

# Language Experience

## Readers for Deaf Learners

A Practical Workshop for Teachers

**Julie Tait**

*Teacher of the Deaf · Auslan Interpreter · Advisor*

*Luang Prabang School for the Deaf • Laos*

## OVERVIEW

# Today's Workshop

6 parts · 60–90 minutes

**Part 1** Why Language Experience Readers?

**Part 2** What Makes a Good LER?

**Part 3** Repetition is Powerful

**Part 4** The Language Ladder

**Part 5** Making an LER in Book Creator

**Part 6** Group Activity

Part 1

# Why Language Experience Readers?

*10 minutes*



## PART 1 · KEY MESSAGE

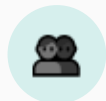
# Children learn best when language is connected to...



Real experiences



Real places



Real people



Familiar routines



Real objects



Not stories about other children.

**Stories about themselves.**

# Show the example book

## LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE READER



**Wash, Wash, Wash!**

*Real photos. Real people. Real event.*

 **Ask the teachers:**

*"Did this really happen?"*

*When they say yes:*

**"That is why children  
want to read it again."**

# Which is the stronger reader?



## Traditional Reader

*The boy is at the farm.*

- X Unknown child
- X Unknown place
- X No personal connection
- X No shared memory

## Language Experience Reader

*Teacher washes Noi.*

*Teacher says, "Wash, wash, wash."*

*Noi splashes in the water.*

- ✓ Known people
- ✓ Known actions
- ✓ Known signs
- ✓ Shared memory

The LER contains known people, known actions, known signs, and a shared memory. Much stronger language foundation.

Part 2

# What Makes a Good LER?

*15 minutes*



# The first two rules



## Rule 1 Use Real Photos

Actual students.  
Actual teachers.  
Actual locations.

✗ Clipart

✗ Internet pictures

✓ Your school photos are perfect.

## Rule 2 Start with a Real Event

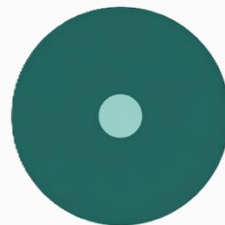
- Washing students
- Cleaning classroom
- Cooking sticky rice
- Playing football
- Going to market
- Visiting temple
- Feeding chickens
- Making handicrafts

The event should already be meaningful.

Rule 3

# Keep Text Simple

*One sentence. One idea.*



✓ **Good:**

*We walked.*

*We carried water.*

*We washed the dishes.*

*We ate sticky rice.*

✗ **Avoid:**

*"After completing our chores  
we returned to the classroom."*

Too long.

Too complex.

Unfamiliar vocabulary.



Rule 4

# Repeat Key Vocabulary

Children need repeated exposure. Same vocabulary. New language.

Page 1



*Kham is dirty.*

Page 2



*Mali is dirty*

Page 3



*The teacher is dirty*

Page 4



*The children laugh.*

💡 The keyword 'is dirty' appears on every page. This is intentional. This is how language grows.

## Part 3

# Repetition is Powerful

*10 minutes*





# Intentional Repetition

## Hearing children

Hear words thousands of times —  
incidentally.

## Deaf children

Often miss incidental language — so we  
intentionally repeat.

### Repeated noun

*fish*

*fish*

*fish*

### Repeated verb

*walk*

*walked*

*walking*

### Repeated phrase

*We went to the market.*

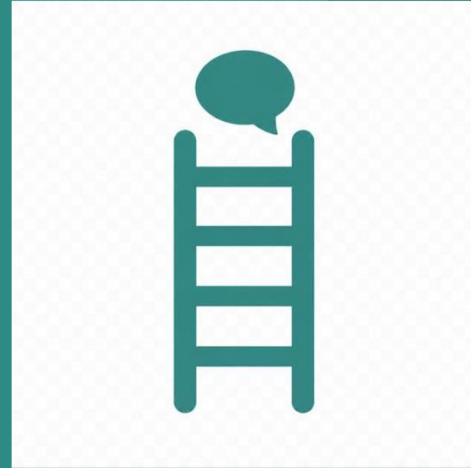
*We went to the market.*

*We went to the market.*

## Part 4

# The Language Ladder

*10 minutes*



# One event. Five levels. Every learner included.

## Level 1

Photos only



*Child points.*

## Level 2

Photo + single word



*Fruit*

## Level 3

Photo + simple phrase



*Some oranges*

## Level 4

Photo + sentence



*We bought fruit.*

## Level 5

Two connected ideas



*We bought fruit.  
Then we went home.*

# The Language Ladder connects to your vocabulary work



Level 1–2

Nouns · People · Objects

*"fruit" "teacher" "water"*

Level 3

Adjectives · Descriptors

*"some oranges" "cold water"*

Level 4

Verbs · Simple sentences

*"We bought fruit."*

Level 5

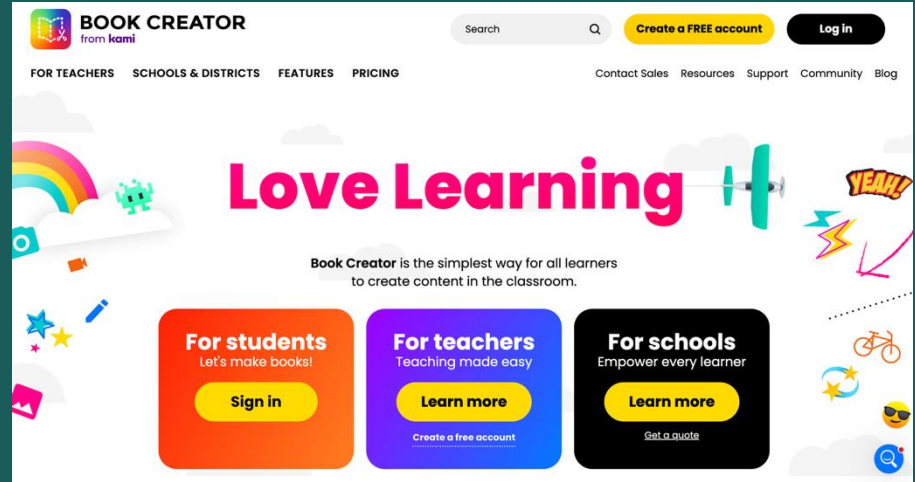
Pronouns · Time words ·  
Connectors

*"Then we went home."  
"Because I was hungry."*

## Part 5

# Making an LER in Book Creator

15 minutes · Demonstration



The screenshot shows the homepage of Book Creator, a platform for creating digital content. The header includes the logo "BOOK CREATOR from kami", a search bar, and buttons for "Create a FREE account" and "Log in". Navigation links for "FOR TEACHERS", "SCHOOLS & DISTRICTS", "FEATURES", and "PRICING" are present, along with links for "Contact Sales", "Resources", "Support", "Community", and "Blog". The main content area features the headline "Love Learning" in large pink letters, followed by the tagline "Book Creator is the simplest way for all learners to create content in the classroom." Below this are three colored boxes: an orange box for "For students" with a "Sign in" button, a blue box for "For teachers" with a "Learn more" button and a "Create a free account" link, and a black box for "For schools" with a "Learn more" button and a "Get a quote" link. The page is decorated with colorful, playful icons like a rainbow, stars, a pencil, and a speech bubble.

# Making an LER — Step by Step



**1** Take photos

*During the event — or straight after*

**2** Choose 6–10 photos

*Best moments, clearest actions*

**3** One photo per page

*Keep it simple and visual*

**4**  
Add one sentence

*Short, first person, real words*

**5** Read together

*Sign every page with the class*

**6** Add sign video later

*Record teacher signing each page*

Part 6

# Your Turn! Group Activity

*15–20 minutes*



# Choose a scenario. Plan your LER.



## Scenario options:

*"We cleaned the classroom."*

*"We made sticky rice."*

*"We watered the garden."*

## Create:

- 1 A cover page (title + photo description)
- 2 5 pages — one sentence each
- 3 Use at least one vocabulary word on 3+ pages

# What Makes a Great LER?



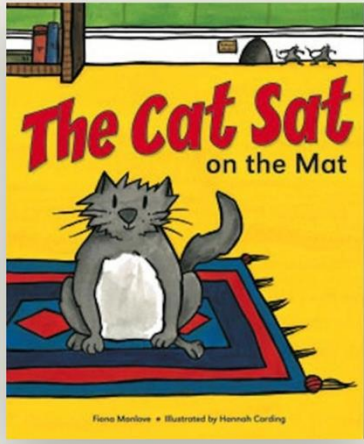
## ✓ YES

- ✓ Real photos
- ✓ Real students
- ✓ Real experiences
- ✓ Simple text
- ✓ Repeated vocabulary
- ✓ Read many times
- ✓ Sign while reading
- ✓ Parents can share
- ✓ Can become a digital book

## ✗ NOT YET

- ✗ Too much text
- ✗ Clipart
- ✗ Complex grammar
- ✗ Unfamiliar events
- ✗ Testing children

# Which book belongs to your students?



Book A

*"The Cat Sat on the Mat"*

Unknown child.  
Unknown cat.  
Unknown mat.

VS



Book B

*"Wash, Wash, wash!"*

Our class.  
Our teacher.  
Our memory.

"This book is about me.

**These are my people.**

This is my language.

**This is my life."**

*Thank you · ຂອບໃຈ · Merci*

**Questions?**