



**College of Education and Human Development
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

Fall 2024

EDSE 115 DL2: American Sign Language (ASL) I

CRN: 76826, 4 – Credits

Instructor: Bradley Brown	Meeting Dates: 8/26/24 - 12/18/24
Videophone: (571) 210-6505	Meeting Day (s): N/A
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Office Hours: By Appointment Office Location: Krug Hall 103B	Meeting Location: N/A; Online

Note: This syllabus may change according to class needs. Teacher Candidates/Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through their LMS (Learning Management System).

Prerequisite(s):

None

Co-requisite(s):

None

Course Description

Focuses on introduction of American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf culture. Teaches basic person-to-person conversational signing. Emphasizes development of expressive and receptive skills. Increases knowledge of ASL vocabulary and the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of the language.

Advising Contact Information

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or speced@gmu.edu for assistance. All other

students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

Advising Tip

Are you interested in an ASL minor? Submit your Minor Declaration (<http://registrar.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/UMD.pdf>), or contact the program for more information: speced@gmu.edu.

Course Delivery Method

Online

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via your LMS

A percentage of this course will be delivered online using synchronous and/or asynchronous instruction via the Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on August 26, 2024.

· To access your course in Blackboard Learn: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/>

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed internet access with updated browsers.
 - [Blackboard Learn](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support) supported browsers:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support
- Consistent and reliable access to GMU email and the course LMS, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Note that students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental

websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - [Adobe Acrobat Reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader/) (<https://get.adobe.com/reader/>)
 - [Windows Media Player](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player) (<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>)
 - [Apple Quick Time Player](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/) (www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

Expectations

- **Course Week:**
Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- **Log-in Frequency:**
Students must actively check the course LMS site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings, if any.
- **Participation:**
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:**
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:**
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:**
Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:**
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should

email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- **Netiquette:**

The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop minimal ASL conversational skills and vocabulary to effectively communicate with members of the Deaf community in the United States (DH1S2, C1.1).
2. Introduce self and produce correct handshape form for letters and numbers, fingerspell names, ask yes/no questions (C1.1).
3. Narrate language and home background (C1.1).
4. Identify person and give information about that person (C1.1).
5. Describe residence, use contrastive structures, tell about living arrangements (C1.1).
6. Talk about family and family relationships, tell similarities and differences between self and sibling, discuss information about relationship, marital status, age, etc (C1.1).
7. Develop a basic awareness of language and culture alive in the Deaf community today (DH1S2, C2.1).

Professional Standards

Goals, objectives, and assignments in this class address NCATE Standard 1b/ Pedagogical Content Knowledge and 1c / Skills Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Knowledge and Skill Standards, the Council on Education of the Deaf, and the Virginia Department of Education teacher licensure competencies. Goals, objectives, and assignments in this class address the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Knowledge and the American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA) competencies. Code for CEC Standards: DH = Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Code for ASLTA Standards: C1 = Communication, C2 = Culture, C3 = Connections, C4 = Comparisons, C5 = Communities.

Required Texts

Smith, C., Lentz, E., & Mikos, K. (2008). *Signing naturally: Units 1-6 student set.* Dawn Sign Press.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., LMS, VIA, hard copy).

VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

There is no required performance-based assessment for this course.

Assignments and/or Examinations

Course Format: Async-Online format

1. **Online portion:** Students will study the new vocabulary, complete the weekly lessons and assignments, and complete the weekly vocabulary quizzes before attending class. Students should expect to have to work on this class for at least 4-8 hours a week to complete all assignments in a timely basis.
2. Students will review any assignments/materials for further clarification, review the new signs learned online, and practice signing with classmates on interactive activities learned in class.

Vocabulary: Students will watch and learn the new vocabulary in Blackboard and refer to their textbook for any additional definitions. Students are expected to practice signing the new vocabulary as they watch the videos.

Vocabulary Quizzes: Students will have weekly quizzes which will be administered via Blackboard. There is a time limit for quizzes, it will be automatically submitted when the time expires. Students can check the My Grades tab in Blackboard for points for each quiz which will tell how many signs on the quiz.

Ex: Vocabulary Quiz #1 is worth 20 points = 20 vocabulary signs

Lessons and Assignments: Students will complete the weekly modules on **Blackboard**.

1. **Reading** – some assignments require you to read and find the answers in your textbook.
2. **Lesson/Assignment Question Formats**
 - a. **Multiple Choice** – select an answer.
 - b. **Multiple Answers** – select more than one answer total points indicates how many answers.
 - i. **Multiple Answer: Which of the following pronouns would...** Points: 2
(Multiple answer question – 2 points = 2 answers)
 - c. **True/False** - type the full word, not T/F.
 - d. **Hotspot** - click on the answer on the picture shown.
 - e. **Jumbled Sentences** - pick an answer from the drop-down list.
 - f. **Matching** - select the correct answer that matches the information given.
 - g. **Ordering** - put the answers in the correct order.
 - h. **Fill in the Blank Questions**
 - i. **Numbers** – enter the number (2, 9, 12, etc.)
 - ii. **1-word answers** – most questions require 1-word answers
 - iii. **2 or 3-word answers** If you see (2-words) or (3-words) next to the question, enter the answer a space between the words.
 - iv. **Parenthesis** – pick an answer given in parenthesis.
 1. (bored/excited) – type one of the two answers

2. Example: (1st, 2nd, 3rd ...) – enter the answer in the given format. The ... means to infinity (4th, 5th, etc.)
- v. **Spelling** – will be deducted if not spelled correctly (use Google to double check your spelling)
- vi. **Abbreviations** – are not allowed except for ASL (American Sign Language)
- vii. **Capitalization** – is not required.
3. **Answer Key** – correct answers will be shown/available after the due dates.
4. **My Grades Tab** – Check my grades tab in Blackboard for the assignment due dates.

Video Assignments: Students will complete video assignments using **Discussion Board** links posted in the modules.

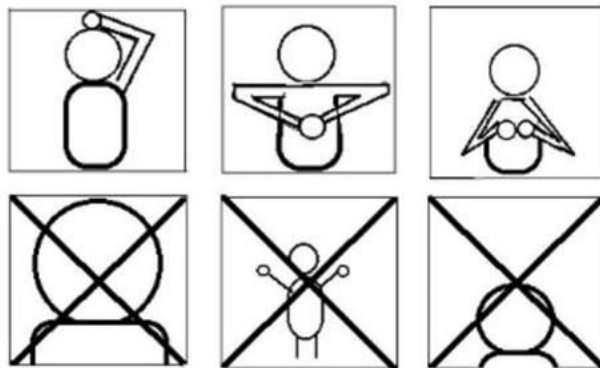
Note: For large classes, the instructor will assign students into two groups. An email will be sent with your assigned group and link.

1. Rubrics are posted to be used as a guide.
2. **Everyone will see each other's videos except for the Final Exam.**
3. Students will need to follow instructions given for each video assignment found in discussion board.
4. Rephrasing – for some video assignments, students will be expected to rephrase what their classmate signed. Students will rephrase, **not copy** what is being signed.

Note: The purpose of this video is to **showcase the student's signing ability** and students will create either a **real or fake** situation on based on the required criteria. Utilize the vocabulary you have learned from the unit. Students will need to **rehearse** until they no longer need notes. Students are expected to look directly at the camera, can look away briefly at notes.

Editing ASL Videos: Students are required to edit their ASL videos.

1. Ensure the computer or tablet is on a firm surface (a desk or table). The video should remain stable – no movements.
2. Make sure the video is centered and visible where the instructor can see the top of the student's head and the bottom of the student's chest area as shown below.



3. If students use their phone, follow the format below:



4. Make sure eyes are facing the camera, not looking to the side, above or below. Brief glances are acceptable for notes.
5. Make sure that the background is clean (one-colored wall) and free of “visual noise” (people, books, television, animals appearing, etc.).
6. The color of the student’s shirt should contrast their skin tone. Avoid red, yellow, and orange shades. If students have tattoos on their arms, they should wear long-sleeved shirts. Tank tops and string shirts are not allowed.
7. Remove hats and excessive jewelry. Wedding rings and small earrings are ok.
8. All videos must be submitted on Flip as one. Multiple edited/short clips is not allowed.
9. Review the quality of the videos before submitting.

Deaf Events: Students will attend **two (2)** Deaf events. Students can find events using the websites below detailing location, type, and time of events.

Here are some websites students can check to find upcoming events:

1. Instagram: @DeafCityEvents
2. Fairfax ASL Social: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aslclub2015/>
3. ASL Bridge: <https://www.meetup.com/ASLBridge/>
4. Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Persons (click on community events calendar): <https://nvrc.org/news/>
5. Gallaudet University: <https://my.gallaudet.edu/calendar>
6. ASL Trivia (must be 21+) <https://www.facebook.com/ASLTriviaDC/>

Another option is to Google the following – Silent Dinner in (city, VA), Silent Supper in (city, VA), or Deaf Event in (city, VA).

The following do not count as a Deaf event:

- Church settings
- Deaf plays
- Interpreted events
- Captioned movies

The purpose of this event is for students to practice their signing skills. For the event, students will write a paper detailing their experience. The paper should be one page, double spaced. Include a comprehensive answer to each question below.

1. Name of the Deaf Community Event
2. When the event occurred
3. The purpose of the event
4. Describe the people who attended.
5. What observations were made?
6. Describe the feelings evoked.
7. Thoughts and feeling toward this event (before and after)
8. What was learned from this experience?
9. Describe any differences between a hearing event and a Deaf event.
10. Other keen observations, thoughts or unanswered questions

It is the **student's responsibility** to find a Deaf event to attend. If you do not meet the requirements above, the assignment will result in a zero. The due date is shown on the schedule below.

Tests: The course objectives focus on the receptive use of ASL. There will be a test at the end of each unit. This course will cover units 5,7 and 8. It will be administered via Blackboard.

Note: The format of the test is similar to the format of the assignments in the weekly modules. The difference is the entire page of questions are shown for assignments, while the questions will be shown one at a time in random order for tests. There is a time limit for tests, it will be automatically submitted when the time expires.

Final Exam: The final exam is a comprehensive exam, which focuses on both the production and receptive use of ASL. Students will create a video post in Blackboard by the instructor with a time limit. They will need to respond to the instructor's questions using Flip. A rubric will be provided.

Final Exam Waiver: If a student earns above 84% (B) in class after submitting all the required work, the Final Exam will be waived.

Note: Students who earn below 84% (B) are required to take the final exam.

Student Evaluations of Teaching:

The student evaluation of teaching, or SET, is an online course survey. You are strongly encouraged to complete this form for each course as this feedback helps instructors and administrators improve your class experiences. Towards the end of the course, you will receive email and LMS notifications when the evaluations open. Your anonymous and confidential feedback is only shared with instructors after final grades have been submitted. More

information about the SET can be found on The Institute of Effectiveness and Planning website at <https://oiep.gmu.edu/set/>

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

All coursework will be online in an asynchronous format. There will be no face-to-face meetings.

Late Work: Any papers, videos, or assignments **will not** be accepted past due dates.

Note: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

— What does 'accommodations are not retroactive' mean?

Once a student meets and establishes accommodations with a specialist, accommodations will be applicable moving forward from the time Faculty Contact Sheets are provided to professors. Accommodations are not applicable prior to the initial meeting.

Graduation Requirements: Students are responsible for completing course work that demonstrates the level of competence satisfying the foreign language requirements for graduation.

Grading

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percent Grade
A+	97-100
A	94-96
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	81-83
C+	79-80
C	76-78
C-	74-75
D	70-73
F	Below 70

Grade Distribution:

Kahoot Activity	10%
Assignments/Deaf Events	20%
Video Assignments	25%
Vocabulary Quizzes	10%
Unit Tests	15%
Final Exam	20%

Note: Students' grades will be based on percentage for each area as shown above, not **total points**.

Note: A student needs 76% to pass the course or to move on to the next course.

Final Exam Waiver - If a student gets at 84% or above in class, the Final Exam will be waived.

***Note:** George Mason University Academic Standards will be strictly enforced *through an institutional sanctioning matrix that all colleges and departments will need to adhere to if they find there are students who are engaged in academic dishonesty*. See [Academic Standards \(http://academicstandards.gmu.edu/\)](http://academicstandards.gmu.edu/) and [GMU Catalog - Academic Standards \(https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/\)](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Standards. The Office of Academic Integrity “works to promote authentic scholarship, support the institution’s goal of maintaining high standards of academic excellence, and encourages continued ethical behavior of faculty and students to cultivate an educational community which values integrity and produces graduates who carry this commitment forward into professional practice.” Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

Professional Dispositions

Throughout study in the College of Education and Human Development, students are expected to demonstrate behaviors that reflect the positive dispositions of a professional. See [Student Guide \(https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide\)](https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide).

Use of Generative AI

Generative AI tools should follow the principles of Mason’s Academic Standards. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative AI tools.

Class Schedule

*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Modules: Due on **Sundays at 11:59 pm**. Check Blackboard for more information.

Coursework	Day	Submitted by
Module 1	September 1	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 2	September 8	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 3	September 15	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 4	September 22	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 5	September 29	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 6	October 6	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 7	October 13	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 8	October 20	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 9	October 27	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 10	November 3	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 11	November 10	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 12	November 17 *Deaf event due	11:59 pm (EST)
Module 13	November 24	11:59 pm (EST)
Final Exam	December 1	11:59 pm (EST)

CEHD Commitments

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to fostering collaboration and community, promoting justice and equity, and advancing research-informed practice. Students are expected to adhere to, and contribute to, these commitments, the CEHD Mission, and Core Values of George Mason University. More information can be found here: [Culture \(https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/\)](https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/)

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to Mason’s Academic Standards. See [Academic Standards \(https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/\)](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [Responsible Use of Computing \(http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/\)](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. See [Disability Services \(https://ds.gmu.edu/\)](https://ds.gmu.edu/).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of your LMS should be directed to:
 - o [Blackboard Learn: https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/)
 - o [Canvas: https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/](https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/)
- For information about [student support resources](https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus) on campus, see: <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
 - o [TimelyCare: https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/](https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/)
 - o [Writing Center: https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/)

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as the [Student Support and Advocacy Center \(SSAC\)](#) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website [College of Education and Human Development \(http://cehd.gmu.edu/\)](http://cehd.gmu.edu/).

Student and Faculty Names and Pronouns

Name and pronoun use: If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and indicate how best to address you in class and via email. I use He/Him for myself and you may address me as Bradley, Professor Brown or Mr. Brown in email and

verbally. I encourage students to use tools Mason provides to change your name and pronouns on Mason records, if you so choose: <https://registrar.gmu.edu/updating-chosen-name-pronouns/>

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

The College of Education and Human Development, an intentionally inclusive community, promotes and maintains an equitable and just work and learning environment. We welcome and value individuals and their differences including race, economic/class status, gender expression and identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and ability status, among other characteristics.

- We value our diverse student body and desire to increase the diversity of our faculty and staff.
- We commit to supporting students, faculty and staff who have been the victims of bias and discrimination.
- We promote continuous learning and improvement to create an environment that values diverse points of view and life experiences.
- We believe that faculty, staff, and students play a role in creating an environment that engages diverse points of view.
- We believe that by fostering their willingness to hear and learn from a variety of sources and viewpoints, our students will gain competence in communication, critical thinking and global understanding, and become aware of their biases and how they affect their interactions with others and the world.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

Land acknowledgment engages all present in an ongoing indigenous protocol to enact meaningful, reciprocal relationships with ancestors and contemporary tribal nations. As a state university, we have a responsibility to include and support indigenous communities and sovereign tribes in our work.

At the place George Mason University occupies, we give greetings and thanksgivings to these Potomac River life sources, to the Doeg ancestors, who Virginia annihilated in violent campaigns while ripping their lands apart with the brutal system of African American enslavement, to the recognized Virginia tribes who have lovingly stewarded these lands for millennia, including the Rappahannock, Pamunkey, Upper Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Nansemond, Monacan, Mattaponi, Patawomeck, and Nottaway, past, present, and future, and to the Piscataway tribes, who have lived on both sides of the river from time immemorial.

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS
Vocabulary: Usage of vocabulary	Accurate, relevant use of wide variety of vocabulary used from all units studied (2)	Generally accurate, relevant use of vocabulary from more than half the units studied (1)	Vocabulary inaccurate and used covers less than half the units studied
Formation: Handshape, Palm Orientation, Movement, Location	Skilled, accurate, appropriate use of hand shape, orientation, location and movement; transitions smooth (2)	Generally accurate, appropriate use; errors made do not compromise meaning (1)	Less than 50% accurate, appropriate use; errors compromise meaning; effort and practice not evident
Space Referents: Motion/Location of Verbs (includes eye gaze, body shifting and choice of signs)	Use is consistently accurate and appropriate; use precisely expresses intended meaning (2)	Use is generally accurate and appropriate; errors do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (1)	Use is either not present or awkward; interferes with intended meaning; effort and practice not evident
Grammar: Yes/No Questions “Wh-word” Questions Location Negation Contrastive Structures (referents, time, intensity, etc.)	A variety of sentence types are used; solid knowledge of grammar is evident (2)	A variety of sentence types are used; errors do not compromise meaning; use demonstrates effort and thought (1)	Use is awkward and confusing; errors compromise meaning; effort and practice not evident
Fluency/Accuracy Smoothness and Fluency of Signs Conceptually Accurate Ideas/Messages	Use is consistently accurate and appropriate; use precisely expresses intended meaning (2)	Use is generally accurate and appropriate; errors do not compromise the intended meaning; good effort (1)	Use is either not present or awkward; sometimes interferes with intended meaning; effort and practice not evident
Total Points Possible = 10	Points earned in parenthesis	Points earned in parenthesis	No points earned