CLASSIFIERS
A Closer Look

by Patricia Lessard

Demo Manual
Third Edition

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Classifiers: A Closer Look, Demo Manual by Patricia Lessard
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Overview

Welcome to the new Demo Version of the *Classifiers: A Closer Look* curriculum by Patricia Lessard. This version contains a small sampling of the types of material available in the full curriculum.

This curriculum was designed with these things in mind:

- A systematic presentation of classifiers
- A means to analyze their production
- Lessons suitable for both ASL students and students of interpreting

This curriculum is so complete that it could be the only material an instructor would need for a one-semester or two-semester course. It contains background linguistic information, lessons and activities, student handout materials, videotexts, tests and additional resource information. It could also be used as supplemental material for classroom instruction; as a student resource via the student workbook/program series for students to use outside of class time; and as individual units that could be used by itinerant teachers of workshops. It is possibly the most versatile teaching package available.

The program has two-tiered pricing:

Option 1: Free for teachers with a requirement to have your students purchase a program/workbook subscription. Teacher access includes online only access to the PDF Instructor Manual and all interactive material for the length of the class. Teachers are required to complete a form to set up their classes with a Class Group Code every semester. If no form is submitted, access is terminated until the form is received.

Option 2: $499 - Includes both a printed set of the Instructor Manuals along with permanent access to the online PDF version and all interactive material. No requirement to have students purchase the material or set up Class Group Codes.

The curriculum includes:

- A two-volume, 562-page online (and printed with Option 2) Instructor's Manual including:
    - Lesson plans, activities and tests
    - Scripts
    - Checklists for grading
    - Black line masters of student handouts

Online Material with the following:
o ASL texts at normal speed
o ASL texts in close up format
o ASL texts in slow motion
o Printed English texts and highlighted texts
o Audio versions of English texts
o Interactive games and tests
o Demonstration lessons (modeling how to teach the material)
o Tests

THE APPROACH

Using this curriculum, the many skills needed to produce classifiers correctly can be acquired with minimal embarrassment or frustration. Each lesson begins with the basic skills your students need to develop. You gradually take them to more complicated and lengthy tasks. This "scaled-up" approach encourages your students to move beyond being passive observers and assists them in becoming active participants.

SAMPLE LESSON

Although there are more activities contained in the curriculum, the ones presented here will give you a sense of the order you should follow when teaching from the curriculum.

Basic Skills

In addition to learning the correct handshapes for classifiers, your students will need to be able to visualize what is happening in three-dimensional (3D) space. They will need to accurately represent that image in their signing space. That requires them to use classifiers that will provide information about an object when looking at it up-close, far away or from an entirely different point of view, i.e., looking at it from the eyes of another person.

One particular chapter in the curriculum deals with Point of View (POV). Your students will need to practice "seeing" things from the narrator's POV and the POV of different characters present in the text. Most students have a difficult time with mental rotation to see the same elements from another's eyes.

Activities

The first set of activities to introduce the concept of POV is called "Table Activity." It is a series of activities that progresses from the teacher being the one taking the predominant role in the lesson to the students gradually taking on a more active role. In the final step of each activity, the students perform the exercises in pairs or groups with minimal intervention from the teacher.

Table Activity "Where Am I?" (Basic)

In the curriculum there are several versions of this activity. Depending on the skills of your students, you can choose the very basic activity with one table or use the more difficult versions with two or four tables. What follows is an example of the activity with one table. Use the table graphic at the end of these instructions when doing this activity with your class.

For this exercise, the teacher will need to copy the single table diagram on page 8 or select the Table Diagram link in the online program. In the full curriculum, there are two versions of the single table diagram. The teacher should choose the one that has a number and letters labeled on the table and chairs. Since this will be the first time that your students will attempt this type of visualization, it may be frustrating for them if you use the diagram without the labels. That will be used later for the more advanced levels of this activity.

There is a video sample of this activity in the "Instructor Materials" section of the online Demo program. You should watch it so that you are familiar with the technique. It is an example of the advanced level activity. It uses four (4) tables instead of one, however the concept is the same.

DIRECTIONS

1. Hand out a copy of the table and chairs diagram to each student or project it on a screen from your computer.

2. Using the face of the clock to orient the paper, chair A should be at 12 o'clock, chair B at 3 o'clock, chair C at 6 o'clock, and chair D at 9 o'clock.

3. They will not be signing this on a vertical plane. They will need to "lay the table down." If you hand out individual sheets, your students could place them on their desks or even on the floor.

4. The students will use the "bent V" on their dominant hand to represent someone sitting.

5. Have them use the "bent V" to show you where A is sitting. Where is B? Where is C? Where is D? Repeat, but mix up the order of the letters. If that is too difficult at first, they can just point to where A is sitting. If you keep modeling the classifier handshape for them, eventually they will be able to make it themselves.

6. Now have them rotate their paper so that chair D is at 12 o'clock, chair A at 3 o'clock, chair B at 6 o'clock, and chair C at 9 o'clock.

7. Where is A sitting? Where is B? Where is C? Where is D? Repeat, but mix up the order of the letters.

Have them get into groups of two, three or four. Let each member of the group have a turn at taking the role of the teacher. In following with the concept of gradually increasing the level of difficulty, the students will work from one table to four, using labels on the table and chairs.
Next they will do the same activity except to make it just a bit more difficult, it is done without any labels on the diagram. The students will begin with one table again, however, to minimize frustration. The teacher is always free to move the level of difficulty up or down, depending on the progress of the students in the class.

Table Activity "Who Am I?" (Basic)

There are also several versions of this activity that can be used, depending on the skill of the students. What you see here is an example of the activity with one table.

This lesson builds on the skills that were developed in the last activity, "Where Am I?" The concept of sitting at a table with four chairs is not new to your students. You can now increase the level of difficulty of the activity.

As with the previous activity, you will be setting up a table and four chairs in your signing space. You will call the table number One and the chairs A, B, C, and D.

You will pass out a copy of the diagram to each of your students.
To orient their papers you will have them do exactly as they did in the previous exercise and follow the face of the clock.

You will begin with only one table and four chairs. When you are done, to give your students a little more of a challenge, you can add another table or move to the most difficult level of this activity using four tables.

DIRECTIONS

1. Hand out a copy of the diagram.

2. In the activity "Where Am I?" you asked your students where A was sitting, where B was sitting, and so forth. Your students either pointed to the place where A was sitting, or they made their hands into the "Bent V" classifier handshape and "sat" A down in the appropriate chair. This time you will do the opposite. You will "sit" A-D in their chairs using the "bent V" handshape, without saying whom it is, and ask your students to tell you who is sitting there.

3. You will begin by signing TABLE, and then adding the classifier handshape for a table, 2h CL: C for a round table.

4. Using the "Bent V" handshape, you will move your hand to where A is located on the diagram and "sit" there – without telling your students who it is.

5. Instead, you will ask, "Who Am I?" They can look at the diagram for help.

6. Do the same for B-D. Do this several times, mixing up the order of the letters.

7. When you feel they understand the concept, let them work in groups of two, three or four. Each of them should take a turn at being the teacher.

You will move the students on to more difficult versions of this activity, adding more tables and taking away the labels. Finally, the students will be given a test that closely resembles the activity.

B

A

C

D
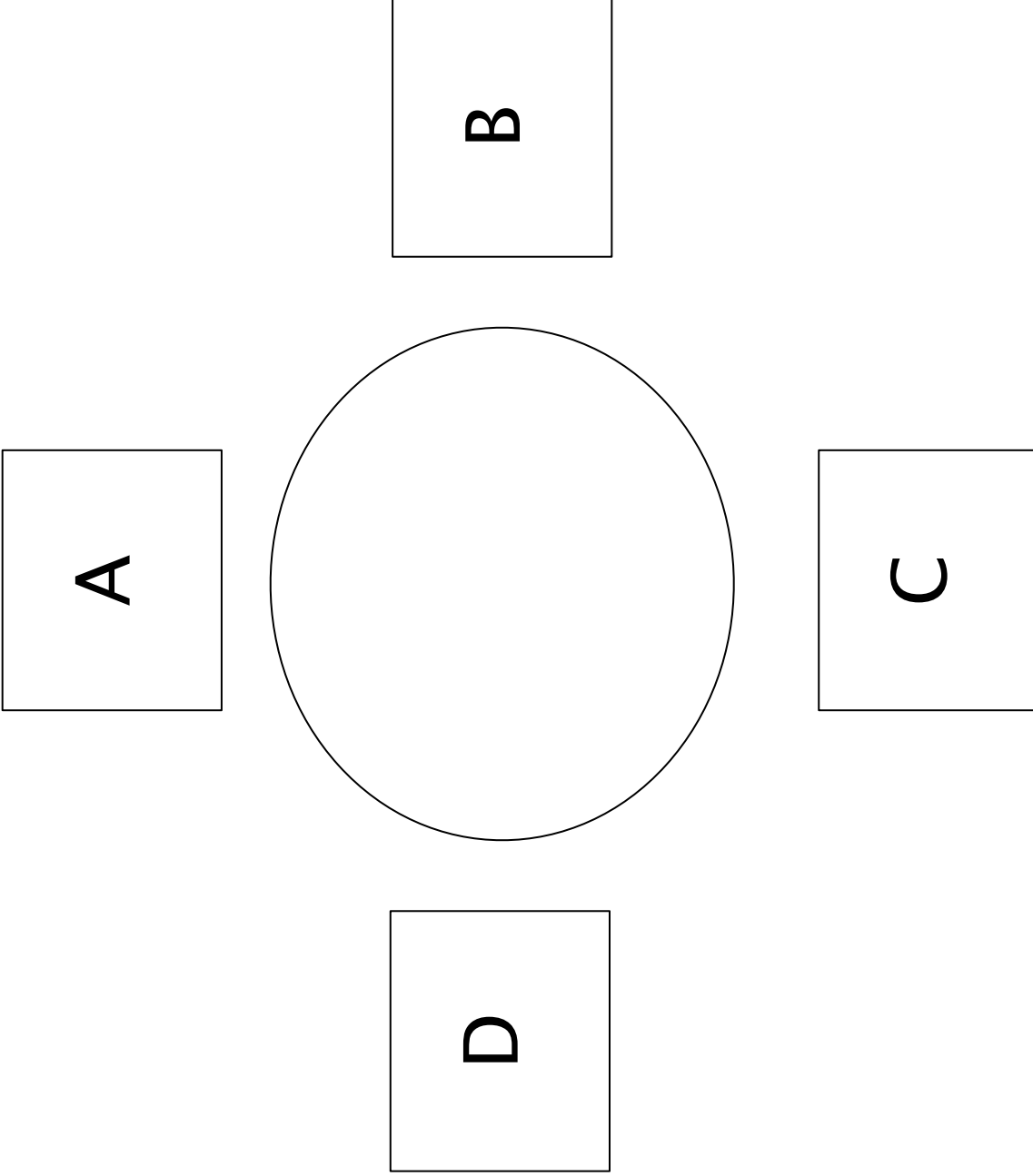
VIDEO ACTIVITIES

After several levels and types of exercises like the ones above, your students should feel pretty good about placing objects in their signing space. Moving onto the next level of difficulty, you will introduce your students to the concept of visualizing and interacting with characters in their signing space. This will begin with an activity I have called "90/180/270," meaning they will rotate an object 90 degrees in their signing space each time they interact with it.

90/180/270 Assignment

For this assignment your students will need to create a very short story in which there will be one other object (living or inanimate) for them to interact with. They will tell the story three times. The first time, they will interact with the object on their right side (90 degrees); the second time they will tell the story exactly the same except the object will be directly in front of them (180 degrees); and the last time they will begin the story as they did the first two times and end with the object on their left (270 degrees).

SAMPLE 90/180/270 Video

In the Demo Program, go to the 90/180/270 section.

The first video clip (STORY) below shows the part of the story that does not change. The three clips below it show how the story should end at 90, 180 and 270 degrees. You should view it in the following sequence: STORY + 90, STORY +180, STORY +270.

APPLICATION OF SKILLS

The previous activities focused on isolated skills. Now your students will have the opportunity to integrate the skills they acquired in these activities into a short story.

Before attempting any of the videotexts however, the students should have ample opportunity to view the Close Up and Slow Motion versions of the same text so that they feel prepared.

Open the "Family Dinner" section of the online Demo Program. This story will be the first of several increasingly longer texts that they will have to perform. Before attempting any of the videotexts however, the students should have ample opportunity to view the Close Up and Slow Motion versions of the same text so that they feel prepared.

The Demo clip shows the first few seconds of the videotext they will perform.

VIDEOTEXT COMPONENTS

Each videotext in the curriculum has the following format:

-   **Background Information**   - detailed information about the classifiers used in the videotexts. Here you will see freeze framed images of classifiers that are of particular interest to the lesson you will teach. In the online program, select the Background Information to see video clips of the classifiers of interest.

-   **Chapter Learning Objectives** - Each chapter of the curriculum begins with a set of Learning Objectives that have been established for your students.

-   **English Text** - a printed English "version" of each videotext.
    Each text was designed to elicit classifiers. It is not meant to be a "translation" of the videotext. It could be passed out to your students before they watch the video in case they have not developed their receptive ASL skills well enough to follow the story. It could also be used for the purpose of classroom discussion.

Classifiers: A Closer Look

- **ASL Texts at Normal Speed, Slow Motion, and Close Up Views**
  In the Slow Motion version, the videos are presented at half their normal speed or even slower. Students will be able to see the classifiers as they appear in the text. You will be able to stand near the screen and point to certain places in the text you want your students to notice, which is not usually possible when the material is moving at normal speed.

  In the Close-Up version, the face of the signer takes up almost the entire screen. In the corner there is a smaller image of the signer in full-body view. Peripherally, the students are still able to see what is being said. This view allows them to focus on the face with the signed text being secondary.

- **Interactive Exercise -** In the online program the text is broken up into phrase-level parts for analysis. Students are able to view each phrase in normal, slow, and close up views. They use these views to complete a checklist testing their understanding of the types of classifiers used, role shift, eye-gaze behavior and non-manual signals used in each part.

- **Thinking Critically** - a set of questions at the end of each videotext provides and opportunity for students to delve into a deeper analysis of the videotext.

What follows is an example of the background information prepared for *The Train Story,* one of the texts used in the curriculum.

In the online Demo program, select the Train Story – Narrator POV section and have this manual open as you go through the material.

Background Information

"The Train Story" Narrator's POV Demo Version

📝 **TEACHER'S NOTE:** Students should be given the printed English text on p. xx before they view this videotext for the first time. That will allow them to get to know the story and reduce their frustration as this story moves quickly. The SLOW MOTION version might be easier for them to watch when it comes time for them to really look for and imitate the classifiers Ben uses. *The Train Story* has many examples of NMSs used to show the emotional affect of a character and other NMSs that are used to give linguistic information. Use the Close-Up to see them better.

The narrator of this story owns a home. Something happened to him that he wishes to relate. To do this, he has to re-live the moment in time when the event happened. Because of this, "Train Story: Narrator's Point of View" actually has two characters or roles that will appear alternately throughout the narrative. Initially, there is the role of the narrator who is giving a general description of the setting for the story. He exists in present time. When the narrator goes back in time and re-lives what happened, he switches to a different role. It is still the same man, the same homeowner, but it is a former instance of himself. The change in roles is evident when studying the eye gaze and posture between the two instances of the narrator.

At the very beginning of "Train Story: Narrator's Point of View," Ben is the narrator, setting the scene for the story. He begins signing with the viewpoint of a camera positioned on the roof of the house looking out to the backyard. From this viewpoint, all the main elements of this passage can be established in the signing space in front of him. He says that there is a neighbor's house next to his and there are railroad tracks (1) that run behind the houses. When Ben wants to explain where the tracks are (FIGURE), he has to keep one hand present as the fence, as background information (GROUND). It is a placeholder or reminder of

the first element and where it is located in respect to the new element. He does this to help us construct a mental image of this place.
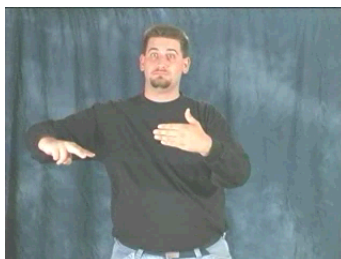
(1)

Next, he says that there is a mountain (2) located on the other side of the tracks. First he signs the referent MOUNTAIN, and then traces out the surface of the terrain that lies beyond the tracks. It gives information about where the mountain is located relative to the backyard, fence and railroad tracks.

(2)

In (3) Ben has changed the size of the mountain. It is now on a smaller scale so he can show more clearly how the tracks curve around the mountain. The ENTITY classifier handshape the represents the mountain is the GROUND in this expression. The FIGURE, or new element to be introduced and given focus is the tracks. It is now possible to see where the tracks are located relative to the mountain. When watching Ben tell this part of the story, it is possible to chain

together the series of classifiers shown in pictures (1) – (3) and form a clear image of the setting for this story.
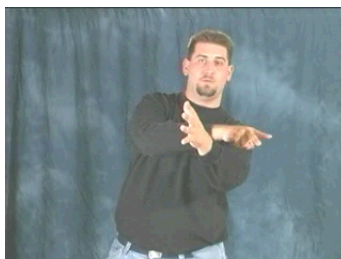
(3)

It should be pointed out that Ben is a right-hand dominant signer. When speaking of trains running along railroad tracks in general, he would use his right hand when making the vehicle classifier for a train.

In (4) Ben is using his non-dominant hand when he has to set up the way the train moves in the real world. The direction of the train is important to the narrative. There will be other examples like this later in the story when he tells how and where a tree falls down. [refer to (6) and (8)] This point should be called to the attention of the students.

(4)

Now that the setting has been established, Ben can begin to tell the story. When Ben introduces the tree, he says, "It is a large tree". Students should be able to recognize the NMS that appears on his face (5) as one used when an object is large.
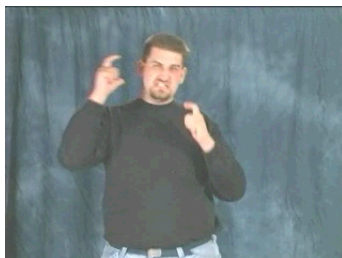
(5)

VIEW FOR UNDERSTANDING

Videotext: **The Train Story: Narrator's POV**

- Students should read the printed English text on p. 18 and highlight the places where they would expect to see a classifier before they watch this videotext.

- They should be encouraged to use the SLOW MOTION to practice making the classifiers in the text.

- The CLOSE-UP version of the video should be used so students can see the NMSs and evidence of a change in eye gaze at the beginning of a role shift that is maintained for the duration of the shift.

- They should use the Interactive Version for practice before they sign the text.

- They will need to have a sheet of paper for this activity.

DIRECTIONS

1. Watch the opening of the video up to where the tree has fallen across the tracks.

2. Pause the video and have them draw the elements of the setting, i.e., the house, the fence between the houses, the neighbor's house, the back fence, the train tracks and the mountain.

3. Check their drawings for accuracy. Ask for volunteers to draw their picture on the board.

4. Have the students sign the exact same elements in their own signing space. Check for accuracy.

5. Using the Close-up version, ask for examples of NMSs that show affect or emotion.

6. Ask for examples of NMSs that are linguistic, for example the NMS for a large tree, the squinted eyes for intensity, the raised brows that indicate a topic is being introduced, especially when it is being introduced as a FIGURE or the GROUND element for a FIGURE.

7. Was there any evidence of Role Shift?

8. Explain the concept of time shift to them. They should be able to answer the question: Are the narrator who begins the story, and the other character one and the same person? How can that be possible?

Slow Motion Practice

Go to the SLOW MOTION format of "Train Story: Narrator's POV. Have students shadow the performance of the sign model. Students should practice with the text a few times until they are comfortable with it.

Checklist Activity for "Train Story: Narrator's POV"

Print out the Checklist on p. 20 for "Train Story: Narrator's POV" for the students.   Tell the students to:
- Look at #1 on the checklist. Find the highlighted/video segment that goes with it.
- Look to see if a Classifier was used there. Mark the box in the appropriate column of the checklist.
- Now look and see if there was any Role Shift and mark the box that corresponds with that segment.
- Was there a NMS for the segment that showed emotion or affect? Mark that box.
- Was there a NMS for the segment that gave linguistic information? Mark that box.
- Look for the video segment goes with #2 on the checklist.
- Follow the same steps as you did for #1.
- Continue until you have completed the entire checklist.

THE TRAIN STORY: NARRATOR'S POV – Demo Version
English Text

I live in a relatively small house. My house and all my neighbors' houses have a railroad track running behind our backyard fences. The track is just below the rise of a mountain. Our houses and backyards are at the foot of the mountain. The train tracks extend beyond our houses. They curve around the side of the mountain. The train tracks run along the bend hugging the slope. The train usually travels past my home from left to right.

My neighbor once had a tree that grew in the corner of his yard that was adjacent to mine. It was a huge tree. One dark night there was a terrible thunderstorm. I was lying in bed asleep until a particularly loud noise like a clap of thunder woke me up. Disoriented, I jumped out of bed. I went to the window and opened my curtains. I was curious to see what was going on in the backyard. I peered through the window into the rain and noticed that my neighbor's tree had fallen over.

THE TRAIN STORY: NARRATOR'S POV – Demo Version
Highlighted Text Answer Key

I live in a relatively small house. My house and all my neighbors' houses have a railroad track running behind our backyard fences. The track is just below the rise of a mountain. Our houses and backyards are at the foot of the mountain. The train tracks extend beyond our houses. They curve around the side of the mountain. The train tracks run along the bend hugging the slope. The train usually travels past my home from left to right.

My neighbor once had a tree that grew in the corner of his yard that was adjacent to mine. It was a huge tree. One dark night there was a terrible thunderstorm. I was lying in bed asleep until a particularly loud noise like a clap of thunder woke me up. Disoriented, I jumped out of bed. I went to the window and opened my curtains. I was curious to see what was going on in the backyard. I peered through the window into the rain and noticed that my neighbor's tree had fallen over.

Train Story: Narrator's POV – Demo Version

Checklist 1

Was there a classifier used?	HANDLE Depictive (Instrument)	HANDLE Manipulative (Body)	ENTITY	TRACE or SASS	Eye Gaze/RS Who's Talking (POV)	NMS Affect	NMS Linguistic
1. Have a railroad track running behind our backyard fences							
2. Track is just below the rise of a mountain							
3. The train tracks extend beyond our houses							
4. They curve around the side of the mountain							
5. Along the bend hugging the slope							
6. From left to right							
7. Corner of his yard that was adjacent to mine							
8. Lying in bed asleep							
9. Woke me up							
10. I jumped out of bed							

The Train Story: Narrator's POV – Demo Version

Checklist 2

Was there a classifier used?	HANDLE Depictive (Instrument)	HANDLE Manipulative (Body)	ENTITY	TRACE or SASS	Eye Gaze/RS Who's Talking (POV)	NMS Affect	NMS Linguistic
11. I went to the window and opened my curtains							
12. I peered through the window and noticed							
13. Tree had fallen							

Train Story: Narrator's POV – Demo Version

Checklist 1 Answer Key

Was there a classifier used?	HANDLE Depictive (Instrument)	HANDLE Manipulative (Body)	ENTITY	TRACE or SASS	Eye Gaze/RS Who's Talking (POV)	NMS Affect	NMS Linguistic
1. Have a railroad track running behind our backyard fences			X		narrator to audience		topic
2. Track is just below the rise of a mountain			X	X	at hands at audience		topic
3. The train tracks extend beyond our houses			X		at hands		topic
4. They curve around the side of the mountain			X		at hands at audience		topic adverb
5. Along the bend hugging the slope			X		at hands at audience		topic adverb
6. From left to right			X		at hands at audience		topic
7. Corner of his yard that was adjacent to mine			X	X	at hands at audience		topic adj. adverb
8. Lying in bed asleep		X	X		RS		X
9. Woke me up			X			X	
10. I jumped out of bed			X			X	

The Train Story: Narrator's POV – Demo Version

Checklist 2 Answer Key

Was there a classifier used?	HANDLE Depictive (Instrument)	HANDLE Manipulative (Body)	ENTITY	TRACE or SASS	Eye Gaze/RS Who's Talking (POV)	NMS Affect	NMS Linguistic
11. I went to the window and opened my curtains		X			outside		
12. I peered through the window and noticed		X	X		follow hand "eyes" gaze– far away		"Wh" topic adverb
13. Tree had fallen			X		at tree		topic

Classifiers: A Closer Look

THINKING CRITICALLY

Videotext: **Train Story: Narrator's POV**

DIRECTIONS
Using the Checklist for "Train Story: Narrator's POV," ask students the following questions. Teacher questions and student answers should be given in ASL.

1. What is the classifier handshape used in #1? ("2" for the tracks)

2. What type of classifier is #1? (ENTITY)

3. What function does the fence serve in #1? (It is the GROUND)

4. What function does the mountain serve in #4? (It is the GROUND)

5. What role do the tracks play in #4? (They are the FIGURE)

6. Why did the signer show the tracks running from left to right in #5? (That is the way the train travels in the real world)

7. What handshape is used for the fence in #6? ("B") What role does it play? (It is the GROUND for the tree in that statement)

8. What is the handshape used for the tree in #6? (1, or index finger) Why that handshape? (This segment is given from a distant perspective and the classifier for the tree must match the scale of the one used for the fence.)

9. What kind of classifier is shown in #7? (ENTITY)

10. What happens in #8? (Role shift)

11. Who is talking in # 8 through #13? (The homeowner, or the narrator in a previous time of his life)

12. What kind of classifier is used in #11? (Manipulative HANDLE)

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CONCLUSION

Thank you for trying out this Demo version.

We hope it has given you a good look at what the curriculum has to offer. This is

only a small sampling of the total package.

Visit www.treehousevideo.com for more information.

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