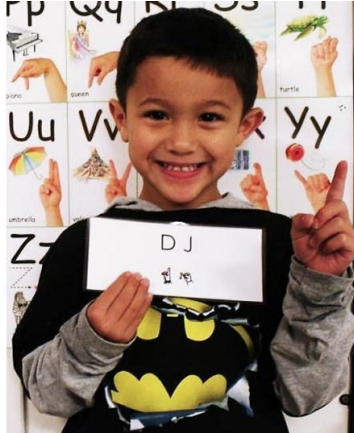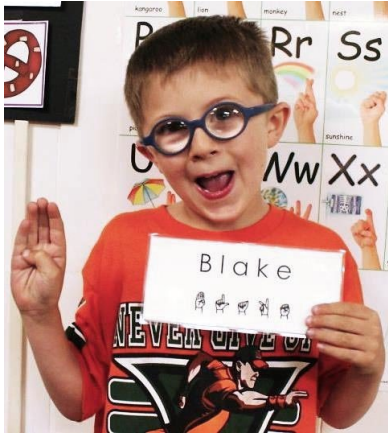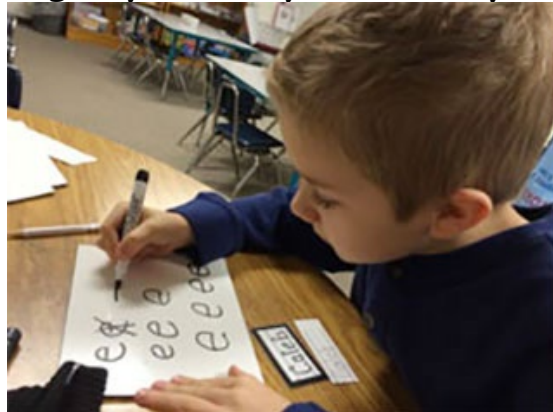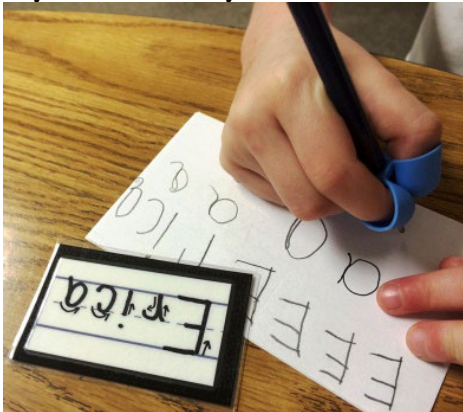# 10 Reasons to Teach Fingerspelling in Kindergarten

1. Fingerspelling helps the brain remember letters and sounds: It becomes the memory hook to ABC/Phonics mastery. Fingerspelling will enhance the effectiveness of any ABC/Phonics program.

How did you teach your brain to fingerspell every letter in your name?

2. Fingerspelling develops fine motor dexterity for efficient pencil grip and handwriting proficiency.

3. For English language learners, fingerspelling provides a multisensory pathway to learning success with letters, sounds, and high-frequency "heart words." (Many English language learners master fingerspelling faster than their English-speaking classmates.)

*Wow! You learned to sing, sign, fingerspell, and read another new word!*

4. While teaching fingerspelling, thoughtful educators develop metacognition and a growth mindset: We teach children to focus, work hard, set goals, and think about their learning.

Look closely, keep practicing, and you can teach your brain to remember!

5. **The strategies used to teach fingerspell are supported by decades of visual learning research**. Teachers and children have crystal-clear, achievable learning targets. Teachers provide specific feedback, children learn to assess their progress, and mastery is acknowledged and celebrated! (Read John Hattie's book, *Visible Learning for Teachers*)
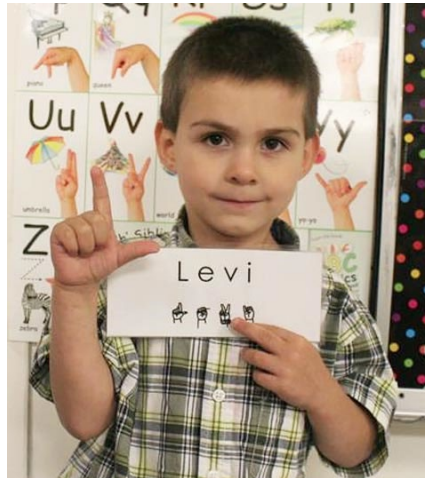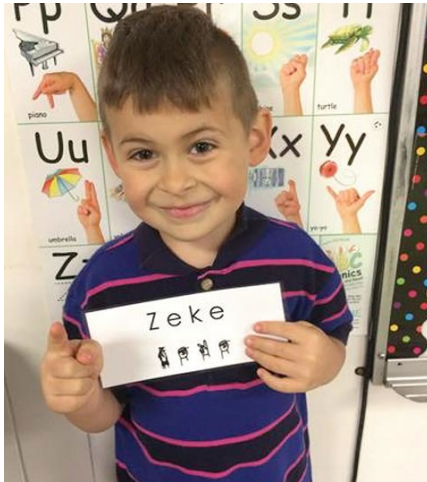
6. **Fingerspelling provides additional support for children who are highly kinesthetic learners**: All children are having the experience of learning a new language together while building stamina for writing workshop.

The more you practice, the better you get!

7. **Learning to fingerspell provides a family literacy experience,** multiplying our teaching effectiveness. Free online ASL video clips and abc support for at-home practice are available. Let parents know that fingerspelling not only builds hand-eye coordination for writing but also develops strength and dexterity for athletics and playing a musical instrument.

Parents as Partners multiplies our teaching effectiveness.

8. **Fingerspelling teaches young children a new language.** American Sign Language (ASL) is the third most commonly used language in the United States.

Childhood is for language. Lewis Thomas

9. **Learning to fingerspell builds children's pride in mastering a new communication skill.** It teaches children to focus, observe closely, work hard, and develop visual motor integration.

You worked hard, and now you're an expert at fingerspelling every letter from A to Z. You must feel proud of becoming an expert at fingerspelling!

10. **Fluency with fingerspelling provides a memory hook to phonics during Writing Workshop** while children are learning how to encode sounds to print. When children fingerspell, it triggers the letter/sound memory. It also enhances the memory for high-frequency "heart words."

Fingerspelling Builds Powerful Memory Hooks: Wow! How did you teach your brain to remember that?
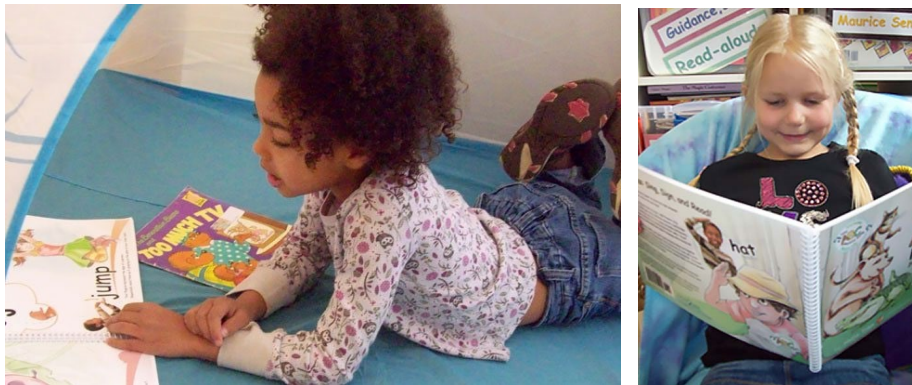
Incorporate fingerspelling into your best literacy practices.

**Study Nellie Edge Online Seminars: Earn 3 graduate credits!**

"All the best things I do come from Nellie Edge Seminars!"

**Enjoy Resources at www.NellieEdge.com/ABC Phonics and on TpT**

- **Learn to Fingerspell:** View FREE instructional videos from Sign2Me
- **See document:** "Parents as Partners: Why We Teach American Sign Language and Fingerspelling"
- **See document:** How to Make Name/Fingerspelling Cards
- **Discover how fingerspelling** is a part of kindergarten–friendly handwriting: peruse the Handwriting page
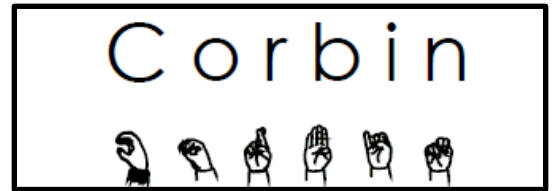
Fingerspelling Helps Build Strong Literacy Foundations
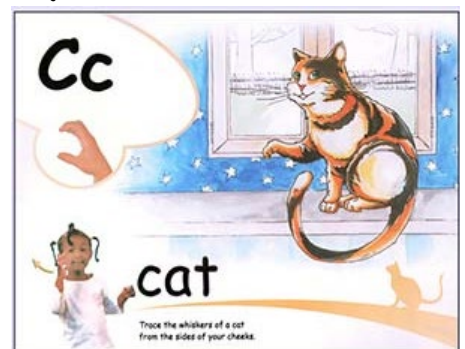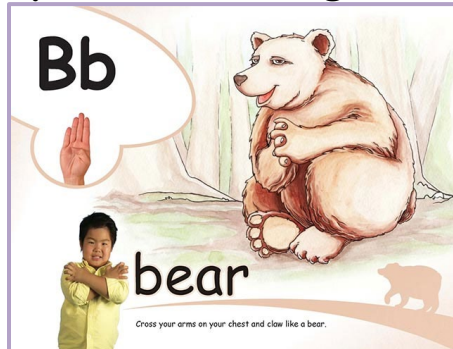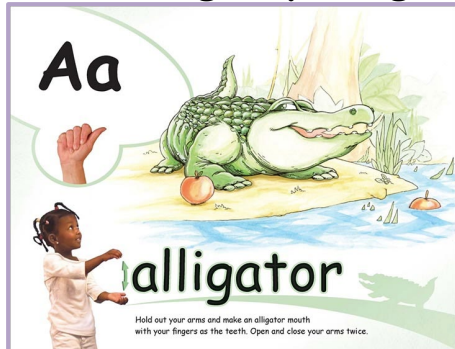
ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! book and resources are **only** available from our publisher at abcsign2me.com.
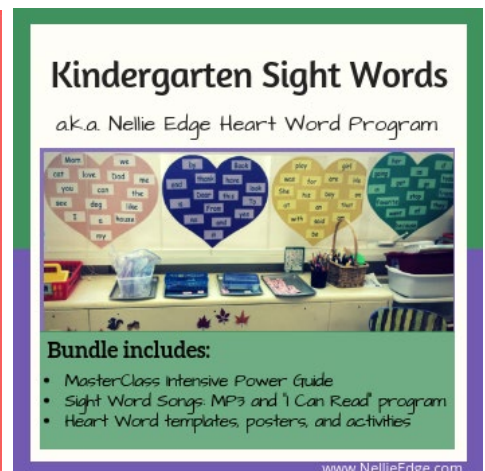
Nellie Edge TpT resources use the power of fingerspelling:

We incorporate the power of multisensory teaching and learning with fingerspelling. Study Nellie Edge Online Seminars

- Sight Word Play Dough Mats Bundle
- Kindergarten Handwriting Program
- Complete Nellie Edge "Heart Word" Program