

*This section looks at the field of interpretation.*



## KEY CONCEPTS



### **What is interpretation?**

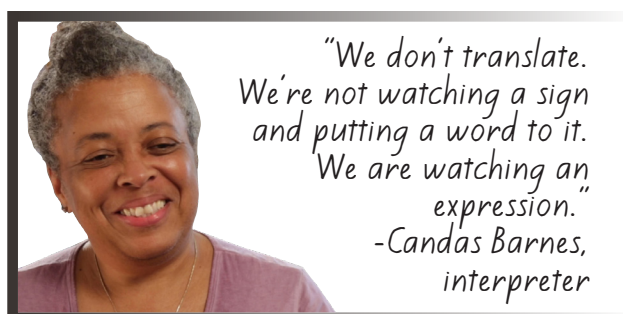
The Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (CCIE) defines interpretation as the “art and science of receiving a message from one language, understanding it, contextualizing it, analyzing it for intent, and rendering it into another language.” [See more here](#)

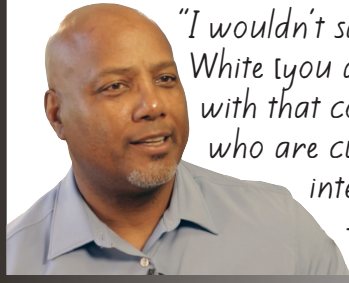
### **What do interpreters do?**

Interpreters of any language, whether it is spoken or signed, have a multi-faceted job that requires them to balance impartiality for what they are to interpret with enough investment to ensure an accurate and successful communication. They are, in other words, necessary intermediaries who are asked to maintain neutrality and confidentiality while also ensuring a successful communication between individuals of different languages and potentially different cultures.

### **Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)**

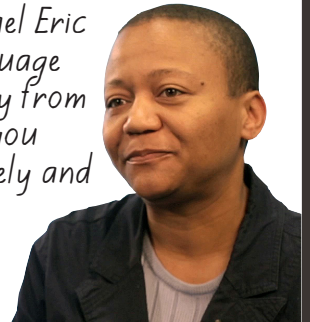
The field of ASL-English interpretation began as a profession with the establishment of the RID in 1964. Today, the RID is a national members-only organization that strives to “advocate for best practices in interpreting ... and for the highest standards in the provision of interpreting services for diverse users of languages that are signed or spoken.” ([See more here](#)) Today, possessing RID certification is a valued credential for ASL interpreters as it provides verification of an interpreter’s abilities and, in some states, it is required in order to be eligible to provide interpreting services. Additionally, to maintain certification, members’ skills are continuously monitored throughout the span of their career via continued education and compliance with the RID’s Code of Professional Conduct.





"I wouldn't say it's a matter of how Black or White [you are] ... It's 'What is your experience with that community?' ... You want people who are culturally competent to actually interpret in those environments."  
-John Lewis, interpreter

"I think of, like, a Cornel West or a Michael Eric Dyson, where you're very academic language one minute and the next it's, like, homeboy from around the corner and on the block. If you don't know how to interpret that effectively and interpret all of the cultural nuances that are there, you won't be effective as an interpreter." -Folami Ford, interpreter

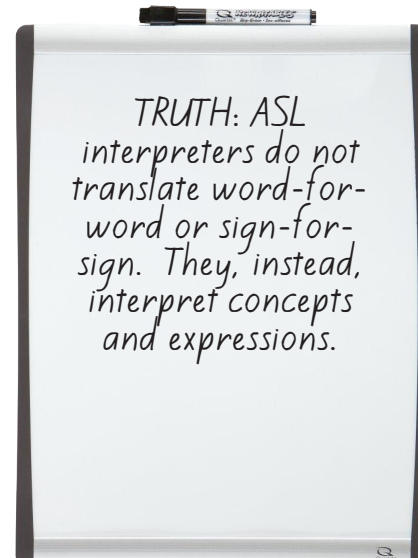


## COMMON MISCONCEPTION

people may think



the truth is



**LINGUISTIC CONSENSUS:** A knowledge of the community and culture associated with the languages being interpreted is crucial to be effective as interpreters.

## FUN STUFF

This section features a clip of Michael Eric Dyson speaking at Aretha Franklin's funeral. The clip is included to showcase how individuals can be, as Folami Ford says in the film, "academic language one minute" and then "homeboy from around the corner and on the block."



This comedic [video clip](#) highlights what a "day in the life of an ASL interpreter" can sometimes be like.



[Matt Maxey](#) was born with a severely profound hearing loss and outfitted with hearing aids at 2 years old. He founded [DEAFinitely Dope](#) based on providing support via music interpretation to those who felt marginalized and ignored by mainstream America. This [video](#) will give you a glimpse into how music is interpreted for the Deaf community.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### PRE-VIEWING

1. Have you ever been to an event (or watched a tv show or movie) that was not in a language that you knew? Did you ever feel like you were missing something that the speakers/signers of the language were not? Explain.
2. If you speak two or more languages, can you think of any words, concepts, phrases, or expressions in Language One that do not have an equivalent in Language Two? Give some examples.

### ACTIVE VIEWING

1. What are some of the examples given by the interpreters of why having knowledge of and experience with the Black Deaf community and Black Deaf culture is vital when interpreting for Black Deaf consumers?

## POST-VIEWING

1. In the film, interpreter John Lewis said being able to interpret for the Black Deaf community is less a matter of how Black or White an interpreter is and more a matter of how experienced an interpreter is with the Black Deaf community and with Black Deaf culture. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

## Additional Resources

More information about ASL interpreting can be found at the following links: the [National Association of the Deaf](#) (NAD), the [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf](#) (RID), and [Gallaudet University](#).

This [Tedx Talk](#) by Andrew Tolman and Lauren Tolo discusses ASL interpreting in more depth.

[Michael Scott](#) and [Amber Gallaway Gallego](#) are two ASL interpreters who have, in various ways, become famous ASL interpreters on social media.