

ABOUT THESE LESSONS

SignWriting® was invented by Valerie Sutton, director of The Center for Sutton Movement Writing Inc., a non-profit educational organization founded in 1974 in California (USA). In 1988 this organization established The Deaf Action Committee for SignWriting and developed the SignWriter® software, designed by Richard Gleaves, and has published a variety of teaching materials including books and a video series. In Spain SignWriting is referred to as SignoEscritura® and the software is referred to as SignoEscritor®.

The lessons in this book are an amplification of the *Primeras Lecciones de SignoEscritura*, published (©1999) by the University of Alicante (Spain) by Irma María Muñoz Baell (University of Alicante) and Steve and Dianne Parkhurst (PROEL and SIL International). The Parkhursts saw the need to complete the lessons (expanding the book from four lessons to 13), and in doing so they claim responsibility for any errors in this material.

This English version is a translation of the materials produced in Spanish with sample signs and texts from Spanish Sign Language (LSE)--and more particularly from the Madrid dialect. The purpose of the English version is to illustrate the teaching methodology. It is not meant to be used as a guide to learning LSE, nor is it expected that signers who do not know LSE will understand the signed texts. The examples used here are not intended to imply that they are the "correct signs." We recognize that there is great variation in how signers of LSE sign, and we encourage Deaf writers to express themselves freely in their own language without artificial rules as to which signs may or may not be used.

Various people have helped in the development of this material. As mentioned above, Irma Muñoz translated (from English into Spanish) the majority of the *Primeras Lecciones*, which form the basis of the first half of this book. José Mari Reseco Parejo, Nolasco Marante and Roberto Benito (all Deaf) wrote most of the stories in this book and helped choose the LSE examples. Others that helped in the development of these materials include Valerie Sutton, inventor of SignWriting; Carlos Vázquez López, José Luis Fernández and María Jesús Carmona Alcalá of the Federación de Sordos de la Comunidad de Madrid; Gemma Piriz; Eva de Andrés Sanz; Chana Franchy, literacy specialist with SIL; and the nearly 300 people who gave input after taking the course at the Centro Prádez of the Confederación Nacional de Sordos de España (CNSE), the Federación de Sordos de Madrid, the Asociación de Sordos de Alcalá de Henares, among others, during the first three years that it has been taught in Spain (1998 - 2001). Many thanks to you all.

**Information on
SignWriting in Spain:**
Steve and Dianne Parkhurst
E-mail: steve-dianne_parkhurst@sil.org

**Information on
SignWriting worldwide:**
Deaf Action Committee for SignWriting
P.O. Box 517, La Jolla, CA 92038-0517 USA
Tel: 858-456-0098 Fax: 858-456-0020
E-mail: DAC@SignWriting.org
Web: <http://www.SignWriting.org>

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