



## Exploring Communication Choices: Signing Exact English

Signing Exact English (S.E.E.) is a sign system that visually matches exactly what is spoken in English. It was invented in the 1970s by a deaf woman and a hearing daughter of deaf parents. S.E.E. is an exact model of English that forms a vital visual bridge for hard-of-hearing people with cochlear implants and hearing aids, so they have access to grammatical markers and English structures that are difficult to hear. S.E.E. was developed as a foundation for deaf and hard-of-hearing children to establish the same English proficiency as their hearing peers. There are many S.E.E. users who are now adults and members of the Deaf community.

S.E.E. matches exactly what is spoken. If a person says, “The boys are running in the hallway”, they sign as they speak, “THE BOY+S ARE RUN+ING IN THE HALL WAY”. If they exclaim, “It’s raining cats and dogs!”, they speak and sign, “IT+’S RAIN+ING CAT+S AND DOG+S.” Many people who speak English find S.E.E. easy to learn because it follows the grammatical structures of spoken English.

Many areas offer weekly S.E.E. classes and use the Signing Exact English dictionary and/or downloadable app for both iPhones and Android. The Signing Exact English (SEE) Center ([www.seecenter.org](http://www.seecenter.org)) coordinates intensive S.E.E. week-long and weekend workshops in Washington, Kansas, Nebraska, Kentucky and Texas. New locations continue to be added. The S.E.E. Center also sells books, DVDs, flashcards and other materials. Northwest School for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children (NWSDDHH) also offers workshops on S.E.E. as well as listening, speech, and language strategies used with their deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

### Resources:

#### National Informational Centers/Publishers of S.E.E. books and materials:

- a. Northwest School for Deaf and Hard-Of-Hearing Children (NWSDDHH) is located in the north Seattle area and serves about 20 school districts from northwestern Washington state. Parents and professionals are encouraged to call NWSDDHH to ask questions, seek workshops and request a school tour to see S.E.E. in action. ([www.northwestschool.com](http://www.northwestschool.com))
- b. Modern Signs Press is the company that publishes S.E.E. dictionaries and other S.E.E. related books, tapes, DVDs, children’s books, and more. One popular book is [One Mother’s Story](#), which tells of a family with two deaf children who were raised using S.E.E. ([www.modernsignspress.com](http://www.modernsignspress.com))
- c. The S.E.E. Center ([www.seecenter.org](http://www.seecenter.org)). Parents and professionals can call to ask questions, purchase resources to learn S.E.E., find children’s books with S.E.E. print, etc. ([www.signingexactenglish.com](http://www.signingexactenglish.com))

Facebook Groups: These include Northwest School for Deaf and Hard-Of-Hearing Children, Signing Exact English – SEE Users Group and SEE Users in Texas and Beyond.

**Nationally Circulated Journal Articles:**

Appelman, K., Callahan, J., Mayer, M., Luetke, B. & Stryker, D. (Summer, 2012). Education, Employment, and Independent Living of Young Adults Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 157(3), 264-275.

McLean, M., Nielsen, D. C., Stryker, D., & Luetke, B. (Winter, 2015). Characteristics of Students Who Read on Grade Level: What Can Teachers Influence? *Canadian Association of Educators of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*, 18-25, 36-37.

Nielsen, D. C., Luetke, B., & Stryker, D. (2011). The Importance of Morphemic Awareness to Reading Achievement and the Potential of Signing Morphemes to Supporting Reading Development. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 16(3), 275-288.

Nielsen, D. C., Stryker, D., Luetke, B. & McLean, M. (Summer, 2016). The English Language and Reading Achievement of a Cohort of Deaf Students Speaking and Signing Standard English: A Preliminary Study. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 161(3), 342-368.

This information was submitted by Barbara Luetke. For more information, please contact Barbara Luetke at [b.luetke@northwestschool.com](mailto:b.luetke@northwestschool.com). Barbara is the mother of two deaf daughters who were raised using S.E.E. They have now graduated from college and are employed. Barbara is the Literacy Specialist at NWSDHH, a member of the WA Hands & Voices Board, a former Deaf Education professor, a researcher and an international keynote speaker.