

Natasha Escalada-Westland became interested in sign language after graduating from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Ironically, her interest was piqued at a music festival that employed stage interpreters for the Deaf attending the performance. After meeting and befriending several Deaf individuals, she went on to learn American Sign Language in order to better communicate. Natasha subsequently obtained a masters degree in Deaf Education at Lewis and Clark College, Portland Oregon. Her first teaching position was in Kayenta AZ deep in the middle of the Navajo Reservation, near the mesas of iconic Monument Valley. She worked with deaf and hard of hearing children in Kayenta, but after 1 1/2 years, transferred to Tucson AZ working at the high school level with deaf students and teaching American Sign Language as a world language. Natasha began working with Valerie Sutton via the SignWriting.org website in 2003 and has become proficient in SignWriting over the years by incorporating it into her lessons in the ASL classroom. Also skilled in website design, Natasha has created many activities that include SignWriting and posted them for student use on her website www.westlandasl.com. In addition to her teaching credentials, she is also a nationally certified ASL interpreter.