

Guide 8: Useful signs

Signing is a great way of supporting communication. Sign key words to support understanding. Allow students to respond to questions using words or signs.

You do not need to sign everything unless signing is your students' sole method of communication. Adding signs to your communication supports students' understanding – a bit like adding pictures to text. Allowing students to sign as well as speak gives them an extra way of getting involved with the meaning of a word and supports their understanding, for some students it also boosts their confidence when communicating – they feel if they sign as well as speak they are more likely to be understood and so are less nervous about trying.

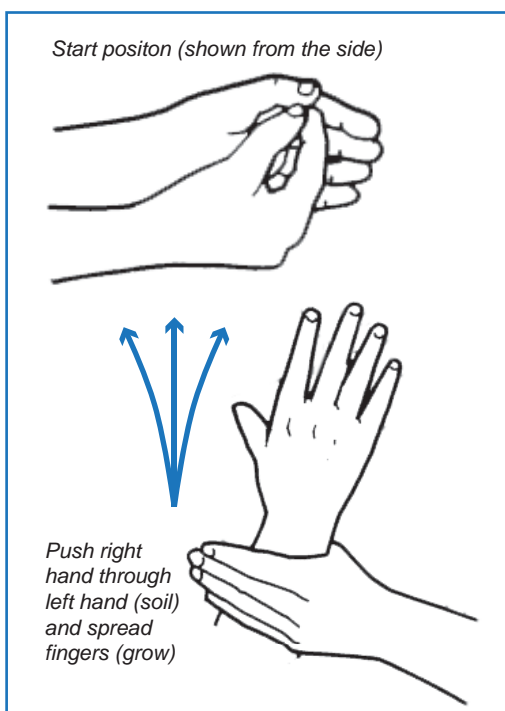
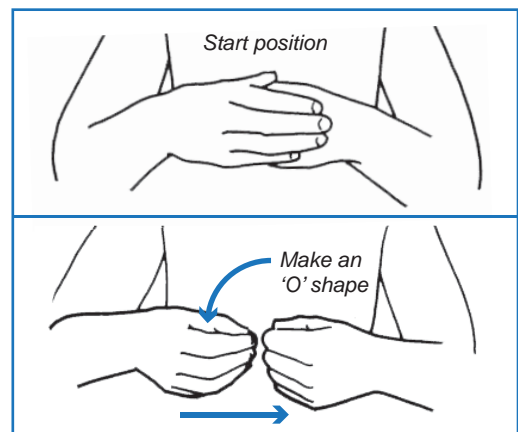
We have provided you with a few key signs; these are based on British Sign Language. If you already have a signing system used consistently within school and your signs differ to ours, please use yours. Signing consistently is important for ensuring understanding.

With all signs speak the word clearly as you sign it.

Potato

Hold your left hand in a gentle fist with the fingers stacked vertically. Begin the sign with your right hand around your left so that the thumb is on the side of the fist that is closest to your body and the fingers cover the fist on the side that faces away from you.

To sign potato slide your right hand away from your left and allow your fingers and thumb to come together in an upwards facing 'O' shape.



Grow

Hold your left hand flat in front of your body so that the fingers are stacked vertically, held together and pointing to the right and your thumb lies flat behind them. Form the fingers and thumb of your right hand into an upward facing point by holding them so that all your fingertips touch.

To sign grow press the point of your right hand between your thumb and fingers on your left hand. Imagine the fingers on your left hand are the soil, the person viewing this sign will see your right hand sprout through the soil. Allow your right hand to grow until the fingers and thumb of your left hand encircle your right wrist. You can spread the fingers of your right hand as it grows to indicate the leaves of the plant.

