

Erasmus+

Beyond barriers and borders

The Course Program updated in the framework of the “Beyond barriers & borders” Erasmus plus project carried out by Polish Association of the Blind, Austrian Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted and VIEWS International

Polish Association of the Blind, Warsaw 2018

How to Teach a Blind or Partially Sighted Person to Sign Independently

Introduction

Question: Why do you need to master the skill of putting a signature independently with your full name or a short form? Discussion

Some possible answers:

- The possibility of entering into agreements – signing contracts
- Extended availability of the labour market, the opportunity to set up one's own company
- The possibility of preparing various official documents independently
- The risk of being regarded as unable to read and write is reduced
- Independence
- Increased self-esteem
- Other reasons, to be specified.

Explanation of Key Terms

Handwriting?

The way of writing letters, the way handwriting looks like

Font

Shape and size of block letters



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A cuboid with the letter up-side-down presenting a copy of a given character

An electronic signature

A decoded piece of information in the electronic form attached in the message sent via Internet that replaces the traditional signature. According to the Act on Electronic Signature, both the traditional and the electronic signatures are legally binding.

Given the legal provisions, an electronic signature can be used to sign contracts, invoices or any other legal agreements.

Teaching the Shape of Particular Letters

Getting to know the shape of letters in a given forename and surname (block letters and cursive handwriting)

Teaching aids:

A) For partially sighted users:

- Shape of upper and lower case letters in different dimensions (black characters on white)

B) For blind users:

- Shape of upper and lower case letters embossed on a special sheet of paper
- Embossed letters with Braille equivalents

C) For both users:

- Blocks with convex or concave block letters and cursive handwriting. These letters should contrast with the background (dark on white or reverse). The background should be uniform. Letters can be either purchased or prepared.
- A domino game with letters
- Other aids

Arranging Full Forename and Surname from Particular Letters

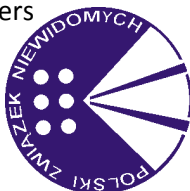
Teaching aids:

A) For partially sighted users:

- Cards with separate letters

B) For blind users:

- Blocks with convex or concave letters



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- Cards made of embossing paper with printed cursive handwriting
- C) For both users:
 - Flexible wires and cord
 - Plasticine, thread, etc. (arranging one's forename and surname according to the given magnified template, contrasting plastic trays and pads with the letters the person is learning)
 - Other aids

Please note that the number of cards and blocks should be sufficient so that each user can make his or her own set easily.

Putting One's Signature

Writing one's full forename and surname

This activity can be carried out when the user is able to identify, differentiate and recognize letters in his or her own forename and surname. Participants should be warned that cursive handwriting is the way of joined writing.

To help to master the activity, the initial training can be carried out on magnified letters but the goal is to teach how to sign on the standard template so that written letters do not exceed 1 centimetre.

Teaching aids:

- A) For partially sighted users:
 - A dotted template of full forename and surname that is magnified and the standard template, with the pattern letters
- B) For blind users:
 - Embossed forename and surname on a sheet of paper or foil that serves as the pattern
 - A dotted forename and surname pattern on the embossing paper
 - Slate used for embossed drawing
 - The Braille slate that can be used to write letters in each cell

Flattened plasticine and clay put on a board, a stylus used for writing letters

- C) For both users:
 - Typoscopes with a signature guide in different sizes
 - Rulers helping not to cross the horizontal line
 - Cardboard and traditional paper both plain and with standard or raised lines that is used for partially sighted users
 - Various types of pens and pencils in different shapes and sizes
 - Pens used for Braille markings



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- Other essential aids

Example Activities

Writing letters on peer's back or palm

Writing on a sheet of cardboard with the finger previously immersed in glue, sprinkling the letters with sand, etc.

Writing the short form of person's given forename and surname by omitting certain characters.

This activity can be carried out when the participant is able to write his or her full forename and surname.

The form of the abbreviated signature should be consulted with the instructor.

Then the activity is repeated until the participant's action is automatic.

Mastering the writing skill of full forename and surname and its short form, ongoing evaluation of the process.

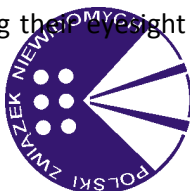
Signing Different Official Forms

Teaching aids:

- Various forms commonly used in a tax office, a post office, at the social insurance, etc.
- Teaching to write Arabic numerals, dates and expressions "I hereby acknowledge receipt" . This should be taught to more advance learners.
- Other teaching aids:
 - Electronic and traditional magnifiers
 - Lamps, coloured foils improving contrast

Additional Remarks

Each time the instructor should be sure that the size of letters is easy to read for partially sighted participants who use or do not use magnifying aids. The instructor should be flexible to change the paper, colour or contrast of the given template. It is advisable to ensure adjustable lighting in the course venue. The facilitator should pay special attention to the appropriate way of holding writing aids and participant's posture. If the users prefer to bent their heads and turn heads because of eye problems, a facilitator should conduct relaxing exercises of body parts involved in the process. It should be remembered that people losing their eyesight *do* have the ability of signing properly. In



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other cases the use of typoscope guiding the participants may be essential. The course is completed provided that each time participant's signature is the same or slightly changed.

