

SignWriting App: Education

When our family's good friends' son was born with speech problems, I could not understand why. I had asked my parents, their friends, my science teachers what was wrong with him; however, no one knew what was preventing this boy's ability to speak words that seemed so easy to pronounce on my tongue. I wanted to help this boy and decided to learn American Sign Language to communicate with him. This is where I discovered SignWriting, which combined the possibility to read and write any sign language in the world.

Speech and language is one area of educational apps that has expanded with great success. Recent Apple-based technology (such as the iPad and the iPhone) has fundamentally changed what and how teachers teach in classes and how students learn the material. Due to these new developments, we are able to easily reach out to the younger generation of the 21st century much faster than before. A great example would be the implication of flashcards into the SignWriting App that App developer Jake Chasan and I designed to incorporate traditional study methods into a program that would greatly decrease the time spent studying and increase the amount the user would learn. I was able to witness these high-scale results in Canyon Crest Academy High School (11th-12th graders), at San Diego Mira Costa College, and when I came to the All-Deaf School in Osnabruck, Germany.

The most memorable moment of this trip was the presentation of my project in Germany at the Osnabruck School for Deaf children. I fell in love with this school right away. The teachers of this school have experience in every area, including math, science, history, and other languages. They work very hard to collaborate with each other to provide the best education for their students, making the school environment very safe and enjoyable for all the kids. It is crucial to find an environment where deaf children receive attention and support. I had the honor of meeting Stefan Wöhrmann, an amazing teacher with great skills and expertise in challenging and nurturing his students and helping them lead the fullest and most fulfilling life possible. He works with enthusiasm and inspiration so well and effectively, using his knowledge of language, math, science, and psychology. I was welcomed into Stefan's classroom, where I met six children who were very curious as to who I was and where I had come from. As I began to explain about the Signwriting App, the children gawked in surprise, and were eager to see the App for themselves. When I showed the App onto the screen, the students immediately began to recognize the signs and their meanings. It was eye-opening when they decided to open the quiz page and began to associate the sign to the English word, even though some of them never learned English prior to our meeting. Each time the quiz was taken, the students would analyze the sign and then say the word in English and Deutsch.

At the end of my stay, I tried to communicate with each of the students... shaking their hands, having eye-to-eye contact, smile, and just share mutual respect for just a moment. How could I not be attached to this unbelievable miracle? It is really rewarding to be a part of something bigger than yourself, being able to touch these children's lives for one day and help them learn about this new SignWriting App as a small challenge to overcome and learn from it. All of these students' emotions and smiles showed me that

our App was doing something to improve the learning of SignWriting and education of the individuals learning it. As soon as the App was developed and in the App store, I began to show the App to others and explain the purpose of SignWriting. By creating a power point, I was able to make the App more understandable to individuals in future presentations in Mira Mesa College and to students like me in Canyon Crest Academy. By the end of each presentation, many students had downloaded this App and wanted to learn more about the creation of the App and the positive impact it has on others. This App not only expended my knowledge of the SignWriting language, but it has also allowed me to grow as an individual.

Elena Eroshkin

“Presenting the SignWriting App To Deaf Students in Germany & Hearing Students in San Diego”

(Photos, page 1)



Project: Create an App that can be used for both deaf and learning students alike

Elena Eroshkin

“Presenting the SignWriting App To Deaf Students in Germany & Hearing Students in San Diego”

(Photos, page 2)



Thanks to:

- Cynthia Chasan
- Valerie Sutton
- Adam Frost
- Jake Chasan
- Stephan Slevinski
- Stefan Wohrmann
- Galina Eroshkina
- Alexey Eroshkin

Project: Create an App that can be used for both deaf and learning students alike