



Representation Matters

Picture Books for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children



About Me:

- BA English Literature (Oberlin College)
- MA Deaf Studies: Early Language Advocacy (Gallaudet University)
- DHH Educator
- Youth and Family Connections Coordinator
- Hearing
- Disabled

CHS Youth & Family Connections

Deaf Mentors

Resource Notebooks

Family Sign Language Classes



Community Events

ARMED and READ Programs

IFSP/IEP Advocacy

Resource Connections

Why Representation Matters



- [The] type of literature to which children are exposed is likely to influence their general perceptions of social life.”
 - Beckett, et al. (2010), p. 373
- “Children’s Picture books, as one agent of socialization, are excellent opportunities to enculturate young children with open attitudes and values.”
 - Yawkey & Yawkey (1976), p. 548



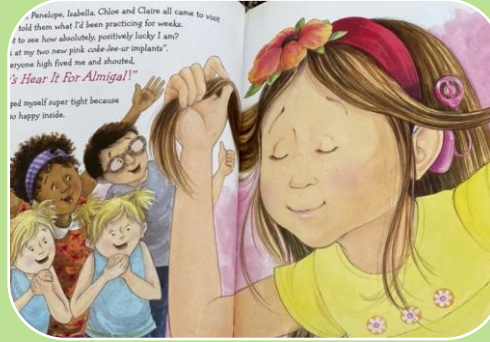
Methodology

- Accuracy of Deaf representation
- Model presented
- Identity
- Diversity
- Signing
- Authorship

Categories



Deaf Life



Hearing Tech



Educational



Inspirational



Storybook

Deaf Life

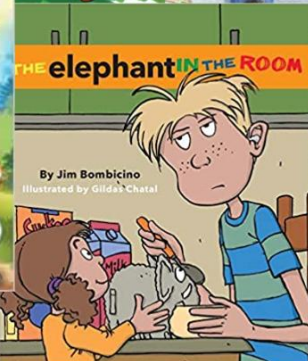
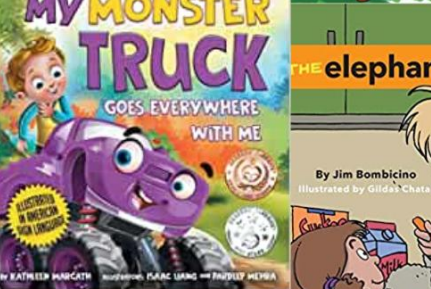
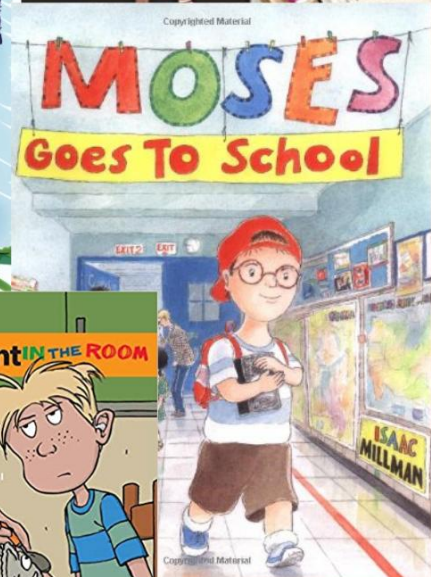
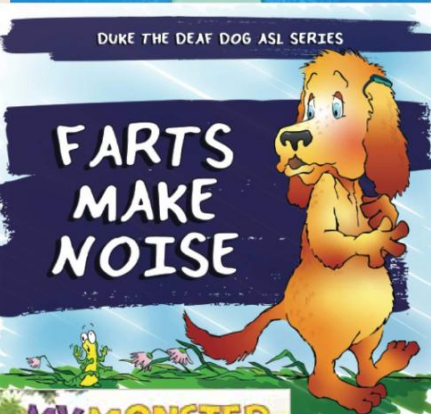
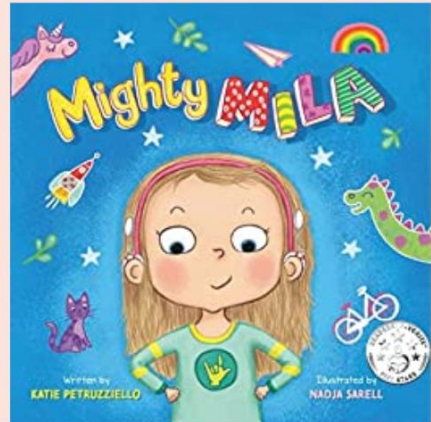


Table 1: Category Chart "deaf life"

	Accuracy	DA Model	Identity	Diversity	Signing	Authorship
<i>The Elephant in the Room</i> (2015)	Hearing aids and oral training	Medical	No	No	No	Hearing, audiologist
"Duke the Deaf Dog" (2019-2020)	Deaf in hearing society	Social	Yes	Animals	Yes	ASL Interpreter, deaf contributors
<i>I Am Amazingly Unique</i> (2021)	Deaf in hearing school	Social	Yes	Yes	Yes	Hearing
<i>Mighty Mila</i> (2021)	Cochlear Implants with extensive listening therapy	Medical	No	No	No	Hearing, parent of deaf child
"Moses" (1998-2004)	Deaf day school	Social	Yes	Yes	Yes	Hearing
<i>My Monster Truck Goes Everywhere With Me</i> (2020)	Deaf with signing family	Social	No	Yes	Yes	Hearing, Special Education Sign Language Supporter

A Tail of Happiness

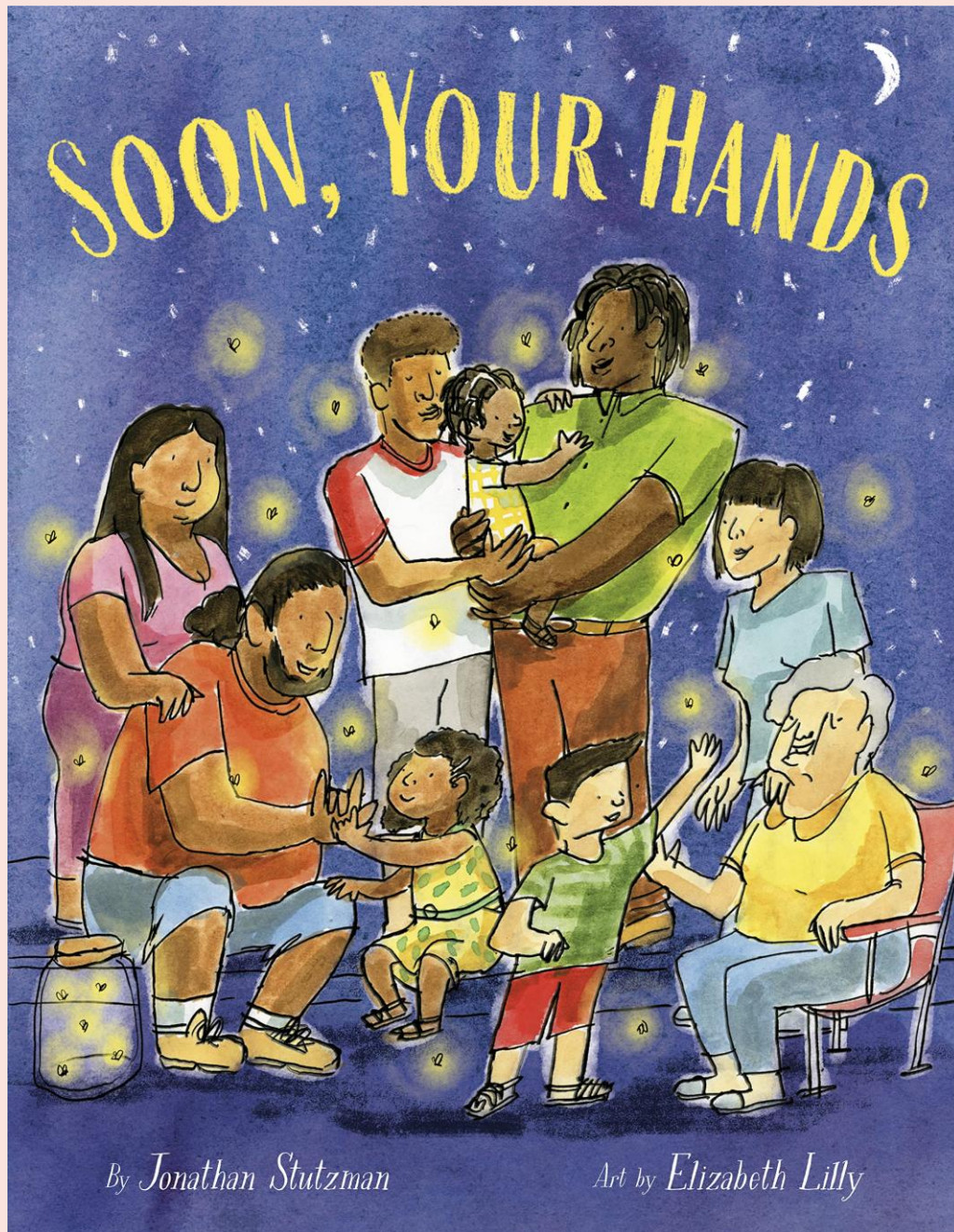
Be More



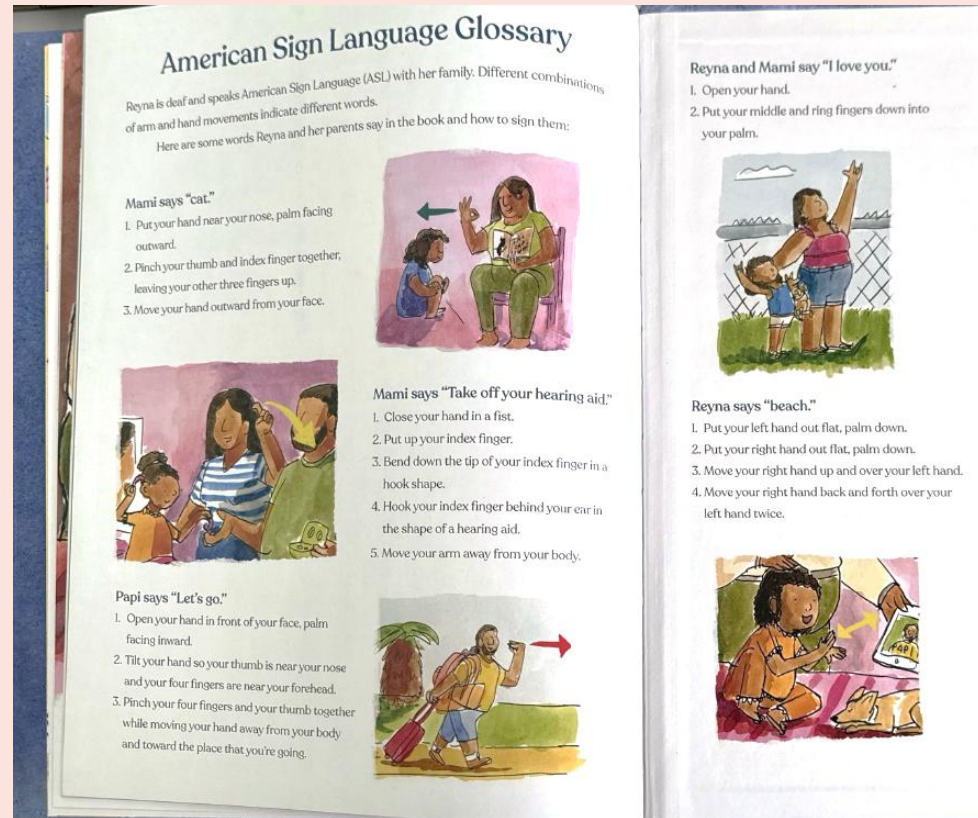
Caroline Crowe and Carlos Vélez

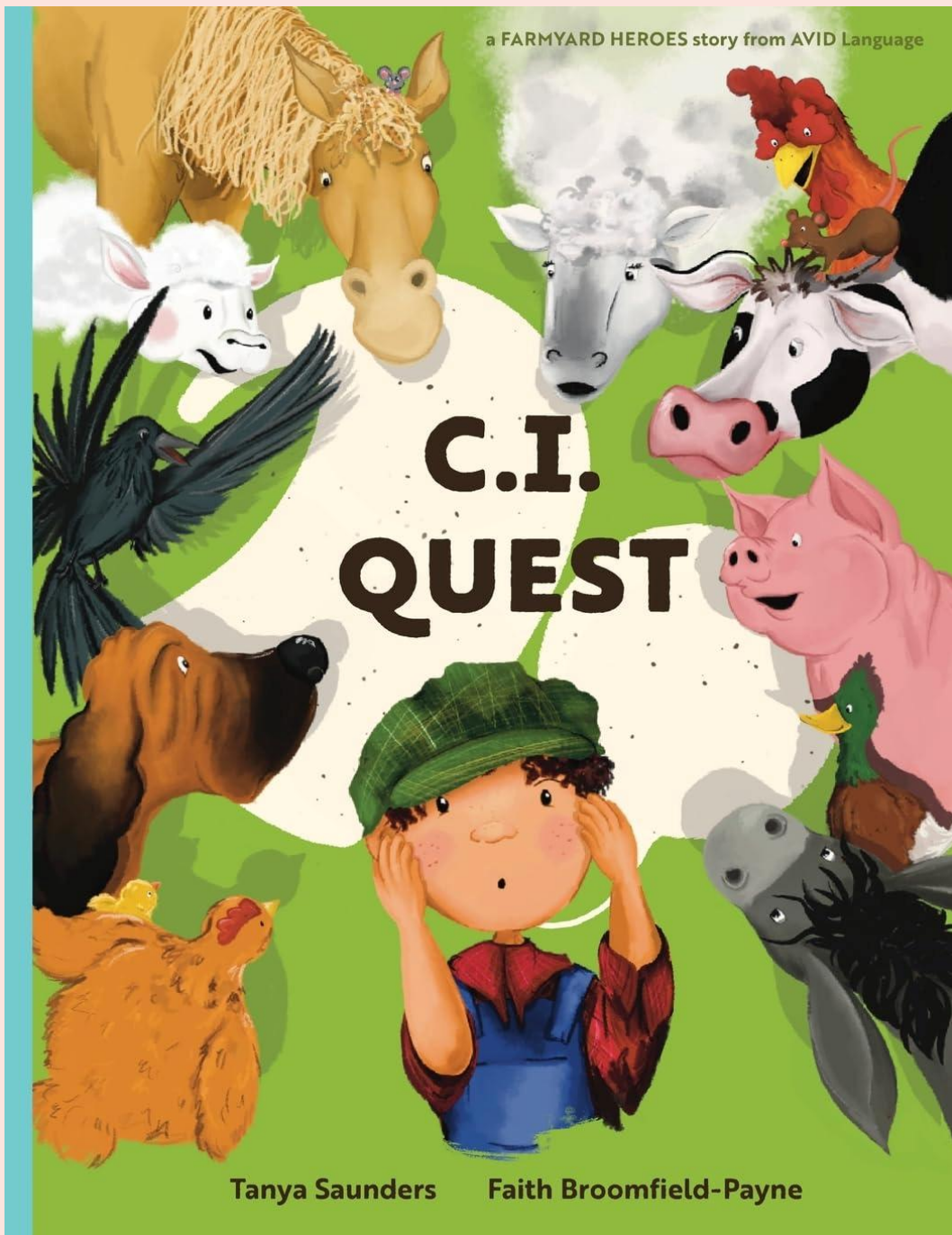
Crowe, C. (2023). *Be More Dog*.

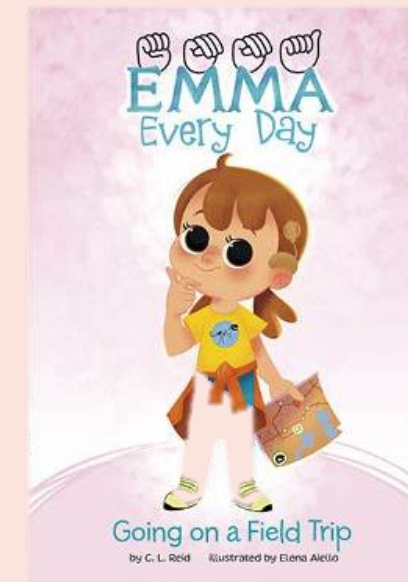
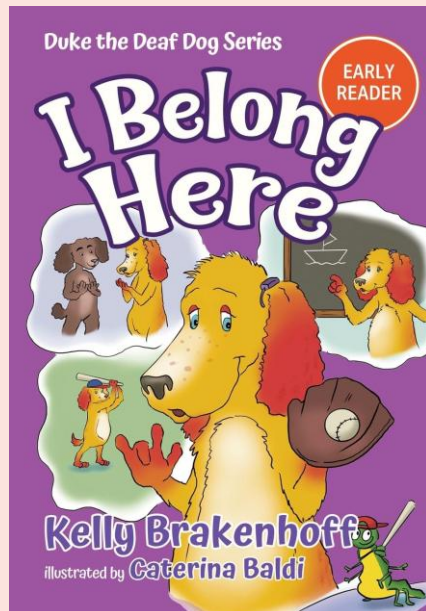
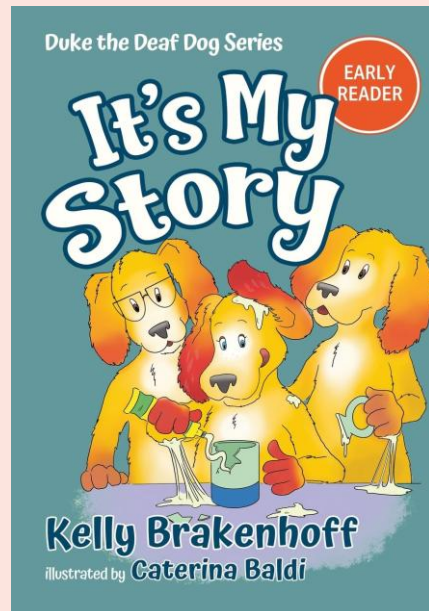
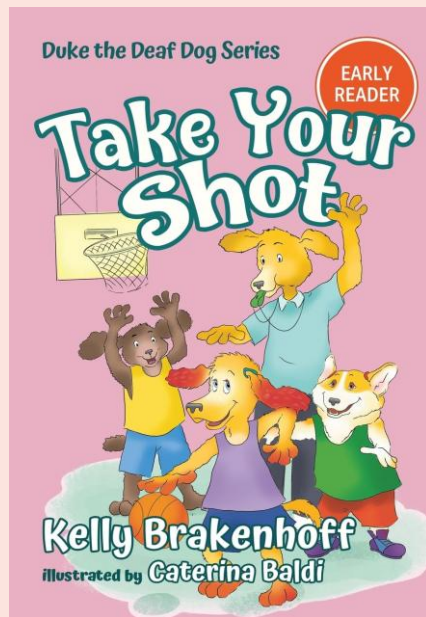
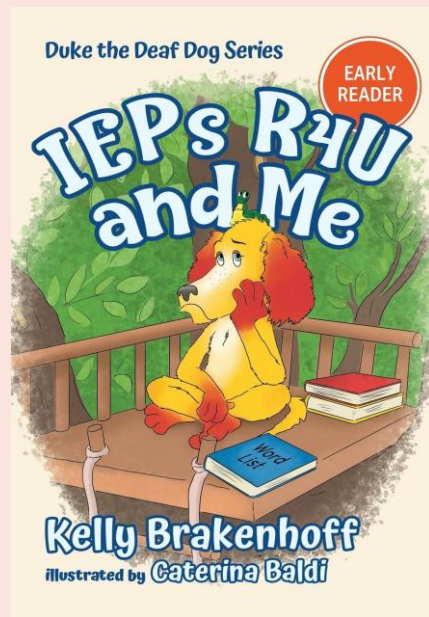




Stutzman, J. (2023). *Soon, Your Hands*.







Brakenhoff, K. "Duke the Deaf Dog" early reader series.

Reid, C.L. "Emma Every Day" series.

Hearing Tech

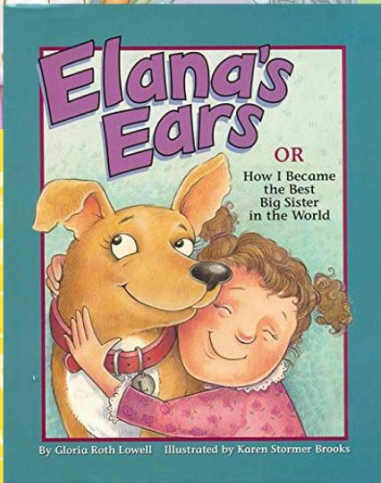
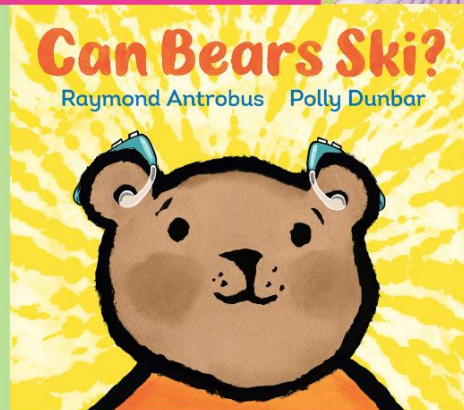
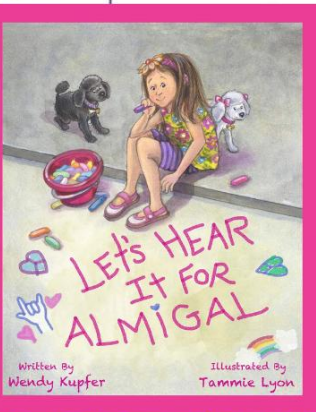
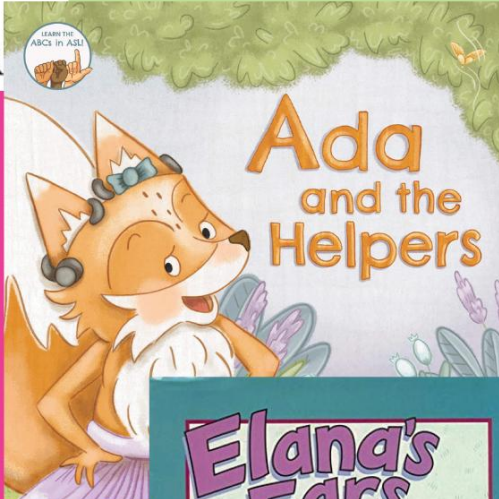
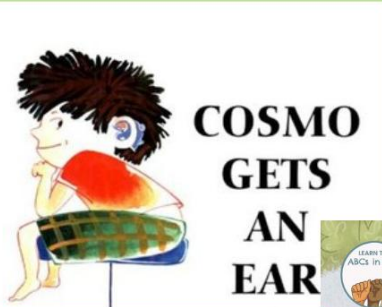


Table 2: Category Chart “hearing tech”

	Accuracy	DA Model	Identity	Diversity	Signing	Authorship
<i>Ada and the Helpers</i> (2020)	Deaf with assistive technology	Medical	Yes	Yes	Yes	Parent of deaf child
<i>Can Bears Ski?</i> (2020)	First audiology	Medical	No	Animals	No	Deaf
<i>Cosmo Gets an Ear</i> (1994)	First audiology	Medical	No	Yes	No	Deaf
<i>Elana's Ears</i> (2000)	Discovering deafness	Medical	No	No	No	Unknown
<i>Let's Hear it for Almigal</i> (2012)	Hearing aid to cochlear implant	Medical	Yes	Yes	Yes	Parent of deaf child



Antrobus, R. (2020). *Can Bears Ski?*

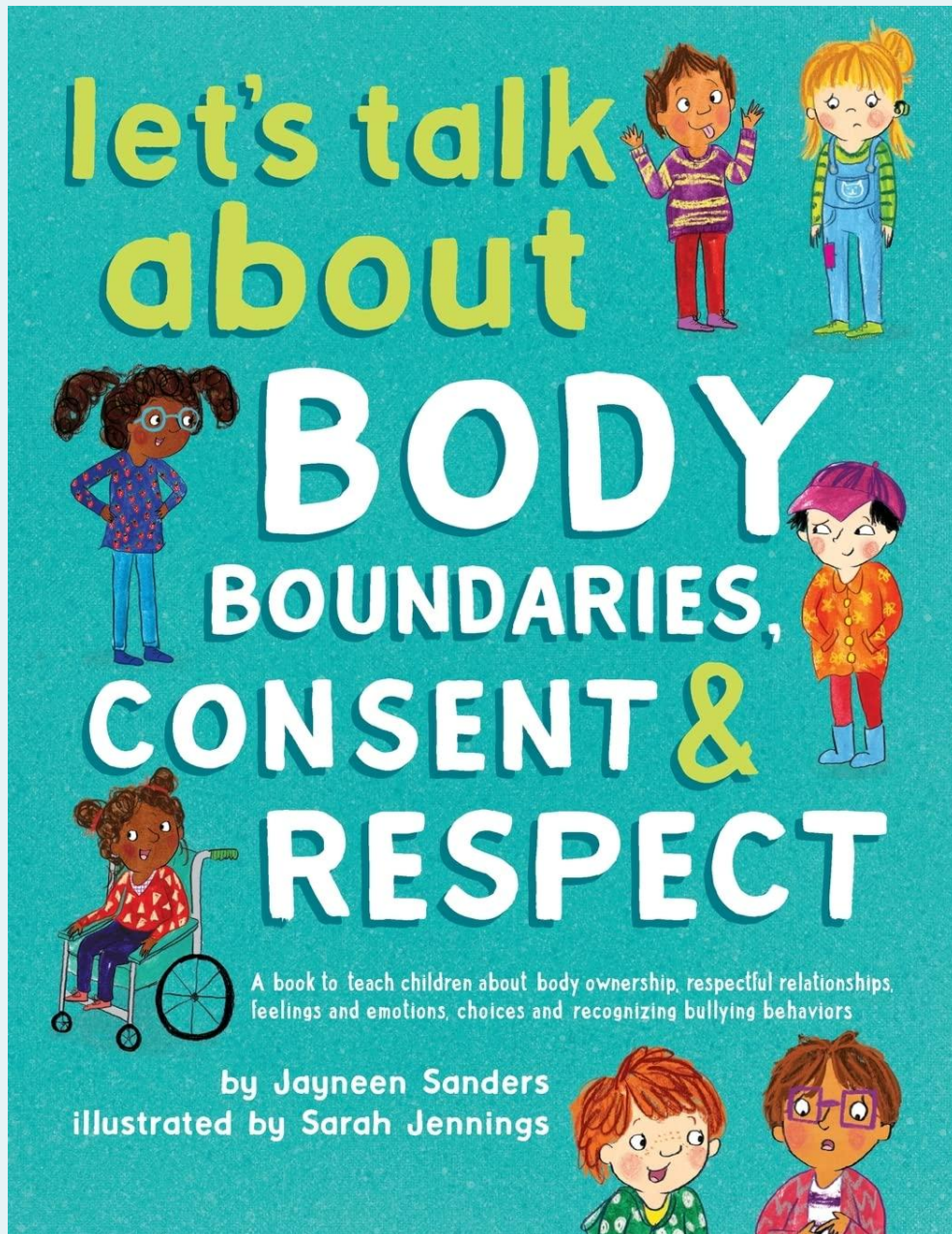


Educational



Table 3: Category Chart “educational”

	Accuracy	DA Model	Identity	Diversity	Signing	Authorship
<i>All the Ways I Hear You</i> (2019)	Diversity in deafness	Medical and Social	Yes	Yes	Yes	Parent of deaf child
<i>Billie BAHA</i> (2020)	Diversity in deafness	Medical and Social	Yes	Yes	No	Hearing, teacher
<i>My Life With Deafness</i> (2021)	Deaf ASL-user	Social	Yes	Yes	Yes	Hearing
“Nita” (2018-2020)	Deaf baby	Social	No	Yes	Yes	Hearing, interpreter
<i>Using Hearing Aids</i> (2019)	Hearing aid use	Medical	No	No	No	Hearing



Sanders, J. (2017). *Let's Talk About Boundaries, Consent, & Respect*.

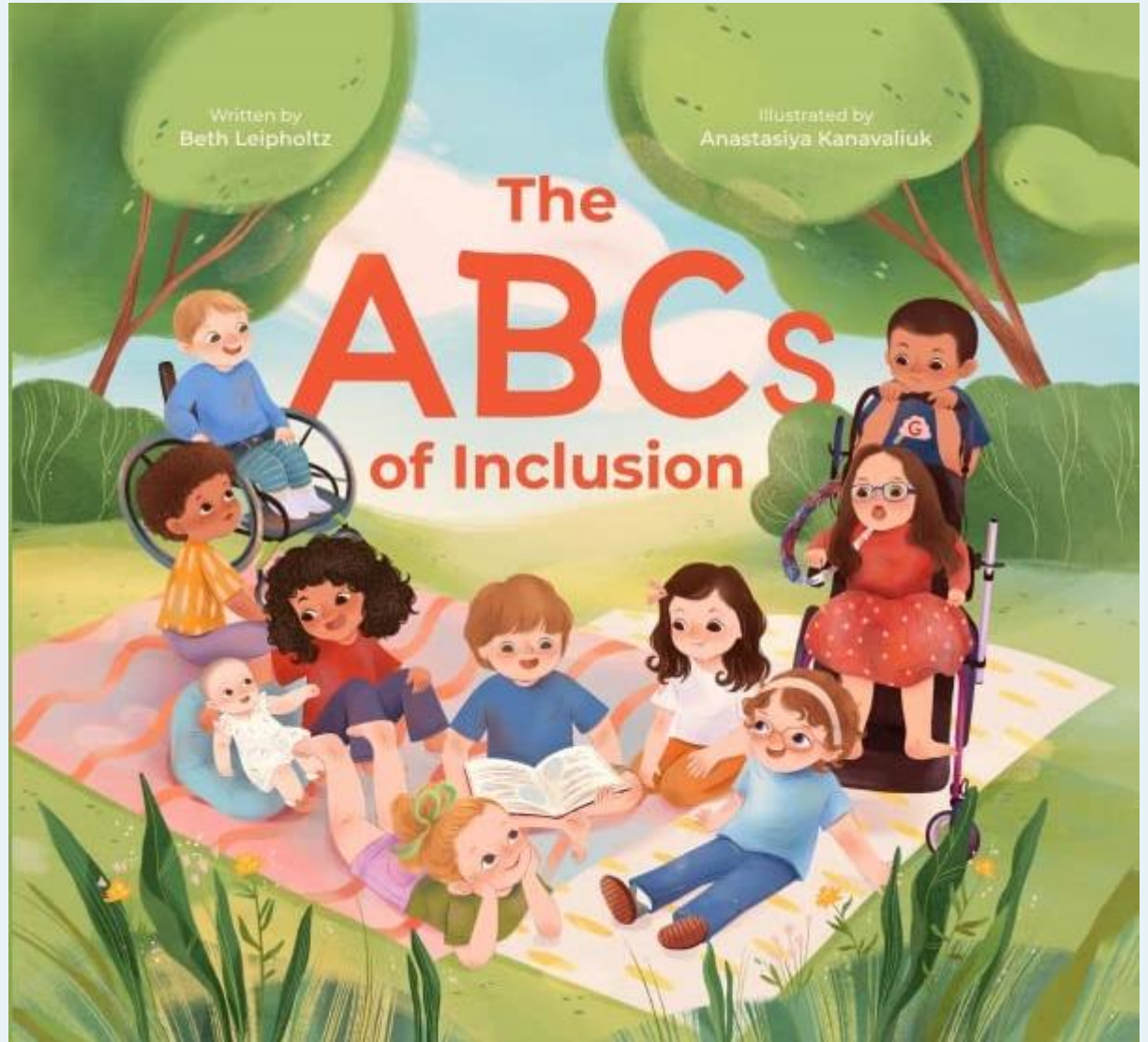


Every Body

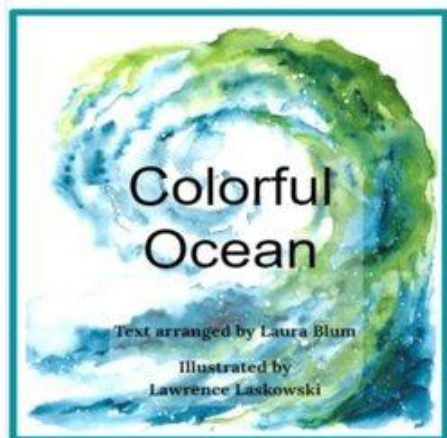
A Celebration of Diverse Abilities

SHELLEY ROTNER

Rotner, S. (2024). *Every Body*.



Leipholtz, B. (2023). *ABCs of Inclusion*.



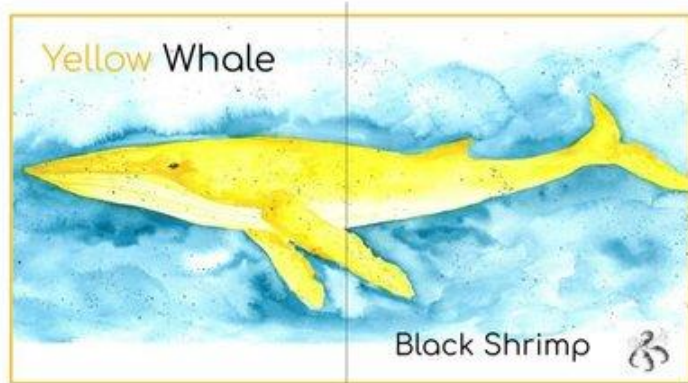
Art by Larry Laskowskii
watercolor illustrations

Concepts:
Colors
Ocean Animals

This book
rhymes
when
signed!

SCAN
QR codes
on each book
to learn the
signs!

Children and parents alike enjoy
learning their colors in rhyming pairs.



Spiro, R. (2019). *Baby Loves the Five Senses Hearing*.

Inspirational

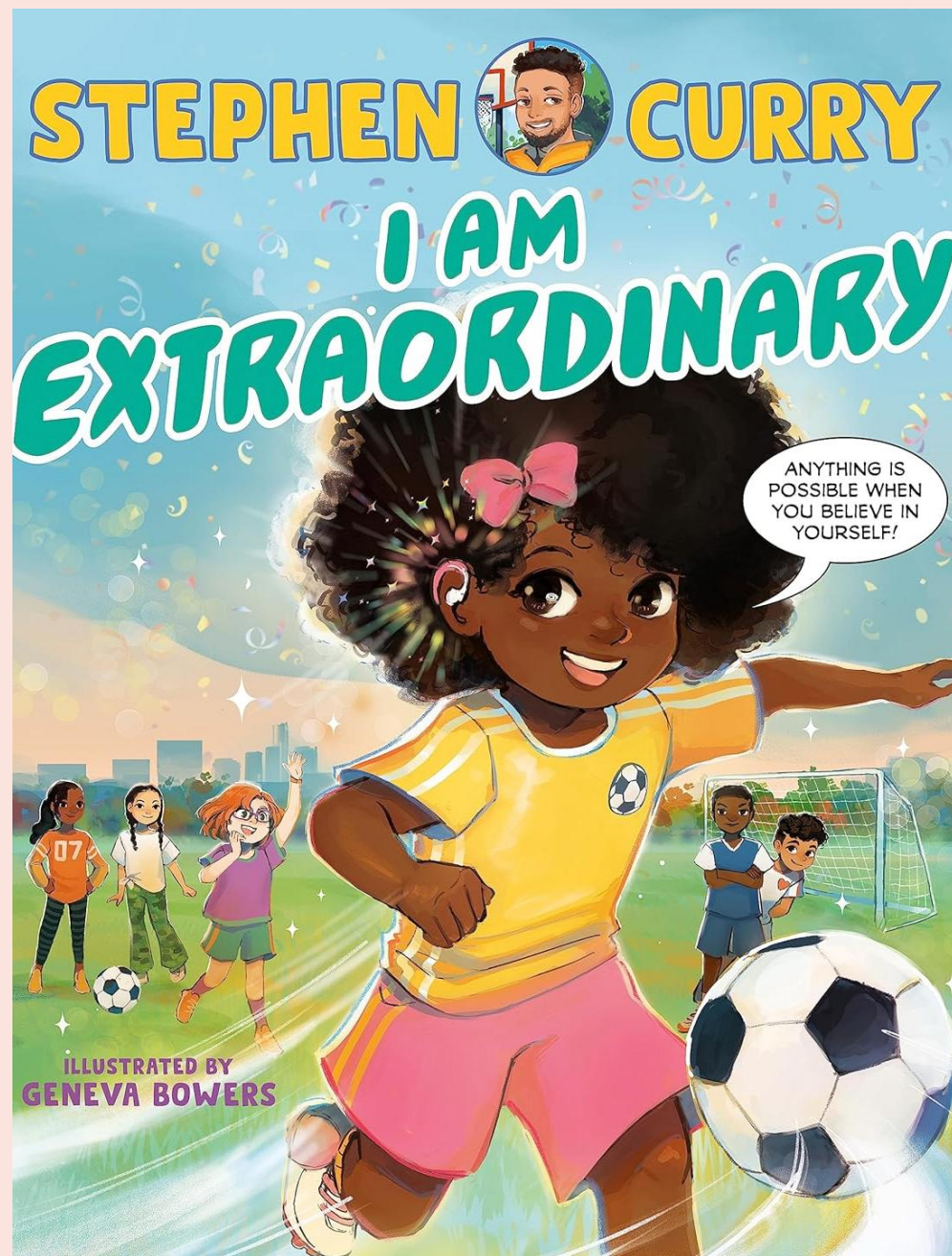


Table 4: Category Chart “inspirational”

	Accuracy	DA Model	Identity	Diversity	Signing	Authorship
<i>Fastest Girl on Earth</i> (2021)	Factual	Social	No	Yes	Yes	Hearing, deaf family member
<i>I Am Helen Keller</i> (2015)	Factual	Social	Yes	Yes	Yes	Hearing
<i>My Heart Glow</i> (2008)	Factual	Social	Yes	No	Yes	Hearing
<i>The William Hoy Story</i> (2016)	Factual	Social	Yes	No	Yes	Hearing



Churnin, N. (2016). *The William Hoy Story*.



Curry, S. (2024). *I Am Extraordinary*.



Kane, K. & McMillan, J. (2024). *Monster Hands*.

Storybook

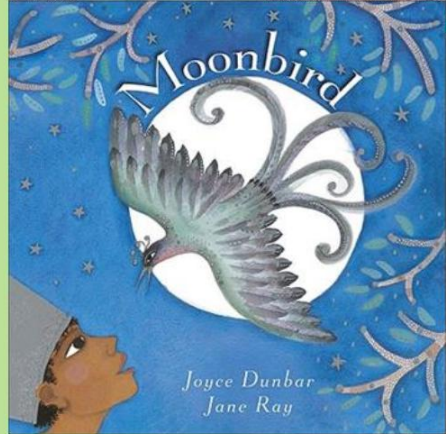
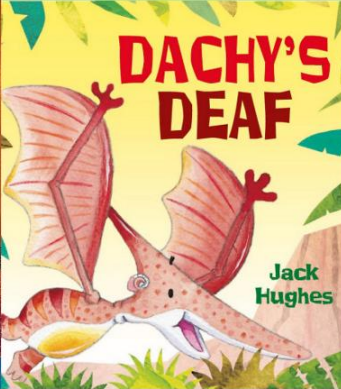
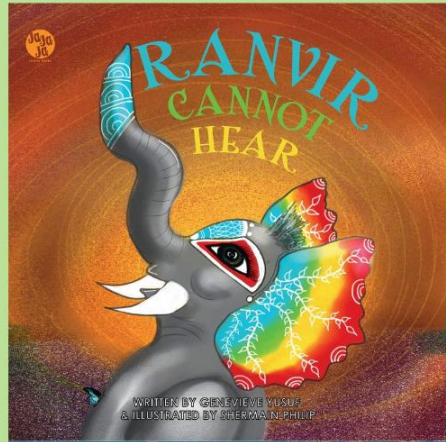
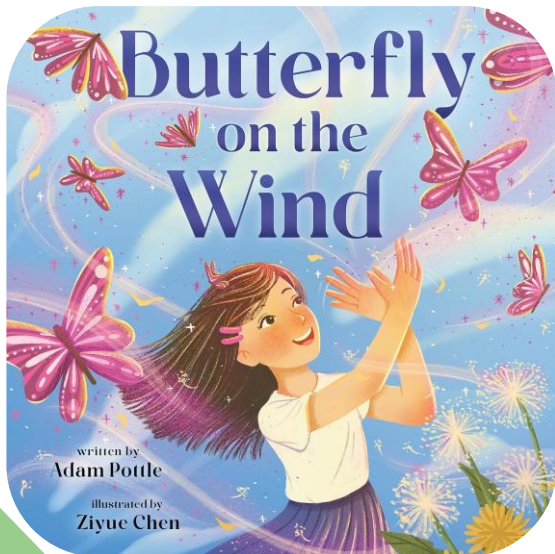
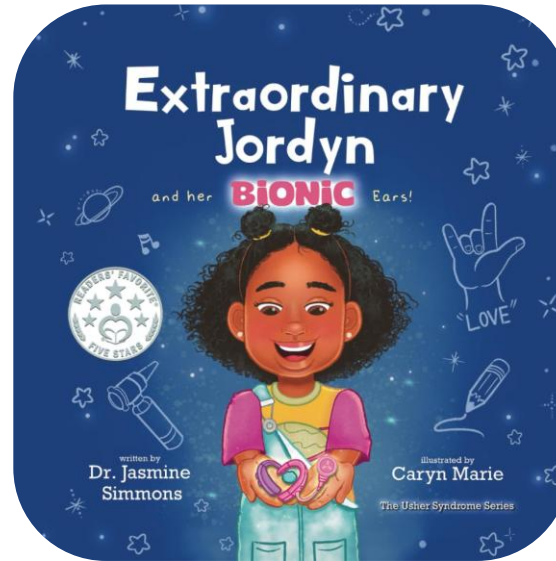


Table 5: Category Chart “storybook”

	Accuracy	DA Model	Identity	Diversity	Signing	Authorship
<i>Boy</i> (2018)	Deaf in hearing community	Social	No	No	Yes	Hearing
<i>Dachy's Deaf</i> (2015)	Sensory overload, hearing aid use	Medical and Social	No	Dinosaurs	No	Hearing
<i>Moonbird</i> (2006)	Deaf with hearing family	Social	Yes	Yes	Yes	Hearing
<i>Ranvir Can't Hear</i> (2017)	Deaf in hearing world	Social	No	Animals	Yes	Hearing



Dunbar, J., & Ray, J. (2006). *Moonbird*.



Gaps

- Deaf authors
- Deaf cultural stories
- Deaf community for children

Rosen, R. (2017). *Deaf Culture Fairy Tales*.

Simmons, J. (2023). *Extraordinary Jordyn*.

Pottle, A. (2024). *Butterfly on the Wind*.

Bonner, S. et al. (2000). *River of Hands*.





Kubler, A. (2018). *Zoom, Zoom, Zoom!*
 Stockham, J. (2011). *First Time Doctor*.
 Rescek, S. (2008). *Bounce & Jiggle*.
 Stockham, J. (2009). *First Time Nursery*.

Hearing is different for me and my crew.
Maybe your hearing is different, too?

There are many ways to hear.
One thing is true:



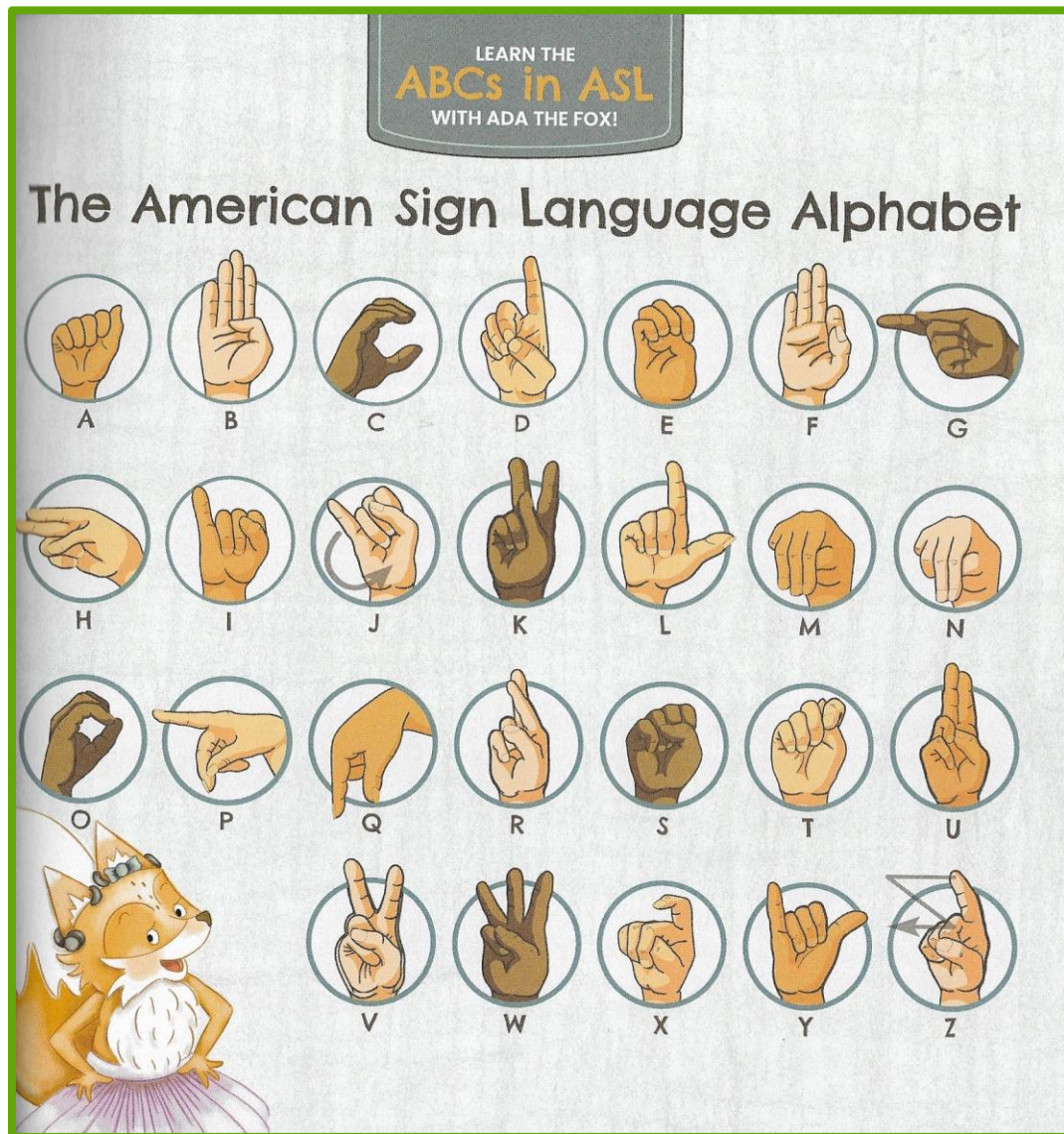
The BEST way to hear is the way that works best for YOU!

Marrufo, S. (2019). *All the Ways I Hear You*.



Jordan-Hogan, J. (2020).
The Adventures of Billie BAHA.

CHS
A Division of
Anixtercenter



Peterson, T. (2021). *Ada and the Helpers*.



Greenbacher, A. (2023).
Sign Language Shabbat.



Authorship

- Does the author have a connection to the Deaf community?
- Are they part of the community themselves?
- Did they work with members of the community during the writing process?



Community

- Do the characters have access to other Deaf peers?
- Do they have access to Deaf adults?
- Are the characters getting supports when they need them?



Diversity

- Are there different ways to be Deaf?
- Are Deaf folks shown using a variety of hearing technology, language modalities, and communication methods?
- Is there diversity of Deaf individuals and intersecting identities?



Deaf Experience

- Is the character fully developed with deafness as part of their life?
- Does their storyline include deafness without reducing the character to that one element?
- Is this accurate to Deaf lived experience?

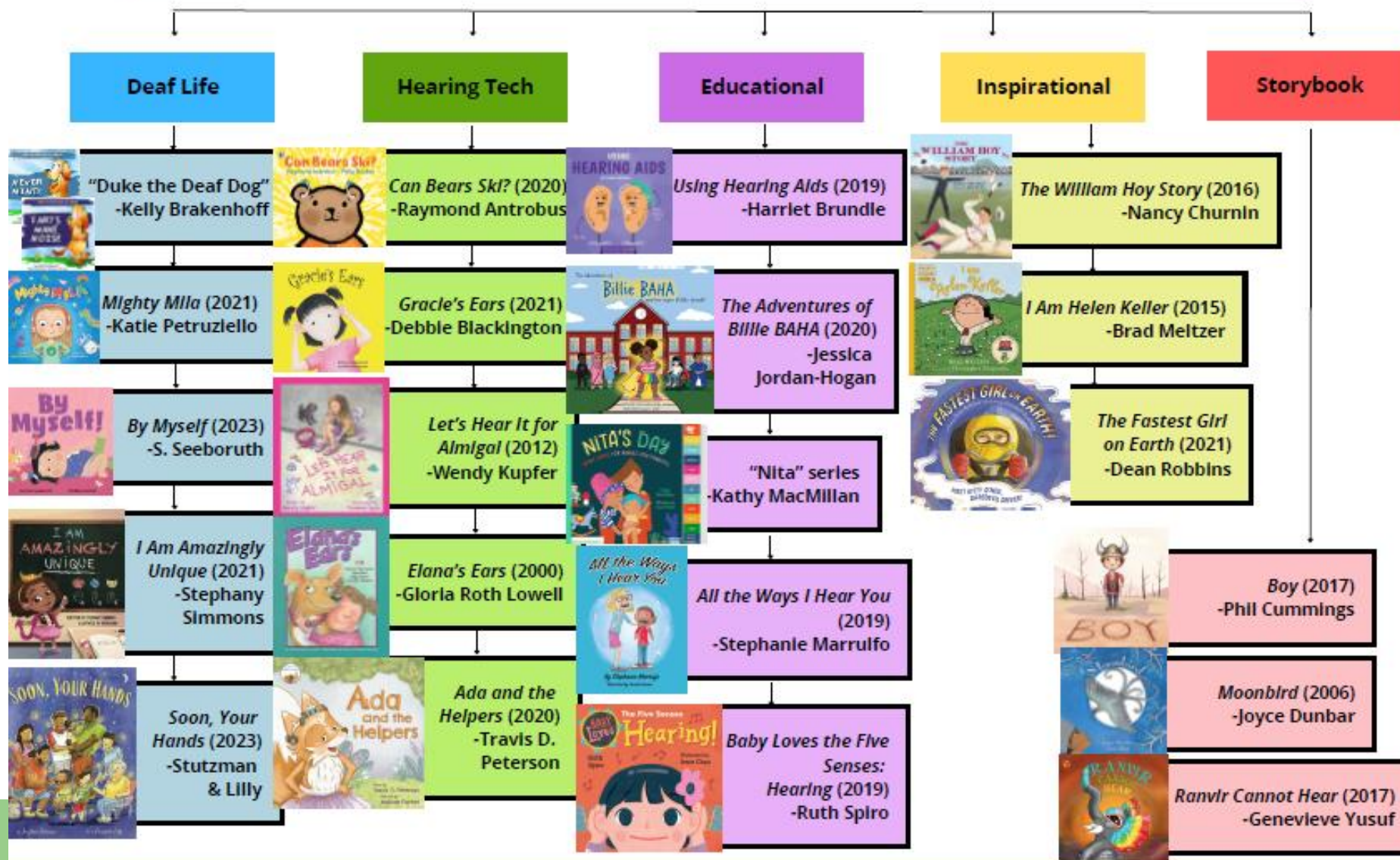


Fixing Deafness

- Is deafness addressed without implying that it is something broken that needs to be fixed?
- Is it part of natural human diversity?
- Is deafness celebrated for its language, culture, and community?



Recommendations for Representational Picture Books for Deaf Children





Drop Everything and Read **DEAR WEEK**

December 1-7, 2025

Youth and Family Connections

www.bit.ly/CHS-DEAR-archive

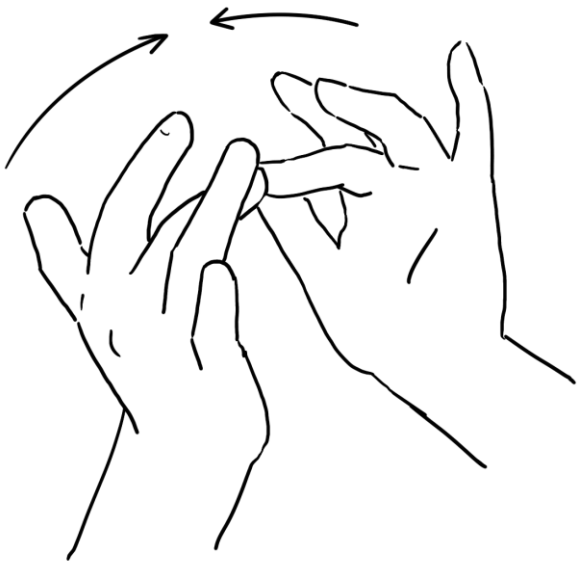


www.bit.ly/DEAR-2025-interest





Contact Me



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