

NICARAGUAN SIGN LANGUAGE PROJECTS, INC.

IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable corporation established in 1995 and incorporated in the State of New Jersey, USA

Sign Language Research Project commenced in 1986, directed by Judy Shepard-Kegl.

Mission Statement: NSLP administers projects designed to empower Nicaragua's emergent Deaf communities by –

- n **fostering nationalization of the indigenous signed language;**
- n **training natively fluent Deaf Nicaraguans to be school teachers and role models;**
- n **providing academic and vocational training to Deaf youth.**

CURRENT PROJECTS BASED IN BLUEFIELDS:



OUTREACH PROGRAM:

Deaf *brigadistas* are sent into upriver communities to live with families with a Deaf child. Young Deaf children are exposed to ISN at a language-ready age, and hearing family members are introduced to signing, as well.

Photo: Claudia Avila with 4 year old Jesenia in Pearl Lagoon



FOSTER CARE PROGRAM:

NSLP provides year round foster care for several orphaned or abandoned Deaf children in coordination with the Bluefields chapter of Los Pipitos. NSLP pays for meals, clothing, shelter costs and health care for these children.

MEALS PROGRAM:

NSLP provides a daily meal to needy Deaf children to enable them to thrive at school.

SEXUAL ABUSE AWARENESS PROGRAM:

Deaf children and young adults are especially vulnerable to all the social ills that are common in Bluefields and elsewhere: sexual abuse, domestic violence, alcoholism, drugs and prostitution. NSLP is tackling these issues head-on –

- n **Coordination with local health care providers to furnish gynecological services to Deaf women;**
- n **Providing sex education in the Bluefields Deaf School: reproduction, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS awareness;**
- n **Three week intensive sexual abuse awareness training for four Deaf Nicaraguan teachers furnished by NSLP in collaboration with the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services (January, 2005 in Portland, Maine, USA)**

TRAINING DEAF NICARAGUANS TO BE SCHOOL TEACHERS:



NSLP is empowering young Deaf people to become leaders and role models for the next generation of Nicaraguan children. NSLP brings Deaf youth from different regions to Bluefields and to the U.S. for intensive training as school teachers. These trainees also assist in textbook development and curriculum design.

Training effective teachers requires years of dedicated effort.

Photo: Tomasa Gonzalez of Palacagüina and Daphny Rodriguez of Bilwi in Spanish literacy class at Bluefields



BLUEFIELDS DEAF SCHOOL: “ESCUELITA DE BLUEFIELDS” --

- n **established in 1995**
- n **originally operated by NSLP in collaboration with Los Pipitos-Bluefields and ANSNIC**
- n **today operated by NSLP and Los Pipitos-Bluefields and the Bluefields office of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MECD)**
- n **30+ students, 3 full time Deaf teachers, 2 full time MECD hearing teachers, and 1 NSLP volunteer**
- n **primary & secondary level education**
- n **Co-directors: Zoila Garcia Cantero (Los Pipitos-Bluefields) and James Shepard-Kegl (NSLP)**





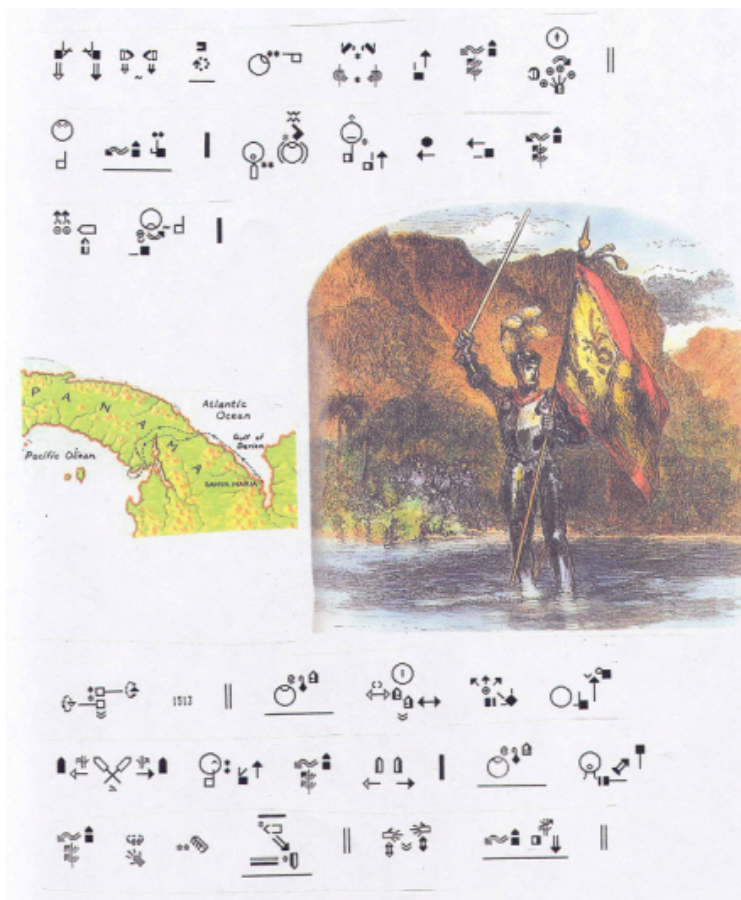
SIGN LANGUAGE LITERACY PROJECT:

Deaf children in Bluefields learn to read and write Nicaraguan Sign Language using SignWriting®, the writing system for signed languages invented by Valerie Sutton.

The Bluefields School has one of the most developed sign language literacy programs in the world!

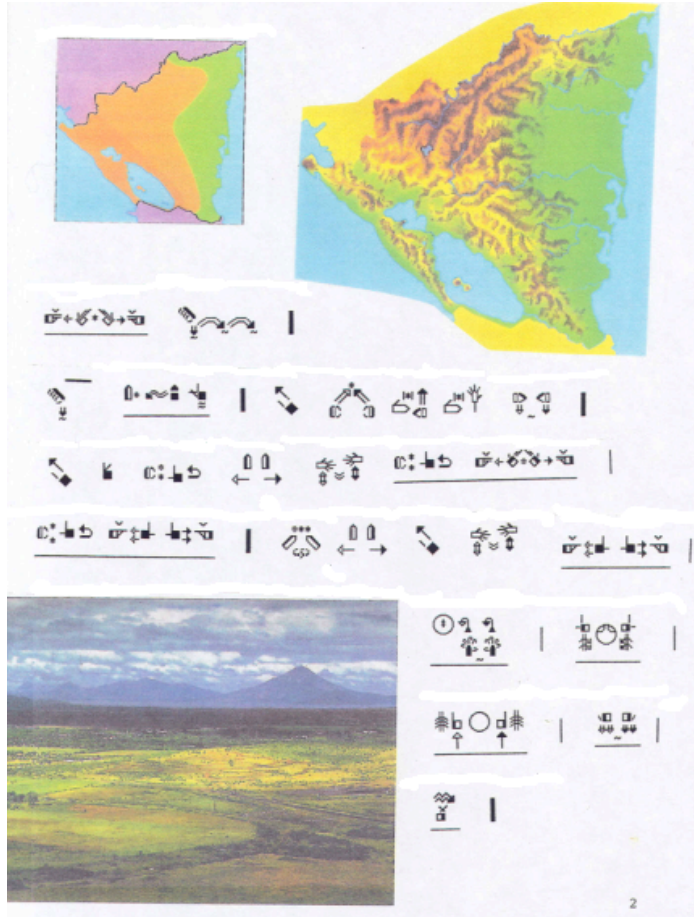
Through sign language literacy we are able to teach –

- n HISTORY
- n GEOGRAPHY
- n LITERATURE and STORIES
- n APPLIED MATHEMATICS
- n ISN METALINGUISTIC SKILLS
- n SPANISH



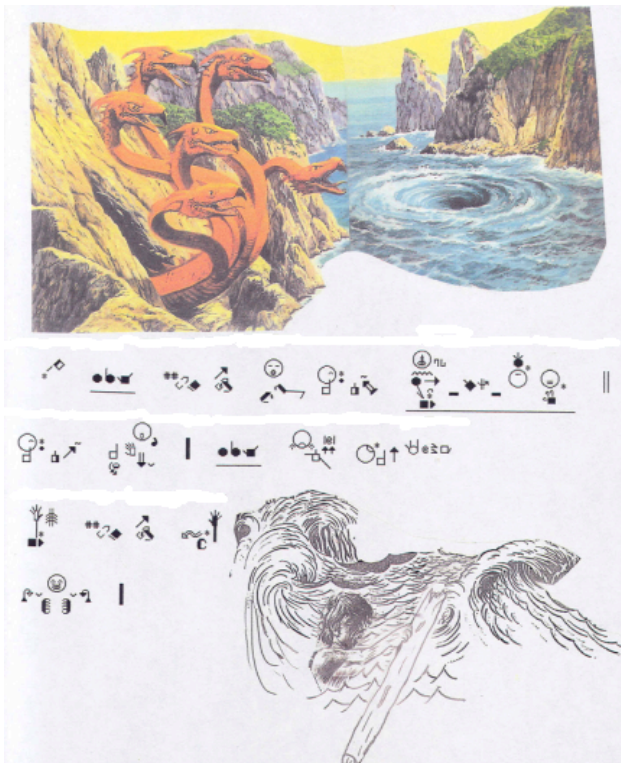
Excerpt from history lesson: Spanish Conquest of Central America

Translation: *“The Europeans thought the world had only one ocean – the Atlantic. The Indians reported that there was a different ocean to the west. In 1513, Balboa, intrigued, explored far and saw the great ocean. Balboa proclaimed the sea to be the possession of Spain, and named it the Southern Sea. Today, we call this the Pacific Ocean.”*



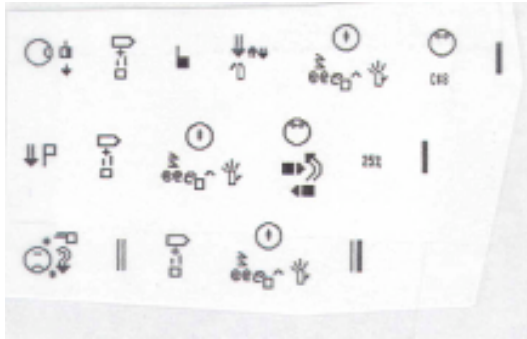
Excerpt from geography lesson: Nicaraguan Geography

Translation: “Nicaragua is divided into three parts. The first is the Pacific Coast. Here there are many volcanoes. There are two large lakes called Lake Nicaragua and Lake Managua. The largest cities are Managua, León, Masaya, Chinendega, Granada, Rivas.”



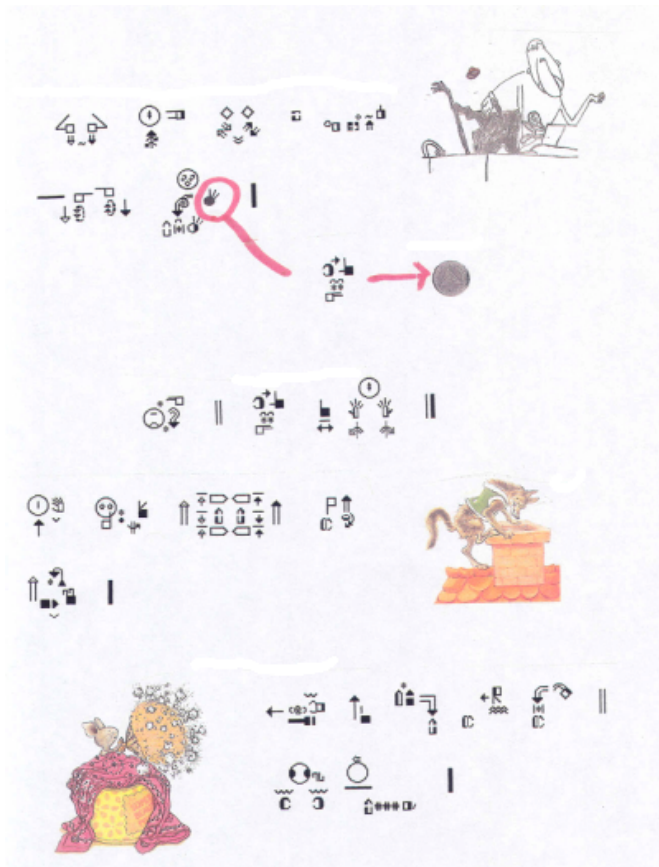
Excerpt from literature lesson: Homer's Odyssey

Translation: “Odysseus, clinging to the wood, sees the six headed Hydra on his left and the whirlpool on his right. Odysseus ponders and comes up with an idea. He reaches up for a tree branch.”

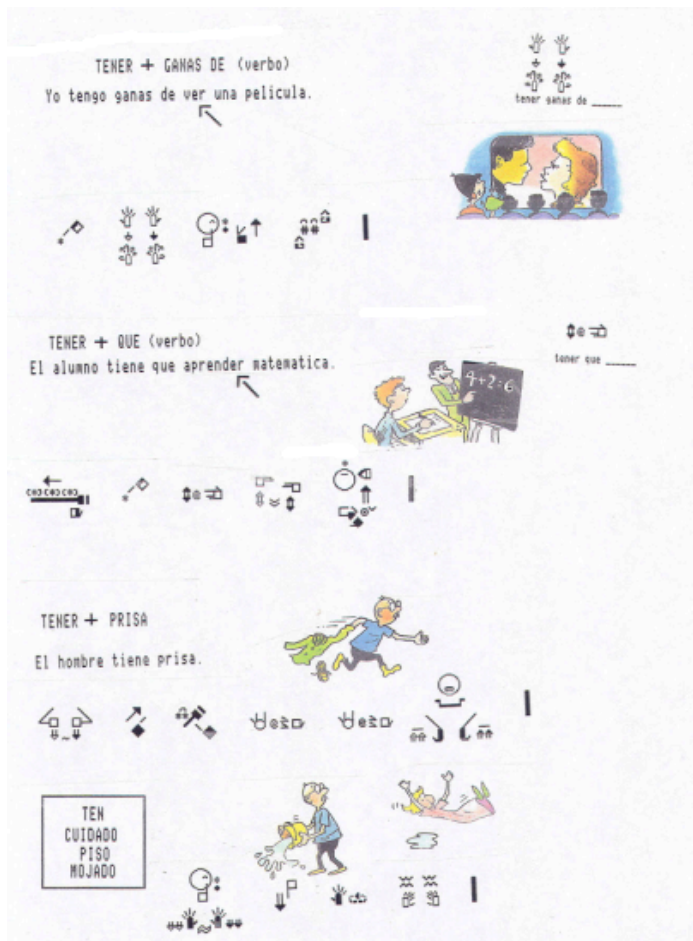


Excerpt from Math Lessons: Percentages

Translation: “Yesterday meat cost C\$8 per pound. Today, meat costs 25% more. What is the cost of meat?”



Excerpt from Grammar Text: ISN Classifiers



Excerpt from Spanish Grammar Text Level One: section on the verb “tener” and its different meanings in context.

To date, NSLP has produced –

- n SPANISH GRAMMAR LEVEL ONE
- n SPANISH GRAMMAR LEVEL TWO
- n TEST BOOKLET LEVEL ONE
- n TEST BOOKLET LEVEL TWO
- n WORKBOOK ONE
- n WORKBOOK TWO
- n CROSSWORD PUZZLES
- n GLOSSARY BASIC LEVEL (600 words + conjugations)
- n GLOSSARY ISN (2,000 entries)
- n NUMEROUS SPANISH READING ASSIGNMENTS
- n THREE VOLUMES OF ISN READING ASSIGNMENT

valiente



Excerpt from Spanish reading lesson: Don Quijote

Each reading lesson appears with a list of new Spanish vocabulary words shown with ISN definitions. These vocabulary words appear in italics in the reading text.



El hombre tiene un amigo. El amigo se llama Sancho.

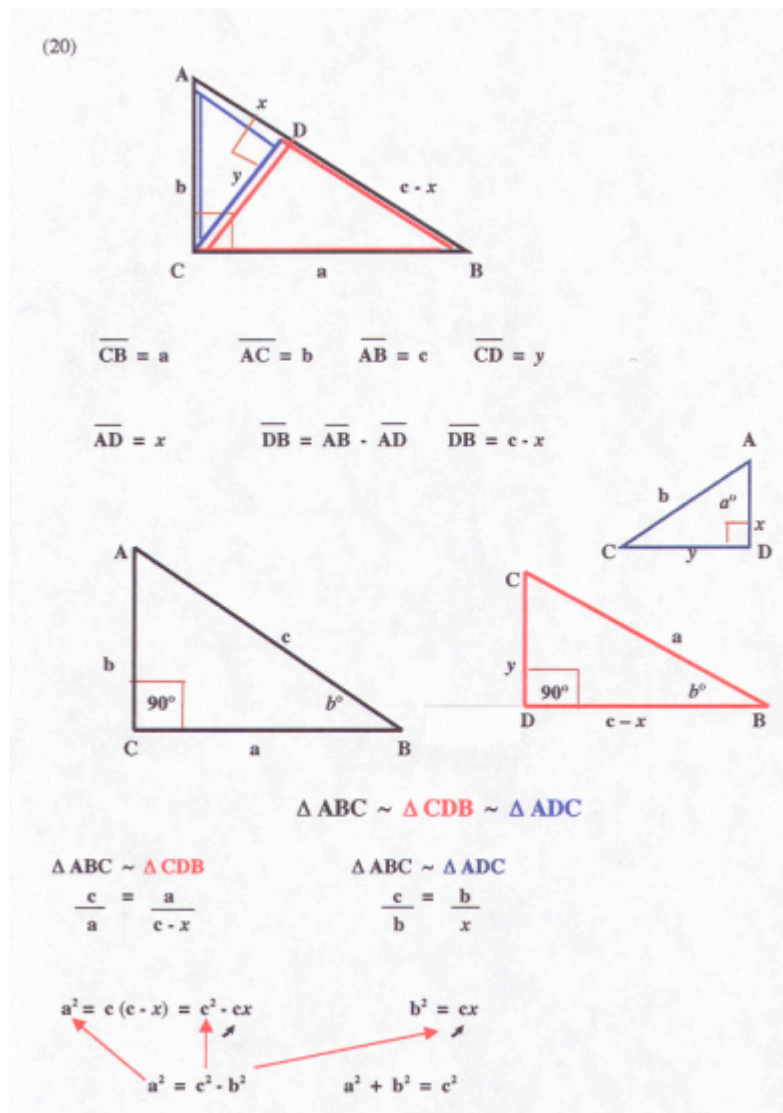
Sancho es gordo. Él es pobre. Él es poco estúpido. Él tiene un burro.

Don Quijote ve a Sancho que está trabajando en un campo. Don Quijote dice, "Yo soy un *caballero valiente*. Ven conmigo. Ayúdame, por favor."

SECONDARY SCHOOL PROJECT:

The Bluefields School teaches the following math subjects –

- n fractions
- n decimals
- n percentages
- n weights and balances
- n measurements
- n negative numbers
- n basic algebra
- n plane geometry and geometric proofs



Excerpt from Geometry Text:
proof of Pythagorean Theorem

DVD LIBRARY PROJECT:

NSLP has furnished over one hundred videotapes and DVD's for educational use at the Escuelita. These films include contemporary movies, film classics and silent movies. We have found that videotapes do not survive Bluefield's high humidity; consequently, we are replacing our library with DVD's whenever possible.

A sampling of films at the school –

- n Schlinder's List
- n Saving Private Ryan
- n The Promise (German film about the Berlin Wall)
- n 13 Days (Cuban missile crisis)
- n Kandahar (about life under the Taliban in Afghanistan)
- n Luther
- n Killing Fields (genocide in Cambodia)
- n Casablanca
- n Dr. Zhivago
- n Anne of 1000 Days & Elizabeth (English reformation)
- n Immortal Beloved (Beethoven)
- n Moby Dick
- n Gone with the Wind
- n Frieda
- n Carla's Song (Nicaraguan Contra War)
- n Fidel
- n Titanic
- n Lawrence of Arabia
- n Cleopatra
- n Orphans of the Storm (silent film about the French Revolution)
- n Pandemic – Facing AIDS
- n Walking with Dinosaurs
- n Walking with Cavemen
- n The Real Eve

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Zoila Garcia Cantero, Bluefields Chapter of Los Pipitos, at Bo. Teodoro Martinez,
Bluefields (green house across from Restaurante Sal Mar)