

The BDA Pitch

History of Sign Language: Where it all began. (10 - 15 mins)

- Introductions. The importance of Sign Language.
- With the use of animation, still drawing or even actors, briefly explain the history of sign language. The concept dates back to the 5th century where records indicate Socrates first notions the idea. Can use subtitles and/or a signer in the foreground as well as a voice-over.



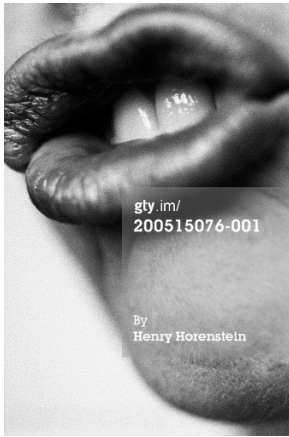
- Using a combination of archive footage and new footage explain the evolution of sign language from basic finger spelling to what we now consider “structured sign language”. Could be quite nice to introduce some visuals such as CGI words amongst the foreground and background, or simply text written on a signer’s hand to demonstrate meaning to their hand movements.

Oral Method: the ousting of Sign Language. (15 – 20 mins)

I’m assuming from what I’ve read that this is an important topic regarding both the BDA and BSL.

- Interviews with experts and historians (preferably signing) with regards to social, educational and political attitudes towards sign language compared to oral methods.
- Close ups on their hands to show off interesting movement and gestures. (Nice to have a shallow DOF and can even slow the movements down a bit)
- Cutting again to animations to keep it interesting whilst explain the history (Milan 1880: Second International Congress of Education of the Deaf.)





- Could use cutaway shots of slowed down, extreme close-ups of lips moving as if someone is lip reading.
- Changing between colour and black and white shots during interviews can help to add a bit of emotion the content.

Signing Cultures: When the big changes happened. (20 – 30 mins)

- Like a breath of fresh air, America Sign Language (ASL) made it way to Britain by the 1960's. Archive footage (high street) of the swinging sixties with grainy footage.
- The culture and history of Martha's Vineyard and MVSL (Sign Language). The fact it was a colony for the deaf and how it developed into what became the ASL. Archive footage again both old and new, running parallels to what it is now, a tourist location.
- The American Sign Language had been recognised as a legitimate language with its own grammar, vocabulary, structure and syntax. Use of cut away shots of signers conversing.
- Almost like a sensation sign language took off. Another simple animation; could be of the map of the UK and markers start popping up all over indicating the culture is spreading.



- The BDDA re-evaluate and in the 1970's renamed itself BDA, dropping the D (Dumb) and becoming its own entity. This seems important as for the first time the deaf had their own identity. Could be quite nice to use emotional tugs such as black and white footage, slow motion with shallow depth of field.

- Sign language is recognised in the UK as of 2003. The battle is won. Shots of children conversing in classrooms using sign language could show the relevance of this.

Conclusion: How sign language now fits into society. (10 – 15 mins)

- Interviews with experts, heads of the charity, regular deaf people, people living with sign language. A combination of archive, new footage as well as cut away shots of people enjoying their conversations.
- Discuss the government's attitudes to sign language. Interview and archive footage.
- Reconfirm the journey that sign language has had to make to get where it is today. Discuss the evolution again. Footage mixed with animation.



- Plenty of cutaway shots. Could use a point of view shot of someone signing or having a sign language conversation
- Could finish with a few words from the head of the BDA and BSL.

Things to consider:

- Use of sounds, voices and music. The video is intending to be used to promote the BDA to deaf as well as able hearing people.
- Most of the BDA video (on their website and on YouTube) seem a little lifeless. It would be a great opportunity to really make this film stand out by making it look really pretty. Sight is especially important to a deaf person so I think shallow DOF, extreme close up shots could work really well.
- New interview shot should be in relevant locations.
 - Deaf clubs.
 - Schools.
 - Associations such as deaf theatres.
- Subtitles and a possible signer in the foreground could work with cutaway shots or animations.