How many times has an audience seen someone perform ABC stories (also known as A-Z stories) and knew whether or not it was a good story, but couldn’t explain why? This is common to the Deaf community. Dr. Tom Humphries pointed this out in his article,

“We all know Deaf poets that we like and don’t like. We all know Deaf artists that we like and don’t know. We are less sure why, and we are very unsure what the “why” should be. I think we are still unsure what qualities are that constitute criticism of Deaf art and literature.”

ABC stories have been passed on for a long time in the history of ASL literature, but no one is quite sure how to produce or evaluate ABC stories properly.

Dr. Ben Bahan first discussed this issue with colleagues and then made an outline of the basic principles that would be necessary to produce a good ABC story. He was the first to write down the basic principles of ABC stories in his article, “Face-to-Face Tradition in the American Deaf Community: Dynamics of the Teller, the Tale, and the Audience,” written in 1999 and published in 2006. I was fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Bahan as his student and later, his co-worker at Gallaudet University. As storytellers ourselves, we frequently shared with each other our critiques and creative inputs of ABC stories, which led us to producing a DVD, A to Z: ABC Stories in ASL, in 2010. After working with Dr. Bahan, I decided to do this article to expand on his original basic principles of ABC stories, with him as my mentor.
STORIES WITH HANDSHAPE CONSTRAINTS: BASIC PRINCIPLES

Since poetry is considered a composition and is regarded as a branch of literature, ABC stories has been put under the genre of poetry in ASL literature. As have number stories, word stories, and one-handshape stories too. Clayton Valli produced several stories with handshape constraints and published them, on DVD, in his poetry collection. Nathie Marbury and Debbie Rennie did the same thing too. Dr. Bahan took notice of the differences between true poetry and stories with handshape constraints. He brought his findings to several colleagues and after a long discussion followed with some agreements and disagreements, he proposed a new ASL literature genre: Stories with Handshape Constraints. In doing so, he would remove ABC stories, number stories, word stories, and one-handshape stories from the poetry genre. Dr. Bahan considers stories with handshape constraints to be more story than poetry, because poetry is heavily based on distinctive style and rhythm, while stories with handshape constraints is based on limited handshapes.

The goal of each four stories are simple: to create a ABC story based on manual alphabet handshapes; a number story based on manual number handshapes; a word story based on fingerspelling words using manual handshape; and an one-handshape story based on the use of one handshape only. The principles for ABC stories, number stories, and word stories are based on the use of different handshapes while using a system of order. The principles for one-handshape stories are based on the use of the same handshape for each sign.

Stories with handshape constraints are unique to ASL literature because it already has principles set up before the storyteller starts creating his or her story, which has to be told without violating the principles. Basically, the principles were set up to limit the storyteller’s choices of handshapes, forcing the storyteller to find a way to successfully tell his or her story.

Dr. Bahan listed the four general principles of stories with handshape constraints, which could also be considered tools of criticism for the stories with handshape constraints genre. The four general principles are:

- Succession Principle
- Minimal Deviation
- Use of Cohesive Devices
- Integrity of the Storyline

SUCCESSION PRINCIPLE

The succession principle is applied to ABC stories, number stories, and word stories only because they all use handshapes already set up in a certain
order, as specified by the rules of each type of stories. The succession principle itself is broken down into four parts designated to make sure the order of the different handshapes are effective and appropriate to the particular genre.

Present manual handshapes in successive order
To succeed in telling an ABC story, it must be told in the exact alphabetical order from A to Z. If the storyteller decides to tell a mixed manual alphabet story, this would mean that the storyteller has failed to follow the exact order of the letters of the manual alphabet, and the storyteller’s so-called ABC story would no longer be considered a true ABC story. That is the basic principle of the whole sequence of ABC storytelling. However, the storyteller can vary his or her style of telling ABC stories, such as going backward in the sequence of the manual alphabet system. If doing the manual alphabet backward was the storyteller’s goal, then it must be done backward in the exact order from Z to A. The same rule applies to number stories and word stories too.

Rhythm/Frequency succession
Storytellers must keep with the rhythm they’ve chosen throughout the story they are telling. Since our goal is to follow an exact sequence of letters or numbers from the beginning to the end, the storyteller should keep his or her story consistent and use the same rhythm from the beginning to the end.

Most storytellers fail to acknowledge this principle. Here’s an example of a common mistake made by storytellers: When a storyteller starts an ABC story about a person going into a haunted house, the story usually goes like this: the person knocked on the door, but no one answered. So, the person decides to open the door and enter the haunted house. The person walks up the long hallway and upstairs while breathing heavily. Then something darts out right in front of the person.

Now for the ASL version, if the storyteller disregarded the rhythm/frequency succession principle and told the story this way: (A: hand — knocking on the door), (A: hand — open the door), (B: hallway — description of long hallway), (B: stair — description of stairs going up), (B: feet — walking up stairs), (B: chest — breathing heavily), (C: eyes — shocked, wide-open eyes), and (D: mysterious figure — someone passes by in front of the person). This storyteller signed the letter A twice with two different meanings, then letter B four times with four different meanings. The way the story was done implies that the alphabet has two As and four Bs in it, so it seems as if the alphabet went on like A, A, B, B, B, B, C, D. As we all know, the alphabet has only one A and one B. Therefore, the storyteller has failed to sustain an appropriate rhythm for his ABC story, using a single-letter sequence.
The only handshape that has the right to be signed twice is the handshape for the manual alphabet letters I and J. As seeing both letters have the same handshape, the storyteller can use the handshape twice with different meanings applied to them. One grievous error often made by storytellers is that they often skip one letter by signing the I and the J handshape together as if they were one sign instead of two.

If the storyteller decides to change the rhythm of the ABC story by changing from one letter to two letters from the beginning to end (AA, BB, CC, DD...), it is acceptable as long as the storyteller maintains the same rhythm throughout the story. As long as this principle is followed, the storyteller has the freedom to experiment with different rhythms, i.e., (AA, B, CC, D, EE, F...).

Careful transition between letters and/or numbers

This is the most commonly overlooked problem. Storytellers often do not realize that they are adding extra signs in between the actual manual alphabet and/or number sequence.

Another haunted house story will be used as an example for this: The person opens the front door of a haunted house, goes inside and immediately sees something that really scares the person. This person then tells the other person standing next to him to check out whatever has frightened the first person so badly. Now, in the ASL version, the storyteller signs, (A: hand — open the door), (B: feet — walking), (C: eyes — shocked, wide-open eyes), (B: hand — tapping next person) and (D: hand — pointing at something). The storyteller has added the one small, subtle gesture of tapping the other person’s shoulder — as if it’s not a part of the ABC sequence. This storyteller has inadvertently added an extra sign between the letters C and D.

When storytellers are on stage telling ABC stories, they must realize that the audience watches their stories very carefully, often checking to make sure that each letter appears in the story. If the storytellers add signs in between letters, the audience may either overlook or notice the inconsistency. They may choose to ignore it, but just because the audience does not often complain about it, doesn’t mean the storytellers should be allowed to add signs in between letters.

Order of presenting two lettered or numbered handshapes

Many storytellers like to get creative by using a combination of two handshapes. There’s nothing wrong with doing this, since it is a form of creative language play. There are many nifty combinations of two handshapes that can be used in ABC stories, such as the use of ‘AB’ to describe a heart beating (A: heart — beating) and (B: chest — covering the heart) or ‘KL’ as a rider on
a bike (K: person — riding on the bike) and (L: bike — moving bike).

However, storytellers need to be careful not to return to the previous letter. This is one of the most common mistakes storytellers make, because it is very easy to do without even noticing. For example: A person is riding on his bike, and then all of sudden, the rider falls off his bike. An ASL storyteller may start with the letters K and L to show a rider on a bike (K: person — riding on the bike) and (L: bike — moving bike), then (K: rider — falls off). Then L letter handshape disappears while the storyteller is still signing the K letter handshape. That becomes a failure in the succession of the manual alphabet. It goes the same with signing the next letter early, then going back to the letter that was supposed to come before. That is, starting with L (L: bike — park on the land), then K appears (K: person — walking to bike), then the combinations begin (K: person — riding on the bike) and (L: bike — moving bike). The combination of two handshapes should not be a problem long as the storyteller avoids mixing up the first and second letter in the order.

**MINIMAL DEVIATION**

How often have audiences noticed that there are certain signs that often appear in ABC, number, word, and one-handshape stories, but are never seen or signed in a normal conversation? Developing and signing stories are not easy; it is challenging to make a whole story come alive with each handshape. There are some handshapes that storytellers often struggle with because there are limited numbers of signs for those handshapes. As a result, storytellers will often come up with a deviated version of that handshape to fit into their stories so they can move on. There are two different methods of deviation, such as changing the handshape a little bit to meet the needs of the story, or using the correct handshape for a sign that we would usually sign with a different handshape. However, the question is: How much deviation is permitted? There are some storytellers who deviate too far from the original handshapes or signs. What we need to do is set a goal to keep deviation as minimal as possible.

**Deviations #1: Changing the handshape of the original manual handshape?**

We know that to follow the manual handshapes is a basic requirement for a successful story with handshape constraints, but sometimes we want to change the handshape a little bit so it can go into the signs that we want to use it for. Take the letter A, we can use the handshape of the letter A to show the act of KNOCKING, WASHING, OR PUTTING-A-SHIRT-ON. Those are the perfect signs for the letter A, because in signing those signs, you can clearly use the proper handshape of the letter A. Now, what about using the A hand-
shape with an open thumb? It can be used when signing the following words: chasing, which, girl, and game. When we spell out the letter A, do we spell it out with an open thumb? Not typically, although there are a few people who spell out the letter A with an open thumb, but the point is that the appropriate way to sign the letter A is with a closed thumb. Yet storytellers will change the A handshape slightly by opening their thumbs to make more signs accessible. Since using the A handshape with an open thumb is in fact, a minimal deviation, it is still acceptable by many people; so it is not wrong to do this.

There are storytellers who have deviated handshapes to the extent where it is not acceptable at all. Here’s a famous example — changing the T handshape to the “time-out” sign. In doing this, storytellers are attempting to substitute the image of the T as seen in written English for the manual T of ASL. The “time-out” sign does not come close to the T of the manual alphabet and we don’t spell out the manual alphabet like this: R, S, “time-out”, U, V… Storytellers should always follow the appropriate sign of each letter of the manual alphabet, within the control of acceptable minimal deviation.

Most storytellers argue that the reason why they use the “time-out” sign rather than the T handshape is because they cannot find better ways to sign the T letter handshape. What they don’t realize is that they can find better ways to sign the T handshape using minimal deviation.
Movement?
We get the concept of following the handshapes of the manual alphabet to make a story out of it, now what about the movements used to individualize each letter or number? Should we follow the movements of the letters J and Z in an ABC or word story? Should we follow the movements of the numbers ten and higher in a number story? There are some people who consider it a requirement to follow the movement of letters and numbers, while others don’t think that it’s necessary to follow the movement of letters and numbers, just the handshape.

My point of view on the movement issue is that it is not necessary to follow the letters and number's movements for stories with handshape constraints. Let's look at this from a linguistic view; it follows the four principles of phonology for the ASL signs: handshape, location, movement, and palm orientation. Since the handshape is frozen, we depend on different locations, movement, palm orientation, and as well as non-manual signs to make a story out of the manual handshapes. If we decided to be absolutists for natural ASL fngerspelling components, such as the handshape and movement for the J and Z letters, our options with signing will be much more limited for ABC and word stories. To sum it up, we are not allowed to change the handshape of each letters, but we are allowed to change the movements to enhance a story. Hence, the issue of movement does not matter to me at all, however, it is acceptable if a storyteller wants to follow the exact movements of the J and Z letters and numbers.

Bending the handshapes
It is very common for storytellers to bend the handshapes they're using in order to improve the quality and structure of their stories. There are some handshapes that can be bent, such as B, C, and D while other handshapes cannot be bent, such as A, M, and S. Again, deviation has to be as minimal as possible. For example, the B handshape: if the fingers bend slightly, about one-quarter of the way, deviation will be considered minimal, thus acceptable. If the fingers bend half of the way down, and deviation will be a little more than minimal, and may be not considered acceptable. However, if the storyteller repeatedly moves his fingers quickly, i.e., the D handshape used for COME-TO-ME, it will be acceptable. If the fingers bends more than halfway down, at least three-quarters of the way, the deviation will be considered too far out and it may be rejected by the majority of the audience.

Deviations #2: Changing the original sign to fit the handshape?
Sometimes when we want to sign something, but are stuck with a handshape that does not go with the signs we want to use. Then we try our best to
change the sign slightly to fit the handshape. Of course, there are some signs that have undergone acceptable minimal deviation and there are also signs where the deviation was overdone to the point where it is unacceptable.

Here are some examples where I have seen some storytellers use minimal deviation for the letter M — they have used it to indicate SWEATING (M: water — trickling on forehead). The number 5 handshape would have been the appropriate handshape to use instead, but most audiences have found the use of the letter M acceptable. Another example is the THINKING sign using the E handshape, (E: think — using both hands, moving all fingers on forehead). The flat-O handshape is what people usually use for the THINKING sign, but in this instance, the storyteller used the E handshape because it’s similar to the flat-O handshape, therefore reasonable to most audiences.

There are some signs being used by other storytellers that deviate too far and are unacceptable. Someone once used the A handshape to indicate an airplane (A: plane — flying). People wouldn’t be able to see how the A handshape can be used for an airplane, because to sign “airplane,” we use the ILY handshape. In using the A handshape for AIRPLANE, the storyteller went too far outside the limits of deviation.

Who decides the limits of deviations?
Storytellers may try to defend their work (i.e., the use of the A handshape for AIRPLANE) by arguing that the sign is similar to a SEE sign or that the airplane is too far from us to be able to see the shape clearly. This leads to the next question, who decides how much deviation is acceptable? There are some who believe the storytellers have the final say because they are the artists and their stories are their works of art. There are also others who believe that the audience has the right to decide how much deviation is acceptable. Personally, I believe it goes both ways. Storytellers should follow the basic principles and please the majority of the audience. If the audience wants to critique the storytellers’ work, they have to do it within reason. Both the storytellers and the audience need to agree on a common range of acceptable minimal deviation for stories with handshape constraints.

USE OF COHESIVE DEVICES

The general storytelling principles are a part of the stories with handshape constraints principles, too. It’s very important to be aware of how storytellers present their stories to the audience. Their stories will reflect the storyteller’s delivery skill; if the storyteller is successful, someone who makes good use of cohesive devices, the story will turn out to be excellent, whilst storytellers who are weak with cohesive devices will turn out second-rate stories. The
cohesive device principles are designed to help the storyteller be able to tell stories smoothly, going from manual handshape to manual handshape or use one-handshape continuously. Whenever a storyteller tells a story with handshape constraints, with a stiff hand as if they were signing each manual handshape individually, that is when the storyteller loses control over his audience. The audience will get bored and start focusing on the storyteller’s mistakes, thus notice them more. The cohesive device principles often holds a lot of power because if the storyteller fails to follow this rule, the audience can get distracted easily and lose interest, even if the story itself is a good one. Cohesive devices involve the use of the following:

- Use of space and role shifts
- Use of paralinguistic cues: eye gazes, facial expression, and body movement
- Deployment of 3 Ps: pacing, pausing, and phrasing

Use of Space and Role Shifts
The use of space and role shifts helps the audience follow the story clearly and easily. The use of space helps the storyteller set up a map of the story, such as the location of a tree, house, and lake in the story’s setting. Also, the storyteller can set up two things or characters in the story, with one on the left side, and the other on the right side, and from there on, the storyteller can point to the right side and audience will know what or who the storyteller is talking about. To be able to tell a story about two or more people, you have to tell it using clear shifting between two or more roles. Proper role shifting requires you to act as if you are one character, then immediately change to an entirely different person by turning your body around a little bit with a change in where your eyes are fixed, so that the audience can understand the difference between the two characters and can see what is going on between both characters.

Use of Paralinguistic Cues: Eye Gazes and Facial Expression
The direction of eye gaze plays a role in the use of space and role shifting, too. Eye gaze acts as a support for the setting and the people in the story. Where the storyteller’s eyes gaze is the key to the audience in many ways. It helps the audience’s awareness of what the person in the story is looking at. The storyteller can reveal more information from the story by just using eye contact. Eye contact plays a very important role in showing the mood of the character in the story such as showing fear or curiosity through the different eye expressions. Of course, the storyteller needs to keep the audience involved with the story by making regular eye contact with them during the telling of the story.
Everybody agrees that facial expression is very important for storytelling. However, what some storytellers do not realize is that facial expressions gives them an extra advantage in telling stories with handshape constraints. Since the storyteller’s handshapes are limited, they have to use their facial expressions to relay extra information. Going back to the haunted house story as an example of the mistake commonly made by storytellers with the use of their facial expression, (A: hand — open door), (B: feet — walking), (C: eyes — shocked, wide eyes), (B: hand — tapping other person on shoulder) and (D: hand — pointing at something). The mistake is adding another B handshape in between the C and D handshape. How can the storyteller avoid this mistake and let the audience know that the main character in the story is getting the other person’s attention? That’s when facial expressions comes in and saves the story. After the C handshape, the storyteller can “freeze” the manual alphabet sequence, turn his or her head to the side, make a “Hey, look at that!” facial expression, and then turn back to where the character is pointing at, using the D handshape.

Use of Paralinguistic Cues: Body Movement
There are some storytellers who tell stories using their entire body by moving their legs, bending up and down, using bigger signs, and wiggling their body around, but when it comes to telling stories with handshape constraints (especially ABC stories), they lose the use of their body movement? The use of paralinguistic cues, such as body movements, is the key to giving out extra information in the story, which is what your hands are not allowed to do due to limited handshapes. We are aware of the importance of facial expressions, but we often forget to make good use of the rest of our bodies, such as our legs, while telling stories. To get the audience’s full attention, it is always best for the storyteller to put himself in the story, which can be achieved by using his whole body to its fullest potential.

Deployment of 3 Ps: Pacing, Pausing, and Phrasing
Each storyteller must put the following to good use: pacing, pausing, and phrasing, or the stories would be dull. Good stories are told using a range of speed, going from fast to slow, depending on what is happening in the story at certain moments. So storytellers should tell stories using the pacing, pausing, and phrasing methods successfully. This is the area where the most problems appear for many ABC stories, number stories, and word stories because storytellers often tell their stories using the same pace from the beginning to the end. This is where the famous example of the haunted house story comes in again. The storyteller would sign, (A: hand — knocking), (B: door — opening the door), (C: search — searching), (D: hear — hear something), and (E:
scream — screaming in “E” note). A true storyteller would tell the story from A to C in a slow pace, then jump from D to E using a faster pace. Using this method would get the audience interested in the story, but many storytellers tell their stories with the same pace from A to Z, they will use the same pace from A to E, which isn’t acceptable.

All in all, storytellers telling one-handshape stories usually have no problem with cohesive devices but most of them will have problems with ABC stories, number stories, and word stories. This may be because the storytellers are very focused on each letter or number during the telling of these stories, as if trying to remember the order of the letters or numbers. When storytellers are this focused on remembering the order of the letters or numbers, cohesive devices are easily forgotten.

**INTEGRITY OF THE STORYLINE**

It is very important to see how storytellers present the story and to see how the plot of the story is presented to the audience. A very good story plot paired up with a skilled storyteller makes a masterpiece. Since creating new stories with handshape constraints is challenging, it’s even more challenging to create a good plot. It requires quite some time to mull over the new story and work out the kinks.

Logically, stories with handshape constraints have to make sense. A story that doesn’t make any sense to the audience can’t be a good story. How can the audience enjoy stories with handshape constraints if they don’t understand the story at all? Unfortunately, this happens, especially with stories with handshape constraints. Storytellers need to study their stories closely to see if it would make any sense to the audience. A basic guideline to follow when going through a storyline would be: Would the audience follow the story easily? Would the audience understand the story without any problems? Would the audiences enjoy the story?

We have to make sure the story with handshape constraints is clear and that the plot is good and easy to follow. To create a story that makes sense involves these three elements:

- Clear introduction and conclusion
- Flow in the stories
- Phrasings that are not forced

**Clear of introduction and conclusion**

Generally, stories must have good introductions and conclusions, but storytellers seem to struggle with this when it comes to stories with handshape constraints. Most storytellers don’t have any problems with the introduc-
tion; they are able to start off well, but many storytellers have a lot of trouble with their conclusions. There are many stories that have been cut short without a proper conclusion. For example, there have been ABC stories that were brilliant until the final letter, Z, when all of sudden, the character simply zooms away in the middle of the story’s plot. Granted, there are some stories that end well with the “zooming away” technique. It may be a good way to get away from having to come up with a conclusion, but it doesn’t apply to every story. All stories need to be wrapped up with a good conclusion, for a good story is nothing without a good conclusion.

**Flow in the stories**

The ABC, number, and word stories should have a smooth flow of each letters or numbers in the plot. Since storytellers often have a hard time coming up with ideas of possible signs without breaking the succession principle and the minimal deviation principles, they often can’t help but come up with some deviated information in the storyline to get rid of some difficult letters or numbers. Here’s a classic example, the use of the T handshape to sign RESTROOM. There are many good ABC stories, but when it comes to the T letter, the story tends to deviate to RESTROOM all of the sudden, then back to the story.

Another example; some storytellers have a hard time with the I and J letter, so they will use the old “I JEALOUS KING” trick with the help of the K letter, which often sticks out of the story plot like an eyesore. Again, storytellers have to make sure each letter or number fits into the plot to ensure the smooth flow of the story. Another one of the most common mistake is using the I letter to show a person walking in high heels. There are some stories that are being told in the masculine form and the storyteller will often end up showing men running, using the I handshape, as if the man is running in high heels. Those men in the stories wouldn’t be wearing high heels at all unless the story involves a male character wearing high heels.

**Phrasings that are not forced**

When storytellers come up with a new ABC, number, or word story, they usually develop the plot letter-by-letter or number-by-number, which is fine, but when they are telling the story, they seem to be emphasizing the order of the letters or numbers over the story itself. Sometimes the process of telling an ABC story shows the storyteller focusing more on getting the letters right rather than on the storyline, which is a mistake. Because of this, the quality of the story is weakened.

The reason that many storytellers emphasize the letters or numbers more than the story itself is because they are trying to remember the right
order for each letter or number. Storytellers need to practice, familiarize themselves with the story, and know the story by heart. From there, they can tell the story in a way that focuses on the story itself rather than the letters or numbers, which will make the story a successful one.

TOOLS OF STORIES WITH HANDSHAPE CONSTRAINTS CRITICISM

In conclusion, stories with handshape constraints that are evaluated as a successful story, adheres to the following principles: succession principle, minimal deviations, use of cohesive devices, and integrity of the storyline.

Those basic principles are impossible!
I remember when I first learned the basic principles of stories with handshape constraints from Dr. Bahan in one of his classes; I was overwhelmed. My first response to the basic principles was that it is impossible to make stories with handshape constraints without violating them. In fact, I used to believe that I would not be able to come up with any good ABC stories at all. I am confident that those thoughts apply to most others too. That's how most people respond to the basic principles and it's a perfectly normal reaction.

In reality, we can break some of the basic principles. Making up stories with handshape constraints should be a fun activity for us. We can just ignore the basic principles and make up many good stories. It's all about having fun and the challenge that comes with making up stories with handshape constraints. After people play with creating stories with handshape constraints, they can start picking up some new ideas and techniques without violating the basic principles. It's all about creativity and practice.

When it come to the stage, contests, filming, or any other professional events, storytellers should seriously consider strictly following the basic principles of stories with handshape constraints. Professional storytellers should be able to tell stories with handshape constraints without violating the basic principles. Also, their stories should be models for all those that follow. If the storytellers violate some of the basic principles, others will take that as an example and follow those storytellers, who are supposed to set standards for others. If they are able to follow the basic principles and present good stories with handshape constraints, it will encourage others to practice their stories with handshape constraints correctly.

Creating new standards for critique
These tools of criticism were designed with several reasons in mind, one being to encourage storytellers to create a standard that will in turn bring up the status of stories with handshape constraints in ASL literature. They
were also designed with stability and precision in mind, because with these basic principles, all storytellers alike will be able to produce quality work that can be compared to and evaluated fairly. It also provides proper guidelines for the audience, giving them the opportunity to do sophisticated evaluations instead of second-guessing contestants and storytellers' quality of stories like they have been doing in the past. Also, we would be able to be more effective in teaching others about/how to do stories with handshape constraints. With these basic principles, we will be able to pass our knowledge on to the next generation of storytellers and influence ASL literature as we know it, as well as improve the quality of stories with handshape constraints.

ENDNOTES

6. Principles for the handshapes in order don't have to apply to just three types of stories. Theoretically, these principles may apply to a composite of ASL Handshapes stories, such as the “ASL Handshape Chart” by Frank Allen Paul at DawnSignPress or others. The same goes for principles for one-handshape stories too, it can also apply to two-handshapes stories, such as Nathie Marbury's "Love Lesson."
8. This article provides several examples of specific letters in ABC stories. In order to help the reader understand how to sign the examples visually, this article uses a system in written English. It goes like this: (Letter: What the hand will represent — What the hand is doing.) Here is an example of the classic ABC story and a visual example of how it will be signed:
   - The person opens the front door and enters the haunted house. Then this person saw something that really scared this person.
   - (A: hand — open door), (B: feet — walking), (C: eyes — shocked, wide eyes).
10. DST 314: Oral Traditions in the Deaf Community at Gallaudet University, Fall 2002.