



# Deaf Education Historical Document Collection

## Note to Students

Working with primary documents is one of the most challenging tasks that historians undertake. As you read through these documents it is important for you to remember the type of text you are working with. In most cases, these documents were not written to provide you with information. As such, these documents need to be interpreted. You will need to read them carefully and to ask yourself questions about who wrote them, when, and why. You will also need to consider whether the author is a reliable or credible source of information. In order to help you with this task, each document is prefaced with a very brief background statement as well as some guiding questions.

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## Document 1: On Marriage of Deaf Individuals

Alexander Graham Bell is best known as the inventor of the telephone. However, Bell's research, which eventually led to the invention of the telephone, began out of his interest in deafness. Bell's father and grandfather had both taught elocution and his mother and wife were both deaf. While this meant that Bell was unusually familiar, for a hearing person, with Deaf culture, Bell was also very concerned about the growth of the deaf population as well as the tendency of deaf individuals to separate themselves from the hearing community.

In the text below, which was addressed to deaf students at the National College for Deaf-Mutes in the United States, Bell discusses marriage between deaf individuals. As you read this text consider the following question: How does Bell feel about marriage between deaf people? Why?

### Marriage

My Dear Friends:

You have come together here from every part of the United States to receive in the National College for Deaf-Mutes

that higher education which you cannot obtain in the States from which you came.

In a very little while- it may be in one year, or two years, or more- you will separate from one another, and each go back singly to the places from which you came to begin the battle of life. You will go out into the great world, the world of hearing and speaking people; a world of people who cannot spell upon their fingers or make signs. Are you prepared for that change, and what is to be your position in that world?

I would have you all remember that you yourselves are a part of that great world of hearing and speaking people. You are not a race distinct and apart, and you must fulfil the duties of life and make your way to honorable positions among hearing and speaking people.

Now, I have considered what subject I could bring to your attention tonight, the consideration of which would be of assistance to you when you go out into the world; and there is no subject, I am sure, that lies closer to your hearts than the subject of marriage.

It is a very difficult thing for me to speak to you upon that subject, because I know that an idea has gone forth, and is very generally believed in by the deaf of this country, that I want to prevent you from marrying as you choose but, my friends, it is not true you can marry whom you choose, and I hope you will be happy for you all know that I myself, the son of a deaf mother, have married a deaf wife.

I think, however that it is the duty of every good man and every good woman to remember that children follow marriage, and I am sure that there is no one among the deaf who desires to have his affliction handed down to his children. You all know that I have devoted considerable study and thought to the subject of the inheritance of deafness, and if you will put away prejudice out of your minds and take up my researches relating to the deaf, you will find something that may be of value to you all.

The Rev. W. W. Turner of Hartford was the first, I think, who showed that those who are born deaf have a greater liability to have deaf offspring than those who are not. He showed that where a person born deaf marries another person born deaf, that in this case about one-third of the children are deaf. It is obvious that persons born deaf run considerable risk of having deaf offspring if they marry persons who are also born deaf. Look at the family rather than the individual. In the vast majority of cases reported deaf from birth there is an undoubted tendency to inheritance.

Bell, A. G. (1889). *Marriage: an address to the deaf*. Washington, DC: Sanders Printing Office.

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## Document 2: Another View on Marriage of Deaf Individuals

This selection is from a much longer book written by Thomas Widd, a deaf man who spent much of his life advocating for deaf education. The book provided a history of Deaf individuals in Canada and also discussed issues of importance to Deaf communities, particularly education. Taken as a whole, it seems that Widd's motive for writing the book was to convince his readers that deaf and hard of hearing individuals could and should be educated. In this short excerpt, however, Widd chooses to address a different topic-marriage. As you read this document consider some of the following questions:

1. Based on this text, what can we infer about Canadian society's attitude towards marriage of deaf individuals? Or, to put it another way, what led Widd to write about marriage among deaf individuals?
2. What evidence does Widd use to support his argument?
3. How does this text compare with Bell's? Do you find one more compelling? Why?

### Marriages Among Deaf-Mutes

We will now consider the marriage of the deaf and dumb with each other. We have known people to declare that such unions are very wicked, and ought not to be allowed; but their opinion is mainly founded on the belief that this

intermarriage invariable perpetuates the infirmity, which is quite a mistake. We admit that the children of deaf and dumb parents are occasionally similarly afflicted, but the cases are rare- they are quite the exception. In London we know of 114 instances of this kind of union; 76 marriages have had offspring, but in only seven of these instances is the offspring deaf and dumb, and in these cases one or more of the brothers or sisters of one of the parents have been so afflicted. On the other hand, we know of deaf and dumb parents who have had as many as nine children, not one of which was deaf; we have known, on the contrary, cases where both parents have had all their faculties, but out of ten children five have been deaf and dumb.

Widd, T. (1880). *The deaf and dumb and blind deaf-mutes, with interesting facts and anecdotes; a short history of the Mackay institution; an easy method of teaching deaf-mutes at home; the audiphones etc.* Montreal: F. E. Grafton Publisher.

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## Document 3: "Fallacies Concerning the Deaf"

This text is also written by the famous inventor Alexander Graham Bell, who has been discussed above under document 1. As you read this text, consider the following questions:

1. Why did Bell write this text?
2. What idea was he trying to get across to his audience?
3. Why did he need to express this idea?

### Fallacies Concerning the Deaf

The majority of people at the present day believe that those who are born deaf are also dumb because of defective vocal organs. The hypothesis that congenitally deaf children do not naturally speak because their vocal organs are defective involves the assumption that were their vocal organs perfect such children would naturally speak. But why should they speak a language they have never heard? Do we speak any language that we have not heard?...The deaf have as perfect vocal organs as our own, and do not naturally speak because they do not hear. The deaf children of Italy and Germany are almost universally taught to speak, and why should we not teach ours?...

To unreflecting minds it appears that we grow into speech; that speech is a natural product of the vocal organs, produced without instruction and education; and this

leads directly to the fallacy that where speech is wanting or imperfect the vocal organs are defective. The idea gives rise also to the popular notion that stammering and other defects of speech are diseases to be “cured”. If parents realized that stammering and other defects of speech were caused by ignorance of the actions of the vocal organs, and not necessarily through any defect of the mouth, they would have their children taught the use of the vocal organs by articulation teachers, instead of patronizing the widely-advertised specialty physicians, who pretend by secret means to “cure” what is not a disease. Speech is the mechanical result of certain adjustments of the vocal organs, and if we can teach deaf children the correct adjustments of the perfect organs they possess, they will speak.

Bell, A.G. (October 27th, 1883). Fallacies concerning the deaf, and the influence of such fallacies in preventing the amelioration of their condition. Washington, DC: Judd & Detweiler.

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## Document 4: Teaching Deaf People to Speak

This short article appeared in the *Globe* newspaper, which was a precursor to today’s *Globe and Mail*. In this piece, the author recounts a meeting between R.H. Grant, Minister of Education for Ontario, and a group of parents whose children were deaf. As you read this article consider the following questions:

1. What does this article tell us about the education of deaf students in Ontario?

2. What change are the parents asking for?  
What motives might lead parents to ask for this change?

### Want Deaf Pupils Taught To Speak Parents Anxious That Children Learn Use of Vocal Organs

Anxious to keep their children out of the class commonly regarded as dumb, a deputation of parents of children attending the Ontario School for the Deaf at Belleville yesterday visited Hon. R. H. Grant, Minister of Education, to urge the adoption of methods to further the teaching of speech and lip-reading. They asked that the use of signs be eliminated as much as possible and lip-reading be emphasized. To accomplish this aim, they asked that more supervisors be provided, if possible, and that those taught manual conversation be separated from those learning oral methods.

The deputation spoke appreciatively of the work of the institution, and made it clear that their visit was not prompted by hostility towards the conduct of the school, but by the hope of helping to better methods. Dr. C. B. Coughlin, Superintendent of the school attended at the request of the Minister.

### Limits Conversation

Hon. Mr. Grant expressed sympathy with the requests of the deputation, and stated that he would give them every consideration and do everything possible to further the education of deaf children.

In explaining the significance of the deputation’s request to *The Globe*, Dr. Coughlin pointed out that the manual method does not lead to a knowledge of English, and further limits persons acquainted with it alone to conversation with others familiar with the signs. On the other hand, lip-reading enables the deaf to talk to normal persons, and can be combined directly with the reading of the written word.

Most deaf persons, if taught carefully, could learn to speak, he said. They had, however, to have conscious control of tongue movements in which respect they differed from normal persons. Careful supervision was required to get them accustomed to continued oral communication, and it was for this reason that the deputation requested more supervisors.

(1920, June 19). Want deaf pupils to speak: parents anxious that children learn use of vocal organs. *The Globe*, pp. 8.

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## Document 5: Retaining Sign Language in Schools

This short article also appeared in the *Globe* newspaper two years after the previous document. It explains that the Ontario Association for the Deaf had voted to formally protest attempts to stop the teaching of sign language in deaf schools (this would be replaced with “articulation” or lip-reading and speaking). As you read this document, consider the following questions:

1. Why would the Ontario Association for the Deaf protest against the teaching of articulation?

2. Why would the Ontario Association for the Deaf oppose the establishment of “day schools,” which would see deaf students taught in the same schools, and sometimes the same classes, as hearing students?

## Sign Language Needed By Deaf

Association Formally Protests Attempt to Abolish Present System

### Oppose Day Schools

Brantford, July 4- The concluding sessions of the Ontario Association for the Deaf were held here today.

The association went on record as formally protesting against the attempt being made to do away with the sign language, as only by this means could the benefits of social, intellectual and community gatherings be enjoyed. They favored also the enactment of a Provincial regulation requiring all medical practitioners to report all cases of deafness among persons under 18 years of age, so that they could receive education, and also opposed the proposal to establish day schools for the deaf throughout Ontario, believing that the Belleville Institution served every requirement of the deaf. President P. Fraser commended the Ontario Government for constructional work at the institution, and the interest it showed in the deaf children.

(1922, July 5). Sign language needed by deaf: association formally protests attempt to abolish present system. *The Globe*, pp. 2.

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## Document 6: Oral vs. Sign Language

This article appeared in The Toronto Daily Star newspaper, the precursor of today's Toronto Star, a few years after the previous document. As you read it consider the following questions:

1. What argument is the author making about the education of deaf students?

2. How does this argument compare with the one offered in document 4?

3. Taken as a whole, documents 4, 5, and 6 give the impression that in the early 20th century there were two conflicting views about deafness and what should be done with deaf students. In your own words describe each view and identify parts of the documents that support these views.

## Instruction for the Deaf

To the Editor of The Star.

Sir: I see that several correspondents have been "boosting" the classes for the deaf in our Toronto public schools.

These classes are, I am told, strictly oral classes.

I wonder if your correspondents realize to what sort of life they are trying to condemn their children? Do they really believe that their children will be able to fraternize freely with hearing people?

Almost any oral graduate placed in a group of hearing people quickly becomes a mere spectator, having little or no part in the conversations. There may be one in a thousand with sufficient skills, dominance and personality to take an active part in a general conversation but not any more.

Are your correspondents' children among these gifted few? Or are your correspondents content that their children shall be spectators in social life hungering for real communion with their fellows?

Get a group of oral students together and ask them which they prefer, "oral" or "manual." They will at once say oral, because they know that only the very clever can become proficient in the use of the oral system. Naturally they want to be thought clever enough. Who of us, would not? But it will be noticed that if they think they are unobserved, they will communicate with one another in the "manual" system (if they are fortunate enough to know it). Ask them why they do so and they will admit that the "manual" is easier, surer and clearer than the "oral".

Parents have been heard to say that they did not want their children to learn those vulgar signs. I have been very curious to know what makes them vulgar. Is a language vulgar because it is foreign or unintelligible to us? The sign language can be both graceful and beautiful as all who have seen the deaf sing our hymns will testify.

The truth is they think it draws attention. It very likely does, but only of those who happen to be looking that way. Let an oral student speak and everyone within hearing distance will know that one different from themselves is nearby. Even adults who lose their hearing soon develop peculiar intonation in their speech.

You parents of deaf children: Why not frankly admit that

your child is deaf and secure for it a measure of happiness in an unhandicapped association with its own kind? The deaf in the deaf communities are happier, much happier, than those deaf outside the communities.

The real test of the oral system is not what can be done at school or at home. It is what will be done out in the world where the child must eventually take its place. That is where it has been my privilege to see it and test it. In a lifelong association with the deaf it has been my privilege to meet and to know intimately hundreds of deaf people. I am satisfied that the oral system alone is not sufficient for their needs. Associated with the manual system it has a very valuable place in the life of the deaf.

Since the more extended use of the oral system as a means of instruction in the Ontario School for the Deaf there has been a marked falling off in the scholarship of the graduates.

If the board of education is going to create classes for the deaf I trust that they will make them combined classes where both systems are taught.

In the foregoing I am voicing the opinion of all that I have met who are intimately associated with the deaf in other than an educational capacity.

Some of your correspondents represent the rule of the Ontario School for the Deaf against pupils going home for Christmas. It is a great hardship for the parents and pupils. I hold no brief for the authorities of the school but I am sure that it was with great regret that the rule was adopted. They found in other years that most of the students returned unfitted for work for several days and that epidemic diseases were frequently brought back with them. In a school of 300 students under 16 years of age that is a serious matter. The rule was made in the interests of the school as a whole and the student as an individual.

A friend of the deaf.

(1925, December 14). Instruction for the deaf. *The Toronto Daily Star*, pp. 6

## Document 7: The Oral vs. Sign Language Debate Continued

This article from the Toronto Daily Star is in many ways similar to the previous three documents as it deals with the on-going debate about the education of deaf students. Perhaps the most important part of this document is its date of publication. As you read this article consider the following questions:

1. What does this document tell historians about the debate on how to best educate deaf students?
2. Which "side" seems to have won the debate about how to educate deaf individuals?

### Would Extend School Plan For Hard-Of-Hearing Pupils

Recommendations for extended school service to hard of hearing and deaf pupils have been made by Dr. C. C. Goldring, director of education, to the management committee of the board of education.

He proposes that senior deaf pupils be given vocational training, that a male teacher be appointed for the deaf children, and in addition to his teaching duties he should be a guidance officer to arrange for their training, aid in placing them in employment and follow them up to give needed advice after they leave school.

Dr. Goldring also recommends that a clinic for pre-school deaf children and their mothers be established at Clinton Street school where the education of the children may be discussed with their parents and some preliminary instruction may be given.

This clinic may be held on Saturday mornings or some half day during the week. Dr. Goldring suggests that considerable publicity be given it.

"It should be made widely known that all deaf children whose homes are in Toronto can be educated in the oral classes for the deaf under the direction of the board of education," says Dr. Goldring. "Doctors and nurses should be asked to report all cases of deafness found in children of all ages. Parents of such children would then be informed of the opportunities for the training of deaf children in our schools."

### Have 5 Classes Now

At present there are five classes of 49 deaf children in Clinton Street school and 60 hard of hearing children in Kent, Kimberley, Ogden and Rosedale public schools.

Dr. Goldring points out that the hard-of-hearing pupil can speak and has language when he comes to school. His teacher has to train him to read the lips and correct his speech. But the education of the deaf pupils is a different problem, depending largely on the age at which deafness developed. Some confusion has resulted from the coming to Toronto schools of pupils trained in the sign language at other institutions. Here the teaching method is oral, Toronto teachers believing that best results can be had by use of the oral method. Dr. Goldring suggests that it may be necessary to separate the two groups. "Where signing is the mother tongue, the child has no incentive to learn speech and lip-reading joyfully, and when these are superposed on him the results are not happy," he comments.

### Suggests Early Start

Training of deaf children should begin at the age of two, or as soon as a parent finds the child is deaf, he states. "If there are sufficient mothers of pre-school deaf children, a course for them might be conducted at Clinton Street school a half-day per week," he proposes.

Special vocational training should be given adolescent deaf children, Dr. Goldring emphasizes. This is now being done for children over 14 at Central Technical school.

(1945, March 6). Would extend school plan for hard-of-hearing pupils. *Toronto Daily Star*, pp. 3

2. While Bell does not discuss it directly in this text, how do you think he felt about the gathering of deaf children into schools away from the general public?

It is difficult to form an adequate conception of the prevalence of deafness in the community. There is hardly a man in the country who has not in his circle of friends and acquaintances at least one deaf person with whom he finds it difficult to converse excepting by means of a hearing-tube or trumpet. Now is it not an extraordinary fact that these deaf friends are nearly all adults? Where are the little children who are similarly afflicted? Have any of us seen a child with a hearing-tube or trumpet? If not, why not?...

Deaf children are gathered into institutions and schools that have been established for their benefit away from the general observation of the public, and even in adult life they hold themselves aloof from hearing people; while idiots and feeble-minded persons are not so generally withdrawn from their families. Hence the greater number of "mutes" who are accessible to public observation are dumb on account of defective minds, and not of defective hearing. No wonder, therefore that the two classes are often confounded together the majority of those who for the first time visit an institution for the deaf and dumb express unfeigned astonishment at the brightness and intelligence displayed by the pupils.

Bell, A.G. (October 27th, 1883). Fallacies concerning the deaf, and the influence of such fallacies in preventing the amelioration of their condition. Washington, DC: Judd & Detweiler.

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## Document 8: Misconceptions Regarding Deaf People

In this short selection, which is part of a much longer text, the famous inventor Alexander Graham Bell discusses the inaccurate perception that some hearing individuals had of deaf people in the late nineteenth century. As you read this text consider the following questions:

1. According to Bell some hearing individuals wrongly believed that deaf individuals suffered from some sort of mental disability. What did Bell see as the cause of this confusion?

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## Document 9: Rules for a Deaf School

Harvey Prindle Peet (b. 1794- d. 1873) was an American educator. He had initially intended to devote his life to missionary work, but ended up accepting an invitation to teach at the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, Connecticut. He was later appointed principal of the New York Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. As you read through the rules Peet devised for his school, please consider the following questions:

1. All students (both hearing and non-hearing) who lived in boarding schools in the 1800s would have lived according to schedules like the one above, though the amount of time spent

training for future employment would depend on the educational goals of the school. How would you characterize the life of Peet's students based upon this document? (e.g., Did they have much free-time? Were their days highly structured?).

2. What other types of evidence would you like to have available to you to check, or verify, the conclusions from the previous question?

## **Rules for the Internal Government of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb**

### **Of the Dormitories.**

1. The hour for rising is six o'clock, and each pupil when called shall rise, dress, and turn down the bed covering for the purpose of airing the bed, and leave the room in a quiet and orderly manner.

2. After breakfast, such of the female pupils as may be detailed for this service by the Matron, shall make the beds, after which the lodging rooms are not to be visited by pupils during the day.

3. The hour for retiring is eight o'clock for the younger pupils, and nine o'clock for all others, (except the High Class, who are allowed to sit up till a quarter before ten).

4. All changing of beds, play, boisterous mirth and quarrelling are strictly forbidden; and also the taking away for any purpose whatever, any article pertaining to bed, such as pillow case, sheet, or blanket.

### **Of Meals.**

1. The hour for breakfast is half past six o'clock: dinner at half past twelve, and tea at six o'clock. Before each meal, the pupils shall arrange themselves in their respective sitting rooms, and be ready to enter the dining room at the tap of the drum.

2. Should any pupil, after having been called, fail, through tardiness, to be present at the time the blessing is asked, he shall be excluded from the dining room.

3. No breakfast, or other meal will be sent to the pupils from the dining room or kitchen, except in case of sickness.

### **Of Employments.**

The time for manual labour and household duties is from breakfast till a quarter before nine o'clock in the morn-

ing, and from the close of school till a quarter before six. During the hours thus assigned, the boys are required to be at their respective trades, and the girls to perform such domestic duties as the Matron may direct.

### **Of the School.**

1. The hours for the school shall be from nine o'clock in the morning till half past twelve, and from two to four o'clock in the afternoon. Each day's exercises shall be opened and closed with prayer.

2. At the close of the religious services in the Chapel in the morning, the several classes shall go directly to their respective school rooms, preceded by their teachers.

3. The hours of study out of school shall be from seven to nine o'clock in the evening. All talking during the hours of study, in school, and in the Chapel, is forbidden.

### **General Rules.**

1. No pupil shall leave the premises without permission.

2. No pupil shall go on to the Rail Road unless in company with a hearing person.

3. The pupils are forbidden under penalty of severe punishment to cut, mark, deface, or write on the walls, partitions, doors or any other parts of the buildings; or to stand on the desks, tables or benches.

4. No pupil shall go into the garden to pick fruit, flowers, or vegetables.

5. The pupils are forbidden to frequent the halls of the main building or to assemble on the steps and front piazza for the purpose of conversation, or to visit the teachers' rooms without permission.

6. No pupil shall go into a grog shop in order to purchase any intoxicating drink.

7. No male pupil shall wear his hat or cap in any part of the interior of the buildings, nor take it into the dining room or any of the dormitories.

Peet, H. P. (1866). *Rules for the internal government of the institution for the deaf and dumb*. New York: James Egbert Printer.

## Document 10: Education of Deaf Students in Ontario

This article appeared in the Globe newspaper, the precursor of today's Globe and Mail. It describes the author's visit to the Ontario Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb in Belleville Ontario. As you read this text please answer the following questions:

1. What is the author's attitude towards the education deaf students were receiving at the Ontario Institute? Does he feel these deaf students are receiving a good education?

2. How does the education deaf students received compare to the education you are receiving today? What are the similarities and differences?

### The Deaf And Dumb

#### A Visit To The Provincial Institution At Belleville

Belleville, June 1- No one of the Provincial institutions under the ministerial control of the Hon. A. S. Hardy is more wisely managed or more intelligently equipped, or more thoroughly practical in the plan and scope of its work than the Institution for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb. This is not a mere intellectual mill run by a staff of hired hands, but an enlarged family circle, a school of common helpfulness and mutual co-operation. The institution now contains 236 pupils- 96 girls and 140 boys- and a visit to the classrooms during school hours is a constant succession of surprises, a series of revelations, an unending wonder that so much can be accomplished for these Children of Silence. The want of speech and lack of hearing seems to beget in the mute family an intense love of study, a keener thirst for knowledge and a capacity for application beyond the common experience of the common school population. Even the younger mutes do not go to their lessons as to work, but as to a positive enjoyment, and their bright eyes and quick hands fairly race with their eager minds through the school room tasks. The sign language falling from their winged fingers gives beauty and tenderness and impressiveness to the dullest routine. Perhaps of all the rooms in this institution that where Prof. Greene meets his infant class for the daily lessons most absorbs the visitor's interest. Mr. Greene is a mute, a born teacher, an accomplished scholar and a man of keen, strong, intellectual power.

Mr. Mathison, on taking charge of the institution nine years ago, reached the eminently sound conclusion that

the infants' class was of the first importance and that one of the very best teachers should be at its head. That his subsequent experience has not led him to change his mind is proved by the fact that the class for beginners is under Mr. Greene's control. This class consists of twenty children of both sexes, of much the same ages as the ordinary junior pupils of the public schools. The method of teaching is simple but very effective. Here are a few specimen lessons. During the time that I spent in the room Mr. Greene had occasion to ground them in the difference between long and tall. He had to invite them to correct and connect a variety of simple sentences. He tested them in colors. Here is another exercise to which the children were invited. Mr. Mathison took from the teacher's desk a book, a pair of gloves and a pocket-knife and gave the book to me, the gloves to Mr. Greene and put the knife into his pocket, and then the pupils were asked to relate on their slates exactly what had been done. Most of them reported with scarcely an error, one or two even asking the superintendent for my name in order to give a scrupulously accurate account of the transaction. They were equally successful in dealing with other problems that would tax severely the brightest Public school pupils of the same age, and they did all with a zest, a cheerfulness and an enthusiasm that must make work in their service a simple delight.

I visited all the various classes and saw the work of each exemplified. One other that deserves especial notice is the class in articulation which is under the charge of Miss Annie Mathison, the clever daughter of the superintendent.

The pupils read language from her lips and take problems from her dictation with the greatest of ease. Few, however, learn to speak naturally, and perhaps the chief benefit which comes from this class of instruction is the power of reading the lips. Of equal interest is the advanced class taught by Mr. D. R. Coleman, M.A. He seems absorbed by his work, and his pupils showed great proficiency in the various branches in which they were examined. They possess a wide and accurate knowledge of geography, Canadian history, practical arithmetic and grammar, and they change sentences from the conversational into the colloquial and from the colloquial into conversational easily, correctly, and expeditiously. This is the graduating classroom, and few pupils go out from its walls without a fair educational equipment for the work of life.

Leaving the building proper, a visit was paid to the shoemaker's shop, where thirty boys are employed and where most of the boots and shoes for the mutes and a large

number for others of the Provincial institutions are made. The boys are under Master Shoemaker Nurse, and the most of them thoroughly acquire the trade and easily find good situations after leaving the institution. A number of the boys are also engaged at carpentering under Mr. M O'Donoghue, and while they do not attempt the finer branches they are made thoroughly competent for coarse work and given a training that will make them useful hands and procure them ready employment. Perhaps it would be well to provide a greater variety of industrial employment for boys. Tailoring is a trade for which deaf mute boys are well fitted. They do equally well at printing, and some few find employment in the printing offices at Belleville. Brush-making and broom-making are also light and easy trades for which deaf mutes have a preference and at which they could be profitably employed.

(1888, June 2). The deaf and dumb: a visit to the provincial institution at Belleville. *The Globe*, pp. 12.

### Document 11: Life of Catholic Boys in Quebec

The next two documents are taken from a much longer book about the development of Deaf Culture in Canada. In document 12 you will find some important information about the day-to-day routine of deaf school boys. Document 12a provides similar information for deaf school girls. As you analyze these documents, consider the following:

1. What sort of life were deaf students living?
2. What were the goals of these schools? Or, to put it another way, what did they want their students to learn? How did they want them to behave?
3. What differences do you notice between the schooling of deaf boys and deaf girls? Why do you think these differences existed?

### Life of Catholic Deaf Boys in Quebec Regular Order of the Day (1898-1899)

Institution catholique des sourds-muets, Montreal, Quebec

#### All Groups

5:00 a.m.	Rise, toilet, care of beds
5:20 a.m.	Exit
5:25 a.m.	Prayer, study
6:16 a.m.	Holy Mass
6:45 a.m.	Breakfast

#### Oral Department

7:30 a.m.	Work
9:00 a.m.	Recess
9:30 a.m.	Class
10:00 a.m.	Class
11:30 a.m.	Study
11:55 a.m.	Examination of Conscience

#### Department of Dactylogy

(using signs)

	Class
	Class
	Recess
	Work
	Study
	Examination of Conscience
12:00 noon	Dinner, Recreation
1:30 p.m.	Class
3:00 p.m.	Class
3:30 p.m.	Recess
4:00 p.m.	Work
5:30 p.m.	Recess, spiritual reading
	Work
	Recess
	Class
	Class
	Recess, spiritual reading

#### All Groups

6:00 p.m.	Supper, recreation
7:30 p.m.	Journal
7:45 p.m.	Beads, prayer
8:00 p.m.	Bedtime for children/ study for young men and adults
9:00 p.m.	Rest

Carbin, C. F. (1996). *Deaf heritage in Canada: a distinctive, diverse, and enduring culture*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson. (Reprinted from (1900). Annual report of the Catholic Male Institution for the Deaf and Dumb of the Province of Quebec. Mile-End, Quebec: Deaf and Dumb Institution Printing Office).

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## Document 12: The Life of Catholic Deaf Girls in Quebec

The deaf girls' daily life was as highly structured as their male counterparts at the boys' school. The girls rose at 5:20 a.m. for prayers, followed by housework, and then Mass. After breakfast they attended classes, had a break for lunch, and then resumed their classwork. The mid-day meal was at noon, supper was at 6:00, and bedtimes was 7:30 for the younger students and 8:00 for the others. Unlike the male students, however, the female students did not attend workshops to learn a trade, focusing instead on domestic skills such as needlecraft, cooking, and drawing (this continued well into the 20th century). They also took walks and had daily recreation periods. Religious training was the foundation of the entire curriculum, both during the week and on Sundays.

Carbin, C. F. (1996). Deaf heritage in Canada: a distinctive, diverse, and enduring culture. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, p. 79.

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## Document 13: Educating Deaf Children in Belleville

The Silent Worker was a national newspaper aimed at the deaf population of the United States. It was first published in February 1888 as the Deaf Mute Times and continued to be published monthly until June 1929. Most articles were written by deaf American authors and dealt with issues of interest to the Deaf in America. However, occasional contributions by deaf individuals from other countries did appear in some issues. In this particular article, the author describes the life of students at the Ontario Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb in Belleville Ontario (later renamed the Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf). As you read this article consider the following questions:

1. What was life like for the students?
2. In what ways was the education of these students different from the education you are receiving? How was it similar?
3. What inferences can we draw or hypotheses can we make about early twentieth century Canadian society to help explain these differ-

ences? Or, to put it another way, why would so much school time be devoted to things like sloyd (hand crafting items, particularly woodwork), religious instruction, etc.?

## Educating the Deaf of Canada—The School at Belleville Ontario

The regular school hours are from nine o'clock until noon, then from half-past one until three- excepting Tuesdays and Thursdays, when school continues until half-past three to allow for half-an-hour's instruction in drawing. Saturdays are half-holidays, the pupils have regular duties during the forenoon, but the afternoon is their own. There is one hour of evening study every school day, under the supervision of the teachers in charge. Their studies comprise, after the first two years, a regular school course. As their time at school is limited to a term of seven years, it is impossible to carry them higher than the ordinary course, although some of them are quite capable of an Academic Course.

Besides their regular school work, every child has duties assigned it. In the morning before school, they make their beds, sweep, dust, help scrub the dormitories, wash and wipe dishes, and iron. At noon the girls wash up and wipe the dishes, while some of the boys act as waiters at every meal. The boys keep the grounds and lawns in order. After school, the boys go to the various trade classes and the girls to theirs where they work until five o'clock. The boys are taught farming, carpentry, sloyd (hand crafting items, particularly woodwork), barbering, baking, printing, sewing, and show-making. The girls have instruction in domestic science, tailoring, dress-making, plain sewing, ironing and house work, and also fancy work.

They all have regular religious instruction. Every morning before school and every afternoon after school they assemble in the chapel for a few moments of devotional exercise. The Catholics receive special instruction from one of the teachers and attend their church every Sunday and appointed holy days, weather permitting. Once a month, the clergy of the various denominations in rotation, visit the school and give instruction to the pupils of their sect, through an interpreter. The pupils have many hours of recreation in which they engage, in all seasonable sports, dear to the hearts of all children of all ages and countries. During winter there is a fine skating rink on the grounds, in which they all take much pride, and where they spend hours gliding about on the smooth ice. When the ice on the bay is in fit condition they are permitted to skate all

over it, and that is a great treat indeed. Saturday evening are nearly always devoted to some entertainment. Every teacher is expected to give one Saturday evening lecture during the session, then there are Magic Lantern Exhibitions (an early type of slide projector), Literary Society meetings, and various other entertainments. The older boys are at liberty to visit the city every Saturday afternoon. Once a month the girls are permitted the pleasure, and are assigned in groups of ten or more to lady teachers, who give the afternoon to them, and all have a merry time shopping and sight-seeing.

Balis, S. C. (1907). *The Silent Worker*, 19:9, pp. 1-2

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## Document 14: A Hearing Daughter Remembers Her Deaf Parents

In this document Doris Dickson, the youngest of five children, describes her childhood growing up in rural northern Ontario in the 1930s and 40's, with deaf parents.

### Guiding Questions:

1. What does this text tell us about deaf pupils' attitude towards school?
2. What does this article tell us about the role of Deaf organizations and gatherings in the life of the Deaf community?

Mother's impishness dates almost from the day she was born on a farm near Fenelon Falls, Ontario. She remembered that her mother was impatient of her pranks, but Grandpa Elliott indulged his small deaf daughter and she, in return, loved him very much. At the residential School for the Deaf at Belleville, where she went when she was seven, she skated and climbed trees and, incidentally learned her school lessons and dressmaking she disliked but found useful later in clothing her family. She was proud that when she returned home she was able to teach her father to write and she treasured a letter he wrote laboriously after her marriage.

Dad was ten years older than Mother. Born in 1871, he was nine years old when his parents emigrated to Canada from Ireland, homesteading at Purbrook, a few miles down the river from Fraserburg where Dad later bought his farm. Although Dad always described the journey across the ocean so vividly that we were almost seasick

watching him, he remembered little of Ireland but that it was green. He had no schooling until, when he was twelve, a neighbour urged his father to give the sturdy red-haired lad a chance by sending him to the government-supported School for the Deaf at Belleville. Whenever Dad talked of this his face glowed with the memory of his joy at being able to go to school. He'd make signs to indicate how his eyes were opened and his intelligence awakened when he learned to read. He never lost his pleasure in reading: his favorite book was Robinson Crusoe. Perhaps he felt a fellow-feeling for Crusoe because of the hardships and loneliness they both suffered.

He was still at school, at 18, when word that his father was seriously ill brought him home to help support his mother and the six younger children. He worked mainly in bush camps where his strength was an asset and deafness no drawback to doing a good day's work. Working with other men felling trees when you were unable to hear their warning shouts could be dangerous, but Dad was very alert he never had an accident that was caused by his deafness.

Dad and Mother hated to miss any of the prayer meetings of the Ontario deaf people. These were social gatherings as well as church services and were a time for catching up on the lives of their deaf friends. It was at one of these meetings, when I was looking around, trying to decide which of a half dozen conversations would be most interesting to follow, that Dad turned to me and asked: "Do you feel sorry for us because we can't hear?"

I hadn't been feeling sorry at the moment, but thinking it would be callous to say so, I nodded my head.

"Don't be sorry," Dad spelled. "We are happy."

Dickson, D. (1960, December 3). *My parents were deaf and dumb*. Maclean's, pp. 18, 68-72.

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## Document 15: Deaf Organizations

This short excerpt is taken from a much longer book on Deaf Culture in Canada. As you read it, consider the following:

Why would organizations, such as the Ontario Association for the Deaf (OAD) play such an important role in the development of Deaf culture?

## Organizations

It would take a separate book just to describe in detail all of the organizations of and for deaf people that have existed in Canada since the late 1800s. Further, a complete history of many of these organizations would be next to impossible, because the original documents- such as meeting minutes and membership rosters- have been lost or destroyed. It is interesting to note the similarity of issues addressed by the various Deaf clubs, organizations, and religious groups that sprang up in different parts of the country. For example, the Western Canada Association of the Deaf (WCAD) and the Ontario Association for the Deaf (OAD) both fought through the years to maintain sign language in the residential schools, to provide better vocational training for deaf youth, and to open the doors of employment to deaf people, especially in the areas of education, business, and government. The struggle for the rights of deaf Canadians to live full and productive lives has been a focal point for many of these organizations.

The Toronto Deaf-Mute Literary Association, formed in 1875, is believed to be Canada's earliest literary association of adult deaf people. Its members met "every alternative Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock in Shaftesbury Hall (Young Men's Christian Association Building), Queen Street West, corner of James Street".

In the early winter months of 1899, Richard C. Slater, a deaf printer in Toronto, organized another literary club for deaf Ontarians. This newly formed society was known as the Maple Leaf Reading and Debating Club of Toronto. Affiliated with the International League of Success Clubs of New York in 1902, its members dubbed themselves "The Maple Leaves," and adopted as the club's motto "Learning must be won by study." Once every two weeks between October and April (sometimes May), the club held its two-hour meetings at the Rose Avenue home of Frederick Brigden, the deaf owner of a wood engraving business. Their activities generally included a study and discussion of selected literature, dialogues, or historical essays, as well as debates, readings, recitations, and cantatas- all in sign language.

Originally called the Ontario Deaf-Mute Association (1886-1910), the OAD (Ontario Association of the Deaf) is the oldest provincial association of deaf people in Canada. The first convention focused instead on forming an organization to remove "the impediments (sic) to deaf-mute progress after graduation." That resulted "from their forced social isolation and consequent degeneracy." The constitution clearly stated the objectives of the new association: "To

bring together all deaf-mutes of suitable age and intelligence at appointed meetings; to afford opportunities for consultation on all matters of interest to them, and otherwise endeavor to devise means for the promotion of the moral and intellectual well-being of those concerned."

Carbin, C. F. (1996). *Deaf heritage in Canada: a distinctive, diverse, and enduring culture*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, p. 178-182.

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## Document 16: Data about Deaf Canadians

Canada, like many other nations, regularly surveys its citizens to obtain important information about the population. Going back to before Confederation, censuses were conducted to collect information on a wide variety of issues, including the size of the deaf population. Unfortunately, much of this information is confusing at best. For instance, in the late nineteenth century, census takers identified individuals who were "deaf-mutes," meaning that someone couldn't talk, but not necessarily identifying those who couldn't hear. More recently, there has been considerable information about Canadians whose hearing is impaired, but many of these individuals would not be deaf. As a result of these difficulties, the Canadian Association of the Deaf (CAD) has taken the view that "no fully credible census of Deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing people has ever been conducted in Canada." In the absence of reliable data, the CAD claims -- with a strong disclaimer -- that one-tenth of all Canadians are hard of hearing, and one-tenth of those individuals (or 1% of the total population) are deaf.

The following table is based upon both the censuses (with their varied definitions of deafness) and a consistently administered series of surveys since the 1980s that focuses on the number of children with hearing disabilities. As you examine this table please consider the following questions:

- 1.If the data about the number of deaf Canadians is of poor quality, what might this lead us to infer about the attitude of government officials towards the deaf population?

- 2.Based on the table below, how has the place of deaf children in the larger population changed since the late 1800s?

3.How might the relative size of the deaf population influence the hearing community's perception of deafness? For example, is it likely that members of the hearing community will have frequent contact with deaf individuals?

Survey Year	Number of deaf children in Canada under 19	Total number of children in Canada under 19	Percentage of children who were deaf
1891	1622	2,278,000	.07%
1931	2317	4,322,000	.05%
1951	2295	5,309,000	.04%
	Number of children in Canada under 15 with a hearing disability	Total number of children in Canada under 15	Percentage of children who were hearing disabled
1986	48390	5,325,185	.09%
2001	23750	5,546,020	.04%
2006	23290	5,471,360	.04%

Sources: Census of Canada: 1891, 1931, 1951; Canada, Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS), 1986; Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS): 2001, 2016.

## Document 17: Public Health in Toronto

Public health was an area of growing public concern in Canada during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As in many other parts of the world this concern came, at least in part, from repeated outbreaks of communicable disease, such as typhoid and diphtheria. While the connection between disease and our study of deafness may not be obvious at first, it is important to note that disease was (and is still today) a leading cause of deafness. As you look at documents 17 and 18 please consider the following questions:

- 1.Did doctors in this period have a clear understanding of how disease spread? What evidence supports your answer?
- 2.How quickly did incidences of disease fall once public health measures were taken?
- 3.What impact would increased public health have on the size of the deaf population?

## The Public Health

Dr. Sheard Makes a Report that Places Toronto High on the List

Toronto a few years ago had an ill reputation for contagious disease. Many explanations have been given for the terrible ravages of diphtheria, the most probable being that the dumping of garbage on vacant lots afterwards built upon during the boom period poisoned the earth and brought filth diseases upon people. The experience of German and English cities in the matter lend probability to the garbage theory as accounting for the diphtheria outbreak. During the past two years the garbage has been cremated and Dr. Sheard has prepared a report showing the cases of and deaths from contagious diseases in recent years, which proves that garbage cremation and general enforcement of disinfection and isolation precautions pays a large dividend in the saving of life. Toronto is now second among the great cities of the continent in the matter of health. Dr. Sheard's figures follow:

**TYPHOID FEVER**

Year	Cases	Deaths
1891-2	496	111
1892-3	516	80
1893-4	245	34

**DIPHTHERIA**

Year	Cases	Deaths
1891-2	1,723	410
1892-3	942	263
1893-4	301	84

Toronto's death rate from contagious diseases is, therefore, 18-100ths per 1,000 of population. This is the lowest rate in America, with one notable exception- Brooklyn, N.Y

(1894, November 15). Dr. Sheard makes a report that places Toronto high on the list. *The Globe*, p. 9

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## **Document 18: Canadian Medical Association on Infectious Diseases**

### **Doctors in Montreal Canadian Medical Association Annual Meeting Infectious Diseases**

In consequence of the exertions and ability of our medical legislators in both the Federal and Provincial Parliaments the public have been educated to the necessity of protecting their lives from the perils of infectious diseases of a preventable character. They have been taught the lesson that there is no boon more worthy of possession than life and health. In each Province a Provincial Board of Health has been established, and in each municipality, village, town and city a Local Board of Health is annually elected and a Medical Health Officer appointed. The sanitary laws are rigidly enforced in most of the Provinces. In the Province of Ontario every physician is compelled under a heavy penalty to report within a very few hours after it has come under his charge every case of a contagious or infectious nature of the Secretary of the Local Board of Health. The house in which the case is located is immediately placarded, and no inmate is permitted to attend any school until the physician in attendance certifies that the disease has disappeared and the house and its contents have been disinfected and are free from contagion.

The water used for drinking purposes is carefully looked after, and any source which has been shown to be impure is closed up or condemned and the public forbidden to

make further use of it. When any section of a city, town, or country is shown to be insanitary the Provincial Board of Health, upon being notified, immediately proceeds to put it in a condition not dangerous to health. The milk furnished in towns and cities for domestic use is carefully inspected, and the results published several times a year, and a heavy fine is imposed when an impure article is offered for sale. The herds of milk vendors are frequently inspected and tested for tubercula by competent men, and all tuberculous animals are promptly destroyed.

Drainage in all the larger towns and cities is vigilantly looked after, and sanitary inspectors carefully examine all plumbing and report thereon to the Board of Health. The results following the above precautions have been most gratifying. Diphtheria, typhoid fever and smallpox have been almost stamped out in many localities, and scarlet fever and measles have been very much modified in their course may we not confidently hope that within a few years humanity may be secured from most infectious diseases? Preventive medicine now stands upon a sound and promising basis in Canada.

(1897, August 31). Doctors in Montreal: Canadian Medical Association annual meeting. *The Globe*, p. 5.

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## **Document 19: Price of Complacency**

This newspaper article discusses a spike in the number of instances of Rubella, or German measles, in Ontario in the mid 1970s. As in the late 1800s and early 1900s this rise in the rate of communicable diseases led to an increase in the number of deaf students in Ontario. As you read this article consider the following: Did Canadian society's attitude towards deaf, blind, and other groups change during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries? What evidence do you see of change? What evidence do you see of continuity?

### **Price of complacency: Blind, retarded children.**

Children are still being born blind, deaf and mentally retarded in Metro because their mothers caught German measles during pregnancy.

Twenty five infants were admitted to the Hospital for Sick Children in 1975 suffering from birth defects caused by a disease most people think of as a harmless childhood infection.

"I don't know how society justifies even one case of neurological damage which is a direct result of rubella (German measles)" says Dr. Ronald J. Christie, past president of the Metro Toronto Association for the Mentally Retarded.

This week is Mental Retardation Week, a time to remember that close to 600,000 people in this country are afflicted with some form of brain damage.

What profoundly troubles Christie, chief of general practice at Humber Memorial Hospital, is that society has the means to eradicate at least one known cause of brain damage- rubella- and we aren't using it effectively.

### **Alarming Rate**

"Rubella is definitely a problem in Canada," Dr. Crawford Anglin told The Star, "because we're not using the rubella vaccine as extensively as we should be."

The rates are so alarming in comparison with U.S. rates that Anglin, chief of infectious disease services for the Hospital for Sick Children, has been asked to determine the number of rubella-damaged children born in Ontario in the past 10 years.

When a vaccine to immunize children against rubella, red measles and mumps was developed a dozen years ago, Christie said, free mass immunization was carried out.

"The vaccine is still free. The Minister of Health makes it available," he added, and the network of public health nurses is willing and able to carry out continuous mass inoculations.

Christie believes people have lost sight of the damage rubella can do to the fetus inside a pregnant woman.

It's not. Rubella can produce any kind of neurological damage in the fetus, Christie said, including deafness, blindness and mental retardation. We have not successfully eradicated rubella with vaccine he added, for a second reason: In the past, it was recommended that doctors inoculate youngsters around age 1, but recent research indicates "that may be too early for immunization. It is now recommended for infants age 15 months."

### **11 Years Ago**

"The situation was brought home to me very dramatically last week," said Christie. "My own son came down with red measles"- even though he had been immunized against red measles, rubella, and mumps with one vaccination

"when he was 13 months old, but that was 11 years ago."

The 25 infants admitted to Hospital for Sick Children in 1975 are proof that immunization programs aren't being used effectively, Christie said.

"What I am suggesting first of all is that we begin again to mass immunize our youngsters."

"Then we must determine the level of immunity of women of child-bearing age through a simple blood test."

Carey, A. (1977, May 10). Price of complacency: blind, retarded children. Toronto Star, p. E1.