

# SIGN



A game about being  
under  
stood.

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A non-verbal live action game for  
4-6 players playable in 1.5 hours.



SIGN

# Introduction.

SIGN is a game about being understood.

To be understood, we need to communicate -  
and communicating isn't always easy.

Nicaragua in the 1970s had no form of sign language. If you were deaf, you had simple gestures with a trusted few, likely nothing more than a form of pantomime you negotiated with your family to meet basic needs. Even among your closest circle, you had few tools for deep expression and were forced to keep your anxieties and joys bottled within. You would likely never learn to read. You may never even meet another deaf person. In a very real sense, you were alone.

In 1977, something happened. Fifty deaf children from across the country were brought together to an experimental school in Managua. They were tasked with learning lip reading, but by and large they did not. Instead, something far more remarkable grew out of that experiment. For the first time, these children were amongst their true peers. Those who could understand them and be their friends. Without a shared language to express themselves, the children did the only thing they could - they created one. In no exaggeration, these children built the foundation of modern Nicaraguan Sign Language, giving voice to the Deaf across an entire country.

In SIGN, we follow a small piece of their journey. Together we will share the frustration and loneliness of not having a language. We'll slowly develop the tools necessary to express what's important to us. We will explore which words we choose to define together, and what that says about ourselves, our deepest desires, and the relationships we build.

# Structure.

Before the game begins, choose one player to be the facilitator (we're assuming that's you, dear reader). You're welcome to share responsibilities as both facilitator and player while in the game. Begin by reading the Introduction aloud to the rest of the players. Provide a basic outline of gameplay: after two warm-up exercises, the game takes place over three class sessions, three recesses and a final class. At the start of each class and recess, it's your job to make sure the players read the instructions for the relevant section. Do not do this by reading the instructions aloud! The majority of the game will be silent. Instead, before each phase, turn to the relevant page (as guided in the facilitator notes) and point for the players to read it. As a facilitator, here is a checklist of game preparations:

- Read the instructions beforehand and have printed versions available for play. It's best to print single sided for easy distribution.
- Make cutouts of character sheets and language cards
- Have an implement to keep track of time
- Make sure players don't have name tags on their bodies before the game begins
- Gather a few items:
  1. Notecards
  2. A marker for every player
  3. A chair for every player
  4. Optionally, a ball or other play items for recess.

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Classes take place sitting in a circle. Recess is held walking around and having freeform interactions. Keep recesses long enough for each character pair to have a chance to interact. Around 10-15 minutes for each recess is a good rule of thumb but they may be shorter depending on number of players. For classes, get as many chairs as there are players and arrange them in a circle so players can see each other. During recess, players should not stay in their chairs unless necessary. Remind everyone that the door is always open if a player wishes to leave for any reason.

An encouraging note: A game that features silence may seem challenging on first read. However, with every run, we've been absolutely amazed by how quickly the players develop language and have an experience that is both fun and moving. Silence is an important tool for empathy. Don't let the quiet scare you, embrace it!

# Others' words.

To get you in the right headspace while thinking about Sign, here is what some others have had to say about their experiences playing it.

“I wasn’t expecting it to be so sweet. We were a bunch of kids who were completely isolated and couldn’t communicate even with our families, dumped into a room together. As we developed basic signs for a handful of words, we started to communicate and connect to people for the first time in our lives. That was super powerful, but the backstories that we were trying to communicate were even stronger. Loss, fear, hopes and dreams, suddenly we weren’t alone with these feelings anymore. It brought out some pretty big feelings in us.”

--K. F.

“[Sign] had no spoken dialogue whatsoever; we developed words and tried to understand each other. It was so much fun playing 7-9 yr old children, getting to know each other as much through play as through our emergent language. A beautiful game.”

--A. R.

# Facilitator Notes.

Before you start, here are a few notes:

Playing with a teacher. While facilitating, you have a choice. You may either play as one of the children, or you may choose to take a more organizational role as the teacher. This role is encouraged for facilitating games of 6 players (where the facilitator would be the 7th person). The teacher doesn't take an active role in the classes or recess other than keeping the children organized and doing their predefined tasks. That being said, feel free to play with that depending on the vibe. If you think it would be fun to break up a brewing conspiracy during recess, go ahead! The only restriction is, no talking. The teacher is hearing.

The teacher also has a "Sign your name" flyer to remind the players to introduce themselves at the beginning of each class.

Touch boundaries. When playing Sign, it's natural for players to want to tap each other to get their attention or to rough-house during play. Please establish clear boundaries for physical contact before play begins.

On deafness. We've taken great lengths to get input from members of the Deaf community to make sure we treat the topic with empathy and respect. That being said, it's important to stress one thing. This game is not about the modern deaf experience in any way. Sign languages across the world are beautiful, nuanced and complex forms of communication. The game is about experiencing what it is to come together without language and building those tools told through an inspiring true story. We stress this in the debrief notes as well to make sure the players are aware, but feel free to point it out beforehand as well.

Distributing Class Instructions. Before each class and recess, the students will read the class instructions from a printed copy of the rules. This is usually done communally, by placing a copy or two of the instructions turned to the appropriate page on the floor between the players while they sit. If possible, two copies of the classroom instructions (all pages from "First Class: Introductions" to "Final Class: Reactions") is usually more comfortable than reading from a single copy. We encourage printing one extra copy which can be given to a player who may prefer to read the instructions alone, either due to personal preference or for accessibility.

And now you're ready to play! Instructions to the facilitator will be provided in white text in a black border throughout the instructions.

Facilitator: Direct everyone to be seated in chairs in a circle. Read aloud the "Introduction" and give an overview of gameplay. When ready, go to the next page titled "Warm Up 1," and read it aloud.

# Warm Up 1.

# Language

Sign is a LARP exploring the journey to being understood. Our first exercise is meant to help us appreciate our tools for communicating with the world (be it vocal or not). We'll explore how subtly we convey our emotions, desires and inner thoughts.

Sitting in a circle, players will each take turns saying “*hello*” in whatever form is most natural to them.

When you say the word, imbue it with a different overtone or agenda so as to communicate something more about who's speaking and what they're feeling. Think a timid hello, a bubbly hello, a suspicious hello, a hello said to family or a hello said in an interview. Explore all the nuance of communication that you can express with a single word.

Facilitator: Give about five minutes for the above exercise. Ask the players if they have any questions, since the game will soon go entirely silent. Once complete, turn to the “Warm Up 2.” page and read it aloud.

# Warm Up 2.

# Gesture

Close your eyes for a moment and sit in the stillness. Open your eyes and touch your hands. These are your new instruments for communication. If you knew how to speak with your hands before, it's now lost.

As a second exercise, we'll replay the first warm-up of exchanging hellos, except now players will wave instead. This is meant to get us comfortable with communicating who we are through our gestures.

You should still aim to convey the same emotion as you did the first time around, now using your hands as your primary tool of expression. Think a timid wave, a bubbly wave, a suspicious wave ... recall the qualities from the last warm up and try to repeat them.

Note what is easier or harder to say with gestures. Practice communicating emotion with your new interface to the world.

Facilitator: Allocate around ten minutes to the above exercise. After it's complete, read aloud the pages "A Word About Language" and "Before the First Day".



# A word about language

In the course of the game, you'll be compelled to use and define new language just as the Nicaraguan children did. When starting out, everything you'll be doing is improvised pantomime. That's fine -- in fact, pantomimed sign is exactly what Nicaraguan deaf children did with their hearing families. Own the pantomime, since it's all you have to begin with. That being said, this isn't charades. Keep your feet planted and limit your signed movements from the waist up. Focus on your hands as your mouthpiece to the world.

For inspiration in creating new signs, here are a few simple guidelines:

- Draw from your character.
- Draw from the setting.
- Draw from each other.

If "happiness" is your cat at home, sign it. If "pain" is the dog your character lost two summers ago, let that inform your sign. If "beauty" is the way another character made you feel, sign the design on their shirt or the thing they did to make you laugh. Be expressive and creative with the signs you introduce. Without grounding a sign in the real world, the symbol is easily forgotten.

In speaking with your hands, you will need to make compromises between what you want to say and what you can make understood. This is important. Every time this happens, be honest with yourself and acknowledge the compromise. Accept the frustration of being unheard and monitor what you need to give up in order to communicate.

Whenever you feel you have not been understood or you have failed to understand someone else, take the marker provided to you and make a mark on one of your hands - the size and location are up to you. This is a mark of compromise. It will act as a reminder throughout the game that you have compromised in communication.

Facilitator: Next, pass out two character cards to each player. Then begin reading the "Before the first day" sheet aloud to the players.

# Before the first day

You have two characters to choose from. Pick one. Place the other on the floor and the teacher will come around momentarily to collect them. If you have any questions remaining, please raise them now as we will shortly be going into silence.

Facilitator: Once all players have chosen their characters read the passage below.

Close your eyes for a moment and envision the child whose story you just read. Think of a new memory and visualize it.  
Make the character your own.

Facilitator: After allowing the players to reflect, read the paragraph below.

From now on no speech or  
established forms of sign language.

No writing except when specifically instructed.

Facilitator: Pass out the “First Class” sheet to the players and have them read.

# First Class: Introductions

You've met a few deaf people in your life, but never this many - it's surreal. For the first time you're with a group of people who are like you. Even more than your parents, these may be the only people who can truly appreciate who you are. If only they understood anything you had to say.

Before the day starts, the facilitator will pass out character cards. Choose one and hand back the other. Everyone embodies a Nicaraguan student on their first day at a school for the deaf. Each student brings with them a different background, personality, and truth. Let this create a framework to start from, but it needn't be overly confining. Take ownership of your character and fill in the blanks.

The first day begins with introductions. One by one, each student will introduce themselves to the class by giving their name in sign. Their name is then repeated one by one by every other character in the circle. This act is an important one. You'll have a name on your character card, but remember, it's not one you've ever actually heard. For the rest of the game, this sign is your real name.

On a student's turn, once everyone has repeated their signed name, the student will give a brief description of themselves, as you would on the first day of class. The process of introducing their name, a class-wide repetition, and giving a brief introduction is repeated for the next student.

Cycle through each character until everyone has had a chance to introduce themselves. Next, look at your character card, and mentally fill in the two blank relationship goals. The chosen players may change throughout the course of the game, but mentally enumerate these relationships. These initial impressions will inform how your friendships develop throughout the experience and will give you a basis for how to approach another player at recess.

Facilitator: Try to keep the above to less than 15 minutes. When time is up, gather the children and point them to read the next section: "The First Recess. Small Talk"

# First Recess: Small Talk

Recess arrives and with it comes the first opportunity to interact with fellow students in the schoolyard. This is freeform, and each student should have a conversation with every other student, centered around small talk. Let this interaction be informed by the first impressions and relationship goals you've defined.

If you had a gut reaction about someone, do your best to communicate it during this phase. Each interaction should have at least one contribution from each side, getting the other student's reaction to the original phrase. Most of all, follow what feels natural to you in the moment.

Remember to mark compromises.

Facilitator: When time is up, lay out all language cards face up on a table so they're visible to all children. Have the children introduce themselves and then instruct them to read "The Second Class". Once they're done, have them sit in the circle for the next class.

# Second Class: Tools

The second class is about tools. It's a first step toward true agency and building deeper relationships.

You've had a chance to meet other students, now we can start defining words that will help you communicate what's important to you. From the language cards laid out before you, pick one. Pick a card that helps express something meaningful. The words you have aren't totally under your control, but they're a step toward something more.

We will sit in a circle and take turns introducing words. On their turn, a student holds out their word and introduces a sign for that language item. One by one, each student repeats the sign for the item and the card is placed on a table face up. The process continues until every character has had a chance to introduce a language element. You now collectively own all the language you've defined, which will sit on the table for the rest of the game. Feel free to practice these new words together.

Before starting class, re-introduce yourself to the class. Take turns signing your name. If needed, keep the sign that says so out as a reminder.

Remember, words should be tied to either something you know, have seen, or that came out of an interaction during recess. Try to avoid gestures for words without motivation as they're easy to forget.

Facilitator: When they're done, gather the children and point them to read the "The Second Recess".

# Second Recess: Bonds

This recess is about trying to form bonds. You've made small talk and established some impression of the others. At once, you're excited and scared; you've found people who may be able to connect with you on a deeper level.

We now have a recess freeform session. During this phase, take turns talking with each student once again. This time, begin opening-up and telling your truth to someone you trust. Steer conversation toward your truth, but only as it's appropriate for the relationship. Remember the words you've just collectively defined -- use the words the children have created in whatever way feels most fitting in the moment.

This will be a frustrating experience. You don't have the language to say what you need to say. When you get to a point of frustration, don't shy away from it. Acknowledge it with a compromise marker. Once you've settled from this concession, continue on in conversation.

Facilitator: When time is up, lay out enough notecards and writing implements for all players on the table. Have the children sign their names then instruct them to read "The Third Class". Once they're done, sit them in a circle again with the cards they've defined in hand.

# Third Class: Control

This class is about taking control of your language. We'll repeat the content of the previous class, except now you'll be driving what words are defined. Write down one word that is critical for you on an index card. Pick a word that helps express your truth and that can bridge some of the compromises you've made along the way. This is your moment for complete agency in how you communicate and a signal for how the language you've collectively defined could develop going forward.

On your turn, hold out your index cards and establish a sign for that language item. One by one, each character repeats the sign for the item and the card is placed on the table face up. The process continues until every character has had a chance to introduce a language element. You collectively own all the language you've defined.

As with all classes, don't forget how we start the day.

Sign your name.

# Third Recess: Friends

You now have more command over language than you've ever had. This is your moment to use it. We have another freeform session. During this phase, sign your truth as plainly as you can or want, to whoever you trust with it.

Say all you need to say.

Facilitator: When time is up, gather the children and point them to read "The Final Class". For one final time, arrange them in a circle.



# Final Class: Reactions

In the final class, we'll reconcile how far we've come in this journey of understanding and being understood. We'll explore the dynamics of the relationships we've built along the way. Each student in turn will be put in the spotlight. Every other student will take turns answering the following questions about this character in sign.

- Describe the spotlight student
- How does the spotlight student make you feel?

Facilitator: When the above is over, turn to the final page and read it aloud to the children.

# Epilogue.

(To be read by the Facilitator)

And thus ends our final class. You may now speak and hear again. We leave these children with their new friends, a little less afraid than when we first joined them.

# Debrief.

Facilitator, on to one of the most important parts of the game - the debrief. The players will naturally need some time to process the experience, and after doing so will likely want to talk about their characters and their truths. This is cathartic. We encourage you to gently guide the discussion towards the players' emotional responses as well. This will help the players reflect on the experience of play and reinforce what the experience meant. Here are a few questions that help the players think more deeply about the language.

- Did you create signs outside of class?
- Did any signs change in meaning?
- Did the physical shape of signs change over time? Did they become faster?
- What was the hardest thing to communicate? What about the easiest?

We have a few facts that we would encourage you to bring up during or after the debrief.

Privilege. The students described in this game are more privileged than their real-world counterparts were. We mean this both materially and emotionally. This was a conscious decision and compromise we made to make the play experience more approachable. Please keep this in mind as you internalize these childrens' stories.

Sign Language. What we developed over this game are the baby steps towards how languages are formed. Fully developed signed languages as a whole are immensely expressive and beautiful - every bit as complex as spoken language. As such, we would like to stress one thing: This game is not about the modern deaf experience in any way. It's about coming together and building the tools for communication, told through the lens of an inspiring ture story.

Nicaraguan Sign Language Projects. The original person to uncover the magic behind what the children had made was Dr. Judy Shepard-Kegl. Since then, her focus has moved from academic study to intervention. With her husband James, they founded the Nicaraguan Sign Language Project which funds teachers of Sign Language in Nicaragua and runs clinics across to country in order to give language to those who never had one before. If this experience moved you, please consider making a donation at:

<http://www.nicaraguansignlanguageprojects.org/>

Heartfelt Thanks. Thanks to our playtesters! Thanks to the Golden Cobra Judges!

Facilitator: We hope you had a good time! Thank you for running the game!  
Please let us know how the experience went.  
Find us at [www.thornygames.com](http://www.thornygames.com).

# SIGN



**Name:** Claribel Téllez / Alfonso Hegg

**Background:** Reckless and brash, you always managed to find a way to get you and your little brother into trouble. With Emilio at your side, you explored every nook and cranny of your small town and the surrounding hills. You often got away unsupervised while your parents worked in a local coffee plantation. Though your family is quite poor, your adventures and troublemaking are good distraction from the struggles of daily life.

Your primary target for mischief was the neighbor's small farm. Whether it be sneaking up on the goats and seeing how high they would jump when startled, chasing the chickens around the coop or stealing vegetables under the cover of darkness for a late night snack, there was always something to make you feel alive. Emilio kept watch for adults who may have heard and was always ready to pull you away for a fast getaway.

Emilio was the only one who ever came close to truly understanding who you are, and was your first real friend. You've never been able to tell Emilio how much he means to you, but you hope you will be able to soon.

**Personality Traits:** Outgoing, brash, adventurous

**Truth:** I'm afraid Emilio will forget about me while I'm away.

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to explore the schoolhouse with \_\_\_\_\_  
I want to make \_\_\_\_\_ face something they're afraid of

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**Name:** Rosario Alegría / Joaquín Cortés

**Background:** You live for others. Your mother was often sick and it was you who helped your grandmother care for her. Your father left long ago, so you've taken many responsibilities on yourself. You cleaned and cooked basic items for your family as a young child, and found you had a knack for it. Your proudest dish was a special sponge cake you made in secret for your mother's birthday. Your mother and grandmother beamed when you brought it out from the kitchen. After this success, you decided you wanted to grow up to be a great chef. When you heard you would be sent away you were furious, but acquiesced to your mother's wishes. You miss your mother, grandmother and parakeets.

**Personality Traits:** Introverted, caring, emotional

**Truth:** I'm afraid my grandmother won't be able to take care of my mother.

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to help \_\_\_\_\_ do something they love  
I want to convince \_\_\_\_\_ it isn't as bad as it seems

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**Name:** Yolanda Murillo / José Santos Pasos

**Background:** You loved your grandfather - but the thing you remember most are his ears. He would sit you on his knee and over and over again, he would produce coin after coin from behind his ears as you watched in delight and amazement. Since then, you've relished making others laugh. It's your way of being heard. Without it, you may as well be invisible.

Funny faces are your speciality -- those always make your mother burst into giggles. You've tried telling jokes, but it's hard to get across the punchline. You're an only child, but you've always wanted siblings. You've never had close friends your own age, but not for lack of trying. Recently you've taken up juggling and hope that will bridge the gap at your new school.

**Personality Traits:** Gregarious, joking, swift

**Truth:** I'm afraid people will stop thinking I'm funny

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to make \_\_\_\_\_ laugh  
I want to learn a new trick from \_\_\_\_\_

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**Name:** Maria Romero Blanco / Luis Enrique Mejía Zelaya

**Background:** You fit into your big brother's clothes, despite the fact that he's three years older. You're tall and lanky, and find most joy when you're in full exertion - lifting something heavy, running as fast as you can, jumping farther than you ever have before. You'll be in the Olympics one day, you just haven't decided in what event yet.

You love your father. The image you recall most when thinking of him is the soccer whistle under his big bristly mustache. He coaches your team, and clearly loves every moment. It can be hard coordinating maneuvers without hearing his instructions, but you've figured out a set of gestures to discuss tactics. It's the closest you've ever gotten to a real conversation.

**Personality Traits:** Strong, brash, big

**Truth:** I'm afraid I won't be the strongest person in the school

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to impress \_\_\_\_\_ with my strength  
I want to play a game with \_\_\_\_\_

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**Name:** Sofía Meneses / Ricardo López

**Background:** People are hurtful. They scowl, wave their arms and hands and seem to think that by repeating the same thing with grander gestures they'll get their point across. At first, you tried to please them, but now you hide. It was on one such occasion, walking through the village and avoiding home, that you met a little orange tabby outside a butcher shop. The cat also seemed cast away by the others, and followed you cautiously - seeing a kindred spirit. You named her Whiskers and visit her every day after school.

Meeting Whiskers made you realize how much you love animals. Someday you'll be a veterinarian or a zookeeper, you're still deciding. Whiskers loves all the affection you give, and seems to understand you better than anyone else. You miss her dearly, more than your parents.

You never learned you would be sent away until the morning that the bus came. You had no chance to say goodbye to Whiskers.

**Personality Traits:** Scared, protective, emotional

**Truth:** I'm afraid Whiskers thinks I've left her

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to trust \_\_\_\_\_ with a secret  
I want to tell \_\_\_\_\_ a story about my cat

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**Name:** Katia Perez / Miguel Obando y Mayorga

**Background:** You make things -- always have! As a toddler, it was in a sandbox. As a youngster with building blocks and now, with whatever you can find around the village. The project you were most proud of was your cardboard castle. You and your sister Sofia meticulously gathered all the cardboard in the neighborhood. Together, you built a lean-to fort against the side of your family's house. It was massive with multiple sleeping rooms, a large living area, and even a drawbridge. Truly an engineering feat. All through the summer days, you and Sofia played in the fort. Your parents gladly brought you meals - just happy to see you two finally having fun together. Before the cardboard castle, you and Sofia never really connected. You hope that by coming back from school with language, you can grow even closer.

**Personality Traits:** Protective, creative, builder

**Truth:** I want to be an architect one day

**Relationship Goals:**

I want \_\_\_\_\_ to help me build something  
I want to tell \_\_\_\_\_ about something I made

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**Name:** Lila T. Abaunza / Emilio Álvarez Montalván

**Background:** Smart and determined, you came from a well-educated family in the capital. The only child of two professors, your earliest memories were of playing peek-a-boo with the university students and doodling in your mother's philosophy textbooks. Your father, a mathematician, made great efforts to teach you arithmetic, spending an hour with you each day doing number drills. You would try so hard to please him. Despite being a little old for it, your favorite game is still Study Hall, where you give imaginary impassioned lectures to your stuffed lamb, Tiko.

**Personality Traits:** Bookish, thoughtful, and at times bossy.

**Truth:** I'm afraid I won't be the smartest kid at school and I'll disappoint my parents.

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to teach \_\_\_\_\_ something new.  
I want to earn the respect of \_\_\_\_\_ for my cleverness.

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**Name:** Barbara Abaunza / Oswaldo Montalván

**Background:** The other kids don't know you yet, but they will soon! Confident and outgoing to an extreme, your entire village knew who you were. Whenever any shop owner needed the floors mopped, garbage taken out, or delivery made, you seemed to materialize out of nowhere. Your typical reward was lots of smiles and a few pieces of candy. In reality, you just liked helping and being important. You never even ate half of the sweets, and your generosity with them made you quite popular among your peers.

When it was time to leave, there was a big going away party for you. The local shopkeepers arranged a feast for you and your closest friends. You had a wonderful time, and truly felt loved. That's why it was so hard to go, but you know it'll be worth it. You can't wait to come back, able to communicate. Who knows what you'll be able to accomplish then!

**Personality Traits:** Natural leader, confident, brave

**Truth:** I'm afraid the other kids will ignore me

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to recruit \_\_\_\_\_ to help me do someone a favor  
I want \_\_\_\_\_ to follow me around the schoolyard

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**Name:** Violeta Carrera / Javier Castillo

**Background:** People don't forget your smile. Seeing such blind hope bursting forth from such a small package, especially one that has lived as you have, isn't easy to brush off. Life is challenging at times, but as long as you can remember your mother's smile, you always find it within yourself to don a brave face, and hopefully surface some joy in others as well. You love to give hugs, shake hands, and comfort people whenever you can. One day, you think you could be a psychologist - helping people work through their problems and be happy again.

Sadly, remembering your mother's smile is getting harder by the day. She passed away over a year ago, and not a day goes by when you don't think of her. Her long black hair that always had a flower in it, her deep laugh, her beautiful dresses. But the thing you'll remember most vividly is how hopeful she was for the world and for you. You'll never let that hope fade away.

**Personality Traits:** Cheerful, nurturing, caring

**Truth:** I'm afraid one day I'll lose hope

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to make \_\_\_\_\_ laugh  
I want to comfort \_\_\_\_\_ about something they're afraid of

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**Name:** Dora María Chamorro / Manuel Ortega Sunyer

**Background:** You're a rebel, through and through. First your parents sat you down and told you to behave, but all you had to do was outlast their stubbornness. When they locked you in your room, you pried open the window. However they tried to keep you under control, you fought against it - breaking out at night, skipping school and even running away more than once. Your favorite hiding spot was the forest at the edge of town. It was so peaceful and you loved the smell of pine. You became very good at climbing trees.

Your parents thought you didn't understand why they did what they did, that you were too dumb to get it. You understood perfectly. You saw what they did to your older brother Luis. You remember how the rebellious fire in his eyes died out to dull conformity as the years of punishments wore on him. You won't let that happen to you. Now, they've sent you off, hoping that if they only had words they could get inside your head - to make you listen. You'll learn how to communicate, but only so you can let them know what you really think.

**Personality Traits:** Rebellious, headstrong, outgoing

**Truth:** I'm afraid one day I'll be like my parents

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to help \_\_\_\_\_ stand up to something  
I want to make \_\_\_\_\_ not be afraid

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**Name:** Hilda Barrioz / Rubén Solis

**Background:** You are a bit other-worldly. Wide-eyed and dreamy, you appear to have lots going on in your head, even if you've never been able to express it. You live with your aunt and three younger cousins in a remote country town at the base of a valley. Your aunt doesn't quite know what to do with you, but often requests your help in watching after your youngest cousin, Roberto. While babysitting, you play little games by yourself, do little dances with Roberto, and often get lost in your own make-believe stories of faraway places and magical animals. Your happiest moments are looking through Roberto's picture books, especially those with colorful depictions of dragons and unicorns.

**Personality Traits:** Free-spirit, zany, gullible

**Truth:** Some day I want to be a children's book author

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to \_\_\_\_\_ to do a dance with me.  
I want to tell \_\_\_\_\_ about my favorite book

**Name:** Arlen Peña / Horacio Moreno

**Background:** You are the eldest in a family of six children in a small village. Your parents often had to leave for work for days at a time, leaving you to care for your smaller siblings. It's through experiences like this that you learned to cook, patch clothing and most crucially, help your siblings get along with each other. You often played the role of mediator, and even though you often couldn't understand what made the other children upset, you were able to be a calming presence silently urging the others to let go of their quibbles. The best days were the ones where all the children got along, and as a team you would head off to challenge others in the village to a game of soccer. Even in those games, you honestly preferred to be on the sidelines, watching and encouraging your brothers and sisters rather than throwing yourself into the fray.

**Personality Traits:** Elder, calm, mediator

**Truth:** I'm afraid my siblings will fight while I'm away

**Relationship Goals:**

I want to help \_\_\_\_\_ solve a conflict.  
I want \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy a calm moment with me

THINK

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FEEL

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FEAR

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HOPE

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BECOME

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LOVE

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WANT

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MAKE

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LONELY

---

BEAUTIFUL

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POOR

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FAMILY

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PARENT

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SIBLING

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FRIEND

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DEAF

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**SIGN  
YOUR  
NAME.**

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**TAKE  
TURNS.**