is covered in snow."

BEGINNER	Show 3 things you might do.
INTERMEDIATE	Describe what you see outside.
ADVANCED	Create a short snow-day story.
ADVANCED PLUS	Incorporate depiction, movement, and NMS.
LEVEL 5	Create a cinematic visual description of the experience.

MAKE IT YOURS

No snow where you live? Use a huge rainstorm, extreme heat, or an unexpected day off.

4

My ASL Goal

LEVELED

TODAY'S QUESTION

"What's one ASL skill you'd like to improve?"

POSSIBLE GOALS

VocabularyFingerspellingReceptive skillsFacial expressionsGrammarFluencyConfidence

BEGINNER	Identify one goal.
INTERMEDIATE	Explain why.
ADVANCED	Explain how you could work toward it.
ADVANCED PLUS	Identify a challenge and possible solution.
LEVEL 5	Give a short reflection on your growth and next step.

TEACHER NOTE

One goal — not a giant resolution list.

5

Fingerspelling Wake-Up

LEVELED

Partners fingerspell to one another.

BEGINNER	3 familiar words.
INTERMEDIATE	5 words.
ADVANCED	Words embedded in sentences.
ADVANCED PLUS	Names and places within natural conversation.
LEVEL 5	Natural fingerspelling within spontaneous discourse.

TEACHER NOTE

Accuracy first. Speed comes later.

6

Three Things Changed

ALL LEVELS

Look carefully at a partner. Partner turns around and changes three things — sleeves, glasses position, hair, pencil location. Turn back and describe what changed using ASL.

TEACHER NOTE

Visual attention and ASL, without feeling like work.

7

Build It Back

LEVELED

Teacher chooses a concept students learned earlier in the year.

BEGINNER	Recall the sign.
INTERMEDIATE	Use it in a thought.
ADVANCED	Connect it to another concept.
ADVANCED PLUS	Explain it using ASL.
LEVEL 5	Incorporate it naturally into a spontaneous discussion.

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose something the class genuinely needs to revisit.

8

Winter Without the Word

ALL LEVELS

Do not sign the word you’re portraying. Choose one and show it visually. Partners identify the concept.

CHOOSE ONE

Cold

Ice

Snow

Wind

Slippery

Freezing

TEACHER NOTE

Challenge: Make the portrayal increasingly specific.

9

Yesterday — Today — Tomorrow

LEVELED

BEGINNER	Communicate one thing about today.
INTERMEDIATE	Communicate something from yesterday and today.
ADVANCED	Include yesterday, today, and tomorrow.
ADVANCED PLUS	Maintain clear time referencing throughout a connected message.
LEVEL 5	Give a spontaneous narrative that shifts naturally among time frames.

TEACHER NOTE

Excellent practice with time markers and sequencing.

10

Teacher’s Choice

TEACHER CHOICE

The first few weeks back can tell you exactly what students forgot. What needs another five minutes? Choose it. Review it. Done.

TEACHER NOTE

Repeating an earlier Bell Ringer is completely acceptable.

11

Beat Your Own Score

ALL LEVELS

This is not student vs. student. Choose a skill, try it for 30 seconds, and record your own result. Try again. Can you improve **your** score?

CHOOSE A SKILL

Fingerspelling recognition

Vocabulary recall

Numbers

Receptive recognition

TEACHER NOTE

Compete with yourself, not everybody else.

12

New Year, New Skill

LEVELED

TODAY’S QUESTION

“If you could instantly become really good at one skill, what would it be?”

It doesn’t have to involve ASL.

BEGINNER	Identify the skill.
INTERMEDIATE	Explain why.
ADVANCED	Explain how you would use it.
ADVANCED PLUS	Describe how it could change something in your life.
LEVEL 5	Discuss whether talent or practice matters more.

13

Receptive Detective

LEVELED

Partner A signs a short message. Partner B identifies:

BEGINNER	One key sign.
INTERMEDIATE	Main idea.
ADVANCED	Main idea plus details.
ADVANCED PLUS	Meaning plus implied information.
LEVEL 5	Summarize the message and ask a meaningful follow-up question.

Then switch.

14

Make It More Visual

LEVELED

Teacher gives students a basic message, such as:

EXAMPLE

“The car went down the road.”

BEGINNER	Add one visual detail.
INTERMEDIATE	Add size and movement information.
ADVANCED	Use depiction appropriately.
ADVANCED PLUS	Add perspective and spatial information.
LEVEL 5	Transform the basic statement into a vivid visual representation.

MAKE IT YOURS

Supply your own intentionally boring sentence.

15

One Minute, No English

LEVELED

Partners communicate using ASL and visual communication only.

BEGINNER	20 seconds.
INTERMEDIATE	30 seconds.
ADVANCED	45 seconds.
ADVANCED PLUS	60 seconds.
LEVEL 5	60+ seconds with natural turn-taking.

TEACHER NOTE

Goal: Keep communication going. If you don’t know a sign, work around it.

16

Student Challenge

STUDENT CHOICE

Students create today’s challenge. **January rule:** it must practice something the class learned before the break. Teacher chooses one.

TEACHER NOTE

Students help determine what deserves review.

17

Fix the Breakdown

LEVELED

Partner A communicates something. Partner B intentionally indicates:

PARTNER B SIGNALS

“I don’t understand.”

Partner A must repair the message.

BEGINNER	Repeat more clearly.
INTERMEDIATE	Slow down or change the message.
ADVANCED	Rephrase or describe visually.
ADVANCED PLUS	Use multiple repair strategies.
LEVEL 5	Repair naturally without simply repeating the original wording.

TEACHER NOTE

Successful communication isn’t about never having a breakdown. It’s about knowing what to do when one happens.

18

Something I’m Better At

LEVELED

Think of something you’re better at now than you were several months ago. It can be ASL or anything else.

BEGINNER	Identify it.
INTERMEDIATE	Explain it.
ADVANCED	Describe how you improved.
ADVANCED PLUS	Explain what helped.
LEVEL 5	Reflect on how practice changes skill development.

TEACHER NOTE

Growth without requiring personal disclosure.

19

60-Second Challenge

LEVELED

Teacher provides a topic.

BEGINNER	20 seconds.
INTERMEDIATE	30–45 seconds.
ADVANCED	60 seconds.
ADVANCED PLUS	60 seconds with organization, NMS, and transitions.
LEVEL 5	Spontaneous 60-second response with natural elaboration.

Then try it again. What changed?

TEACHER NOTE

The second attempt often reveals growth immediately.

20

My Next Step

MONTHLY REFLECTION

FINISH THE THOUGHT

“One thing I want to get better at in ASL is…”

BEGINNER	Identify the skill.
INTERMEDIATE	Explain why.
ADVANCED	Identify one action you can take.
ADVANCED PLUS	Describe how you’ll know you’re improving.
LEVEL 5	Reflect on your progress and identify a realistic next step.

TEACHER NOTE

Teacher Wrap-Up: Ask, “What can *you* do to make that happen?”

January is about restarting without starting over.

STUDENT OWNERSHIP

THE QUESTIONS JANUARY STARTS ASKING

What is your next step?

Which ones worked?



A Year of ASL: Bell Ringers

January — New Year, New Challenge

Start class. Start signing.