

# The "Cast of Characters" and Associated Body Signals

Signal is the term used to explain the kinesthetic part of Zoo-phonics. As already stated, the Signals help to lock letter-shapes and sounds into memory. Each Signal listed with the corresponding Animal, is described below. **The students should be encouraged to give the letter Sound while making the Signal.** It is important to be consistent. The Signal should always be done in the same manner.

For each Animal a name has been given. Example: Allie Alligator, Bubba Bear, Catina Cat, *etc.* The children delight in knowing the Animal Names. The Names are a useful tool for reinforcing the Picture-Letter Sounds.

The following are the Animals, their given Names and the description of each Signal:



**a — alligator (allie alligator):**  
Extend arms forward, one over the other, to form an alligator mouth, fingers becoming teeth. Open and close arms from the shoulders and say, "a." This can become a clap.



**b — bear (bubba bear):**  
Reach either arm above your head to an imaginary honeycomb. Bring the honey to your mouth, as a bear might do and say the letter sound, "b."



**c — cat (catina cat):**  
Pretend you are a cat washing your face with your paw, and say the letter sound, "c."



**d — deer (deedee deer):**  
Use two fingers of each hand to form deer ears on head and say the letter sound, "d."



**e — elephant (ellie elephant):**  
You have the option to do this two different ways. You and your class may choose one of them: 1) clasp your hands together in front of you, then swing your arms from side to side as if they were a trunk. 2) Take one arm and swing it to your mouth, as if Ellie were feeding herself a peanut. When signaling say the letter sound, "e."



**f — fish (francy fish):**  
With your hands in front of your chest, place the palm of one hand on the back of the other hand to form a fish (make sure you have a thumb on each side), then wiggle your thumbs and say the letter sound, "f" (sustained sound).



**g — gorilla (gordo gorilla):**  
Simulate peeling a banana, saying the letter sound, "g."



**h — horse (honey horse):**  
Slap both sides of your thighs or hips, suggesting a horse galloping. At the same time, say the letter sound, "h."



**i — inchworm (inny inchworm):**  
Using your index finger, bend it up and down, and then move your hand forward suggesting the movement of an inchworm. While Signaling, say the letter sound "i."



**j — jellyfish (jerry jellyfish):**  
Move your shoulders, arms and fingers in a wiggly, jelly-like fashion and shake like jelly! Keep hands and arms in front of your chest, not to the sides of your body, as you say the letter sound, "j."



**k — kangaroo (kayo kangaroo):**  
Make two fists and pose as if boxing. Give a kick with one leg, while at the same time saying the letter sound. "k."

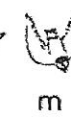


**l — lizard (lizzy lizard):**  
Place your hands under your chin with your elbows lifted up, level with shoulders. Say the letter sound, "l" (continuous sound). Make sure the students keep their tongues in their mouths to keep a pure "l" sound.

\*The small "f" and "m" underneath the Animal Letter denote the gender of the Animal.



**m—mouse (missy mouse):**  
Place your hand close to your mouth as if you are a mouse nibbling on a small piece of cheese. While Signaling, say the letter sound, "m" (sustained sound).



**u—umbrella bird (umber umbrella bird):**  
Place your hand over your head to suggest holding an umbrella. Extend your other arm out to your side, and then flap that arm as if in flight, saying the letter sound "ū."



**n—nightowl (nigel nightowl):**  
Using thumb and index finger of each hand, make round nightowl eyes and say the letter sound, "n" (sustained sound).



**v—vampire bat (vincent vampire bat):**  
Bend and raise your elbows horizontally with your hands near your mouth. Form little fangs with your index fingers. Flap elbows up and down, say the letter sound "v" (continuous sound).



**o—octopus (olive octopus):**  
Extend each arm outward at your sides, using a waving motion to suggest the tentacles of an octopus and say the letter sound, "ō."



**w—weasel (willee weasel):**  
Place your arms in front of your chest, elbows up and hands clasped. Move your arms in a wave-like motion. This suggests what Willie Weasel looks like when he is running. While Signaling, say the letter sound, "w."



**p—penguin (peewee penguin):**  
Stiffen both arms at the sides of your body (hands up) and do a penguin walk, waddling from side to side. While Signaling, say the letter sound "p." (No vowel sound.)



**x—fox (xavier fox):**  
Crossing your index fingers, move them as if you were knitting. Say the letter sound, "x" ("ks"). (Xavier Fox is the only sound which comes at the end of the word.)



**q—quail (queeny quail):**  
Illustrate the topknot of the California quail by placing your bent index finger forward at the top of your forehead, while saying the letter sound, "q" ("kw").



**y—yak (yancy yak):**  
Form a "y-shape" by extending your thumb and little finger, place your thumb next to your ear and your little finger next to your mouth, as though you were holding a telephone. While Signaling (talking on the phone), say the letter sound "y."



**r—rabbit (robby rabbit):**  
Curve both hands, raising them to your chest to represent rabbit paws. Give a hop, hop and say the letter sound, "rrrr." (Be careful not to make an "er" sound, placing the vowel before the "r.")



**z—zebra (zeke zebra):**  
Place your hands together and lean them against your cheek to suggest Zeke catching a few "z's" (sleeping). While Signaling, say the letter sound "z" (sustained sound.)



**s—snake (sammy snake):**  
Move your hand forward in the serpentine manner of a snake, saying "sss" (sustained sound).



**t—tiger (timothy tiger):**  
Extend your arms in a "t" shape to suggest a tiger holding onto the bars of his zoo-cage. While Signaling, say the letter sound, "t."

Teaching the Animal Name is important. It helps the child to hear the letter sounds.

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I learn!"  
—Benjamin Franklin