

## What is Cued Speech?

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Children who are deaf or hard of hearing may exhibit difficulty understanding spoken language. Cued Speech provides the means of translating spoken language using visual representations. Speakers use uniquely connected cues via hand shapes, placement around the mouth, and actual mouth movements when saying sounds/words. Cued Speech allows listeners to combine visual cues in order to identify sounds and interpret the unique combining of cues to illustrate words. This provides the opportunity to build a visual image of what was said. Cued Speech allows the child to make out sounds and words when they are using other strategies such as lip reading.

Cued Speech is a **visual mode of communication in which mouth movements of speech combine with “cues”** to make the sounds (phonemes) of traditional spoken languages look different. Cueing allows users who are deaf, hard of hearing or who have language/communication disorders to access the basic, fundamental properties of spoken languages through the use of vision. (National Cued Speech Association)



### Spoken Language vs. Cued Speech

When using spoken language, an individual's voice, breath support, and tongue placement work together to produce sounds/words to communicate. To represent different sounds and words heard by the listener, these components are manipulated into various shapes with noticeable facial movements during speech production. Since many speech sounds are produced with the same facial cues, comprehension of spoken words by a deaf or hard of hearing person can sometimes be difficult/confusing while lip reading.

Cued Speech involves the manipulation of handshapes, hand placements, and mouth movements to produce a visual representation of sounds/words. Audible speech is not required when cueing. However, it is recommended that the speaker use mouth movements when speaking. There are eight hand shapes representing consonant phonemes. These are placed on four locations near the mouth to indicate vowel phonemes. The visual hand cues are presented in specific sequences to represent sounds that are combined to form words. This allows the deaf or hard of hearing listener to identify and comprehend different sound combinations and “see” what is being said.

**Cued Speech for American English: Hand Shapes and Mouth Positions Chart**  
[https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/parentsguide/download/cued\\_signs.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/parentsguide/download/cued_signs.pdf)

### Effects of Cued Speech

A hearing loss can have a negative impact on a person's ability to learn to read. Cued Speech provides a visual representation of the sounds in spoken language allowing a deaf child to develop phonemic skills in a similar way as a hearing child does.

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These skills are important for the development of literacy--reading and writing. With the use of Cued Speech, it is common for deaf children to demonstrate literacy skills equal to or greater than children with good hearing.

Because Cued Speech is phonetically based, the deaf child can identify all of the sounds that make up each word. Speaking is not required by the Cued Speech user. Since Cued Speech is used around the mouth, it does support the acquisition of lip reading skills.

## Cued Speech & American Sign Language (ASL)

When using American Sign Language (ASL), parents and children must first learn the signs and unique grammatical structures of ASL. Therefore, the development of a child's communication skills depend on how quickly parents are able to learn and begin to sign. Also, since new words are frequently added to the English language, new ASL signs need to be taught on a regular basis.

Cued Speech consists of eight handshapes and four placement locations. These cues can be combined in various sequences providing visual cues for comprehension. Due to the small set of communication cues, the ability to begin effective communication can be achieved quickly.

Resources:

"What is Cued Speech?" (2018) Retrieved 4-3-19 from <http://www.agbms.org/about-cued-speech.html>

"About Cued Speech" (2018) Retrieved 4-3-19 from <http://www.cuedspeech.org/cued-speech/about-cued-speech>

"Cued Speech" (2018) Retrieved 4-3-19 from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/parentsguide/building/cued-speech.html>

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## Helpful Products

The list of Super Duper® products below may be helpful when working with children who have special needs. Visit [www.superduperinc.com](http://www.superduperinc.com) and type in the **item name** or **number** in our search engine. If you're viewing this Handy Handout on a computer, click the links below to see the product descriptions.

### 400 Webber® Sign Language Cards



[Item #WSL-100](#)

### Sign Language Bingo



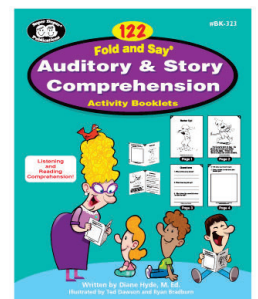
[Item #BGO-133](#)

### Look Who's Listening! Board Game



[Item #GB-512](#)

### 122 Fold and Say Auditory & Story Comprehension



[Item #BK-323](#)