

Lámh Toolbox and Lámh Activities

Open your Lámh Toolbox to see what's inside:

As parents and teachers, you already know so much about Lámh and how it can be fun. The Lámh signs you know and your children love can be incorporated into everyday activities and routines at home. If you need inspiration for signs, look at what you have already.

Here are some tips to get you started:

1. You have probably attended a course; can you remember where your Lámh Sign Book is?
2. Have you signed up for Lámh Signs Online?
3. Pick a family sign of the day and off you go!
4. I'll start: How many times can you use the sign for 'dance' today?
5. **Your children's favourite books are a good place to start adding in some Lámh signs.** Gaeilge or English the signs are the same. Look over the book yourself first and decide on the sign/ signs that you are going to use while reading the book. Books which repeat a word or phrase are great places to start as you can use a sign over and over. Helpful hint: if you can rope in a brother or sister to hold the book and turn the pages, your hands will be free to sign. Find a comfy reading spot and go for it!

If you need a helping hand, call on a few familiar faces. Do you have a copy of the Lámh DVD(s) at home or have you checked out Lámh-a-Song on Vimeo?

Get out the building blocks.

It doesn't matter what brand, or size, of blocks or interconnecting bricks that you use; there are lots of ways that you can practice and use Lámh when you're building. You can count the blocks or sort them by colour. You can build blocks up and knock them down. If you have play figures with your blocks – or any small play figure- they can go on/under /beside /behind the

blocks. If you have built a fantastic creation you can put your figures inside also!

Helpful hint: your children's blocks may have come with a building manual (you can also access these online via your brand's website). As with the story books you can have a look at these before building, to plan what signs you need. With older children you can add 2 signs to your plans/ instructions.

No hugs? Send love with Lámh!

We are all missing our loved ones as we do our bit and it's good to share how we feel. We can send a hug, a hello or an I love you with signs via a video call app, over the hedge to the neighbours (6 feet away) or even to our family member at home. The feelings song or hello song from our dvds might be good to learn or revisit. Remember that our 'hello' sign is also 'how are you'. Interview your family, your favourite teddy and see how they are- if you have a prop 'microphone' for this, even better.

Lámh Activities

Lámh Activity: Bedtime Fun

Tried and tested- a family favourite!

Step 1: This is like Lámh charades- in the bed.

Get all your family dressed and ready for bed. Everyone piles onto the head of one bed. You nominate who will be first. (Best to let an adult be the first person so the children know what to do, until established). The adult goes to the end of the bed.

Step 2: The adult says; “**Look at me**” and they make one sign without saying the corresponding word. See who will be the first person to guess it? Whoever guesses it correctly moves to the end of the bed and the parent goes to the head of the bed with the rest of the family.

Step 3: Keep taking turns. Whoever goes to the end of the bed makes the sign. Use any random sign your family knows to encourage them to shout out when they see it signed.

You may have to rig it- tell the others to wait if you really want one child in particular to guess or to take a turn making a sign.

Step 4: No one is allowed to make a sign that was used before! Tell them;

“**Not again**” or “**make a different sign**”, “**You** have to **think** of a **new sign**”.

****Have fun when you’re using Lámh together. This game is great for encouraging turn-taking, visual attention and signing - in your PJs.***

****Remember: It’s always time to sign!***

Lámh Activity : CHOICE BOARDS

****When children can make choices, they are communicating their interests and needs. It's empowering to make your own choice.***

Step 1: Pick 3-6 activities you like to do with your child indoors. Collect pictures or objects to represent each choice. Stick them on a board or sheet.

For example: bake, read a book, listen to music, dance, paint a picture, playdough.

(Maybe later make an outdoors activity board also.)

****These will give you endless language and sign opportunities.***

Step 2: Check that you know the sign for each activity. Let your child choose what they want to do that day by signing it to you and/or selecting the picture.

Start with a choice of 3 activities. Repeat and reinforce any new signs before you expect your child to copy them or spontaneously use them.

Step 3: Once the activity is chosen by the child, try to use other signs to build their signing vocabulary around their favourite activity. Often the action words/verbs are the vital signs for combining signs. See below how often you can include “**get**” in your conversation-

For example: If you are going to bake, you might revise the signs for “**What** will we **get** to **make** a **cake**?” “**get** a **big bowl**”, “**get** a **big spoon**”, “**Get** **butter** and **sugar**”, “**Pour** it **in** the **bowl**”, “**What’s next**?”, “**Careful**, it’s **hot**” etc.

Step 4: When you are still learning signs try to note any sign you wish you knew or is important to your conversations. It's often worth looking it up on the spot in your Lámh book or online. This really helps you to retain the sign and use it spontaneously.

*** Choice boards objects and pictures can also be used to make a visual schedule of what the plan might be for that morning or day.**

****Remember: It's always time to sign!***



Lámh Activity : **Hide and Find**



An all- weather game - involve all the family, set up teams. But most of all have fun with Lámh

Step 1: Pick your child's favourite object – their teddy, car, a treat – whatever will motivate them.

Step 2: Think about the “**preposition**” = place word that you want to focus on.

In, on, under develop first.

In front and behind are learned next and make a good contrasting pair.

Later you can introduce beside, then between.

Step 3: Think about your goal. Do you want to help your child *understand* these place words or to *use* them in their expression- sign+ /or speech.

Helping their understanding: Tell your child where to look- do they follow your instruction? If they don't understand a place word use it repeatedly. Let them get in the position, e.g. climb in the box. Then they put things in the box. Keep your place word constant till they know it and encourage their imitation of your sign.

Helping their use of place words- they tell you or other family members where to look (using sign+ /or words). Can they express where something was hidden?

Step 4: you can build on this over time to include different place words. Keep the turns going as long as you have their interest. Use different rooms and objects. Go outside and hide things.

Step 5: help your child to carry place words into everyday life- where are my keys? – in my bag. Where is the control box?- on the chair. Etc be silly and loose things – create the opportunity for them to tell you where something is.

Remember- communication has most meaning when the question is meaningful and functional. So rather than ask redundant questions e.g. “where does the milk go?”, ask real questions for genuine information e.g. “Where did you put my phone?”



No Prep needed

Lámh Activity : **Simon Says**

Step 1: Get your family together in a big circle-inside or outside. Take turns signing and shouting out which action you all have to do. Everyone does the actions together. Lámh has signs for all these actions: climb, dance, dig, draw, drink, drive, fall, fight, go, grow, hug, jump, kick, knock, lie down, make, play, pour, pull, push, roll, run, sing, sleep, stop, sweep, swim, throw, stand up, wait, walk, wash.....and more!

Step 2: Step it up a notch and add a number to your action, why not combine your signs!

Example: “ 2 jumps ” sign and say the number and the action word. Then as you do the action shout out “ jump 1, jump 2”.Again, go around the circle so that everyone has a turn to give the instruction and the sign.

Step 3: Get Silly! Add details like throw in some fun actions. This is a great way to include more signs.

For example; walk like an elephant”, “ jump like a frog”, “swing like a monkey”, “ fly like a plane” “ roll like a sausage”.

Remember you can access Lámh Signs Online to check any of the signs needed for these activities.

****Remember: It's always time to sign!***

Lámh Activity: **Opposites**

Step 1: Think about what opposites you want to sign. Check any signs in your Lámh book or Lámh online video library that you are not sure of before you start.

This is a good beginners list:

- Big/Small
- Open/**Closed**
- Clean/Dirty
- Wet/Dry
- Hot/Cold

These are great signs to know and use because they are part of everyday! They are also 10 key signs for language development.

Step 2: How can you play?

1. Get a box together of household objects that can help demonstrate each opposite- e.g. Big/small- Daddy's shoe/ child's own shoe, or a doll's shoe, wooden spoon/ small spoon etc. Try to collect a few examples of each opposite pair.
2. Use an opposites jigsaw.
3. Print pictures of opposites – can they help you to think of something that's "hot". They can google pictures with you and pick their favourite. Again, try to get a few examples of each opposite pair to help their understanding of the concepts.
4. Go around the house and take photos of objects that represent each opposite e.g. open /closed door, window, fridge, box, coat etc. Maybe they can take the photos on your phone/ tablet and be active in opening

and closing things. Print and make and let your child stick them in to make a book.

The more you can involve your child in preparing and playing the above games, the more opportunities you have to teach /show the Lámh sign and create turns for them to sign in a meaningful way.

Step 3: As you pull out an object or turn over a picture you sign your target words e.g. “I got a dirty bowl”. “I want a clean bowl. Can you help me to find a clean bowl?” Once you are confident your child knows the target try to combine 2-3 signs e.g. “ the window is open. Can you get the window is closed?”

Step 4: Try to use these signs in as many real-life situations as you can. Children use more signs when they are with people who sign.

****Remember: It's always time to sign!***