

SEE WHAT I'M SAYING

THE DEAF ENTERTAINERS DOCUMENTARY
TEACHER WORKBOOK

Sample Preview



Me Hear None
Additional Performances



See What I'm Saying
Feature Documentary



Educational DVD
Supplemental Material
from See What I'm Saying

SEE WHAT I'M SAYING

THE DEAF ENTERTAINERS DOCUMENTARY



Directed and Produced
by
Hilari Scarl

Featuring
CJ Jones, Robert DeMayo, TL Forsberg, Bob Hiltermann

www.seewhatimsayingmovie.com

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Note: This is a guide that teachers may utilize to come up with their own questions, activities and exercises. Each of the three DVDs may be utilized to fit individual classes' levels, needs and interests. Teachers may come up with their own questions and activities, or may use the ones we suggested. Each of the three DVDs may be used for group discussions, class activities, ASL receptive practice, voice interpreting practice, essay topics or any other way the instructor wishes. Please keep in mind that this guide was developed for students of various ages, signing abilities and backgrounds to be used in deaf schools, ASL and interpreting classes and deaf studies programs to expand students' knowledge and interests in a wide variety of topics and skills.

PRE-VIEWING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Bob Hiltermann

1. What does it mean to be Deaf? Have you ever met a Deaf person?

2. What is Deaf culture? Are there elements of culture (social beliefs, behaviors, language, history, values, etc.) that are different in the Deaf community? How does Deaf culture differ from hearing culture?

Deaf culture describes the social beliefs, behaviors, art, literary traditions, history, values and shared institutions of communities that are affected by deafness and which use sign languages as the main means of communication. When used as a cultural label, the word deaf is often written with a capital *D*, and referred to as "big D Deaf" in speech and sign. When used as a label for the audiological condition, it is written with a lower case *d*.

Members of the Deaf community tend to view deafness as a difference in human experience rather than a disability. The community may include family members of deaf people and sign-language interpreters who identify with Deaf culture and does not automatically include all people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

-Wikipedia

3. What is audism?

Audism is discrimination against or oppressive attitudes towards deaf or hard of hearing people; or the belief that hearing people are superior to deaf or hard of hearing people.

Advanced question: What is Deafhood?

4. Do you think there are limits on what deaf people can do? Are there any careers or hobbies that Deaf people cannot do?

"Deaf people can do anything hearing people do except hear."

– I. King Jordan, first deaf president of Gallaudet University

DID YOU KNOW...

Some jobs such as police work and airline pilots may have certain restrictions, although we were able to find a Deaf Pilots Association and a few Deaf police officers through our research. Presently, deaf people cannot serve in the military. Discuss your students' thoughts and encourage them to research more about these topics.

5. Can you name any famous deaf people? What are they famous for?

Marlee Matlin, I. King Jordan, Helen Keller, Alice Cogswell, Matt Hamill, Linda Bove and dozens of others. Teachers may guide their students here to name other Deaf role models and individuals who are important in Deaf history.

6. Have you ever seen any deaf actors in entertainment (on TV, in the movies or in the theater?) What did you think of the character they portrayed? What did you notice about deaf stereotypes?



Beethoven's Nightmare musicians Bob Hiltermann and Ed Chevy with Lisa Hermatz at the El Rey Theatre in 2007.

PRE & POST VIEWING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

SIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS

See how much of the signing in the film you can watch without relying on the captions. (Note: The Educational DVD has non-captioned scenes for receptive and voicing practice.) Take a look at how the signing changes depending on who is in the conversation.

HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE STUDENTS

Notice that obstacles are a way of life for everyone. Observe the various challenges that each performer must go through. How many of these obstacles are because they are an entertainer? How many are because they are simply human? How many are because they are deaf? What are your challenges? How do you deal with them? When do you give up and when do you decide to keep going?

DEAF STUDENTS

Whose story did you relate to the most? Have you experienced identity struggle in finding your place with the hearing and deaf worlds? Do you have any deaf role models who are like one of the people in the film? Do you call yourself deaf, hard of hearing, hearing impaired or something else? Is it because you feel that is who you are or what other people think you are? What progress do you think deaf people will make in the next decade because of access to technology?

EVERYONE

Sign language is not universal. It changes from country to country just like spoken language. See if you can spot any other sign languages in the film. There is some Russian Sign Language during CJ's International Deaf Theater Festival.

Has your perspective changed about anything after viewing See What I'm Saying?

See how many deaf entertainers you recognize in the end montage. What films/television shows/theater work have they done?



CJ Jones

OPEN CAPTIONS VS. CLOSED CAPTIONS

What are open captions?
How are they different than closed captions? Why are both important?

The term "Open Captions" is used when text is burned-in on the picture, similar to subtitles for foreign films. Open captions also include audio descriptors and non-speech information that assist deaf audiences, such as [phone rings] or a musical note symbol to indicate song lyrics or background music. Open captions can't be turned off, unlike closed captions which can be turned on and off with a decoder. See What I'm Saying is shown with open captions as part of the film.

Over 30 million deaf and hard of hearing people in the U.S. rely on captions to make film, television and internet clips accessible.

SEE WHAT I'M SAYING EDUCATIONAL DVD

Over 300 hours were filmed for the production of See What I'm Saying: The Deaf Entertainers Documentary. Included in this DVD are short scenes, interviews, and clips that are not in the final film. They offer deaf perspectives, insights into deaf culture and sign language practice.

Sample Preview

Deanne Bray performs
with Bob Hiltermann and
Beethoven's Nightmare
at the El Rey Theatre.



EDUCATIONAL DVD

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*Running times are noted after each title.

1. Robert – Odyssey – :45

A

Robert shows an example of ASL storytelling of “The Odyssey” in first and third person.

How does Robert change perspectives? What are the various ways you can tell a story? Come up with your own story and tell it using first person narrative, third person narrative or both.

2. Robert – Deafness Isn’t a Problem – 2:04

P

Robert’s interview that he has no problem being deaf and why he would not get a CI.

Do you see deafness as a problem? What are some things about you that might be viewed as different? How do these things make you unique? Do you think it’s good to have differences? If you could take a magic pill to change who you are, would you do it?

Advanced discussion: What is a cochlear implant? Can deaf people with cochlear implants be part of Deaf culture? Do cochlear implants make you hearing?

3. Robert – Identity – 1:44

C P M

Robert discusses being deaf and gay and the cultural differences.

Discuss different cultures and communities (Deaf, Gay, Latino, African American, etc.)

4. Robert Compares ASL to Visa Commercial – :47

C

Robert talks about what happens when a hearing person with limited ASL skills approaches a deaf group.

What is the difference between deaf people who sign to each other or to other hearing people? What is an appropriate way to approach a deaf person you don’t know?

A: Each person is different, as is each situation. Use your best judgment when interrupting a conversation or approaching a deaf person who doesn’t know you.

5. Robert – ASL is Precious – 2:21

A P

Robert discusses his opinions on teaching and the reasons why hearing people learn sign language.

Should ASL students teach sign language? If a hearing person is fluent in sign language, should they audition for deaf roles in film and television?

Our answer: No.

6. Robert – Why Speaking is a Choice – 2:10

A P

Robert talks about his choice to voice or sign.

Why would Robert choose to sign instead of voice?

A: Just because he can speak doesn’t mean he can hear. Robert is often more comfortable having people adapt to his preferred communication method, which is signing.

SIGN NAMES

What are sign names? Do you have a sign name? If so, what is the story behind your sign name? You cannot give yourself a sign name; it can only be given to you by a deaf or hard of hearing person. Feel free to research this to explore the concept further.

7. Performers Create a Sign Name for Beethoven’s Nightmare – :57

A P

Bob and his Beethoven’s Nightmare performers try to come up with a sign name for Beethoven.

How did Bob and the performers come up with the sign name for Beethoven? Can you come up with a different one? Why are sign names useful?

8. Hearing Misconceptions – 4:53

C P E

Bob Hiltermann tells CJ Jones his story about being called “disabled” at the airport, plus Ed Chevy and Robert DeMayo tell their related stories.

What is the difference between being Deaf and being disabled? Do you think the airline was correct to deny Bob a seat in the emergency seating? Why or why not? What are some misconceptions about deaf people? How do Ed and Robert illustrate these misconceptions? Has anyone ever made incorrect assumptions about you?



Interpreter James Foster signs to Rose Crisman, star of the "See What I'm Saying" music video.

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