

"Let's All Talk!" – Exploring Inclusive Communication

Objective:

To help students understand and appreciate the different ways people with disabilities communicate, such as sign language, braille, communication boards, and assistive technology.

Time Required:

30–45 minutes

Materials Needed: (Pictures for printing are available at end of document)

- Basic American Sign Language (ASL) alphabet chart (can be located online)
- Braille alphabet cards (with raised dots or printable tactile versions available online)
- Sample communication boards (simple ones with pictures)
- Tablet or video demo showing a speech-generating device (AAC or augmentative and alternative device)
- “Let’s All Talk!” worksheet (with space for reflection and drawing)

Activity Steps:

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

Discussion Prompt:

“Did you know not everyone talks or communicates the same way? Some people use their hands, pictures, or even special devices to talk!”

- Briefly introduce the idea that people with disabilities may use different tools or methods to communicate.
- Explain the goal: to explore these tools and try them ourselves!

2. Communication Stations (25 minutes total, ~approx. 5-6 minutes per station)

Divide students into small groups and rotate through the following **four hands-on stations**:

1. **Sign Language Station**

- Learn how to spell your name in ASL using the alphabet chart.
- Practice 3 common signs (e.g., “hello,” “thank you,” “friend”).

2. **Braille Station**

- Feel the Braille alphabet (if physical braille cards were attainable) and match letters to their print version. Alternatively, visually compare printed braille to what their written names would be.
- Use a Braille card to write your initials (with dot stickers or pre-made cards).

3. **Picture Communication Board Station**

- Use simple boards to ask for things like food, play, or help.
- Play a guessing game: “What am I saying?” using only the board.

4. **Assistive Tech Station**

- Watch a short video of someone using a speech-generating device.
- Try using a tablet app or simulation (if available) to choose words to make a sentence.

3. **Reflection and Sharing (10minutes)**

• **Group Discussion Questions:**

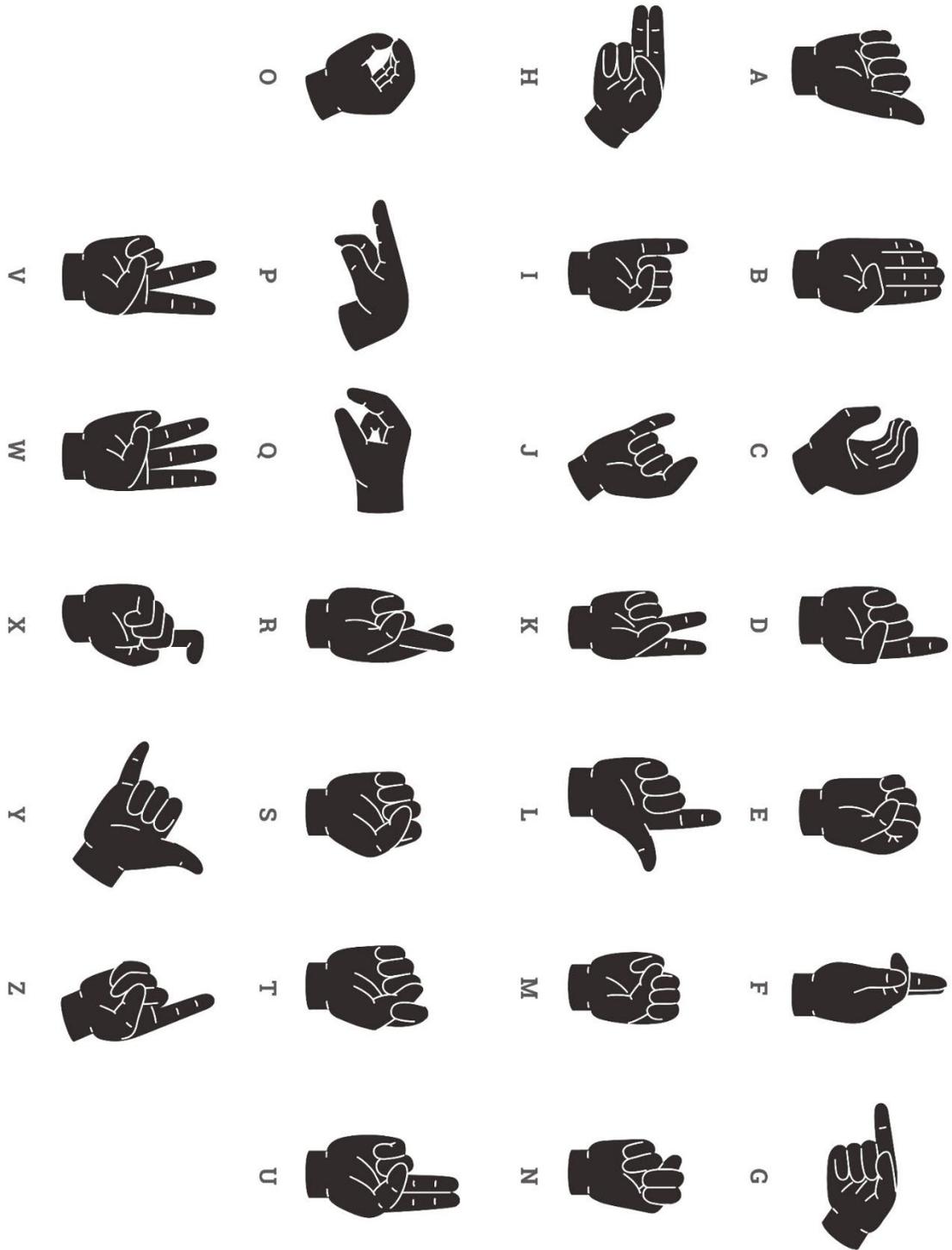
- “What was your favorite station?”
- “Was anything hard or surprising?”
- “How do you think someone feels when they finally get to share what they’re thinking?”

• **Worksheet Activity:**

- Draw or write about your favorite new way to communicate.
- One thing you learned and one thing you want to learn more about.

Extension Ideas:

- Invite a guest who uses one of these communication methods to speak with the class.
- Create a classroom “communication corner” with tools like mini boards or ASL charts.
- Learn a new ASL sign each week as a class!



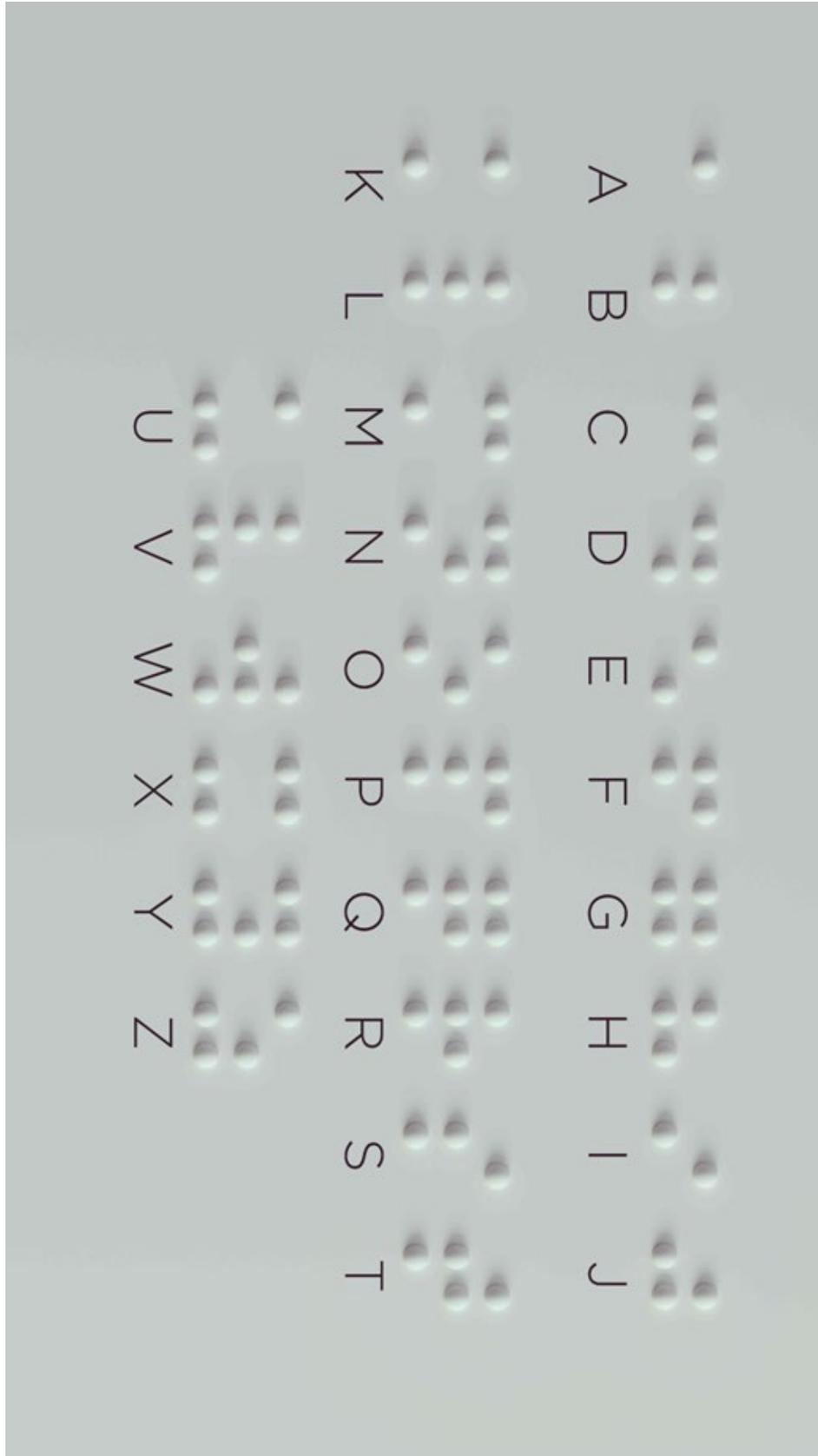




Photo source: Peter Quinn, K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute, Ithaca, NY