CLERC CENTER
AT GALLAUDET

Bilingual Strategy: Chaining

ADMINISTRATOR WALKTHROUGH CHECKLIST

Chaining is the process of linking a concept across multiple representations (e.g., ASL, fingerspelling, print, visuals, examples) to build deeper, concept-level understanding. In an ASL/English bilingual context, it involves intentionally connecting these representations to prior knowledge to expand meaning. The focus is on developing a strong conceptual foundation by making relationships between ideas and representations explicit, not on isolated words.

This checklist is designed to guide administrator observations and feedback on how instruction supports students in building and connecting concepts across ASL and English with increasing independence.

Planning (Evidence of Intentional Design)

- ◯ Teacher identifies key concepts requiring deeper understanding
- ◯ Lesson includes multiple planned representations (ASL, print, visuals, examples, etc.)
- ◯ Representations are intentionally connected (not isolated)
- ◯ *(MS/HS)* Focus includes complex or abstract concepts

Implementation (Classroom Look-Fors)

- ◯ Teacher establishes the concept clearly in ASL
- ◯ Multiple representations are used to build understanding
- ◯ Connections between representations are made explicit
- ◯ Instruction builds understanding progressively
- ◯ Teacher checks for understanding throughout instruction
- ◯ *(MS)* Teacher prompts students to explain connections
- ◯ *(MS/HS)* Students are supported in making cross-language connections
- ◯ *(HS)* Students are given opportunities to independently connect concepts and select appropriate representations in different forms

Engagement (Student Evidence)

- ◯ Students demonstrate conceptual understanding (beyond vocabulary) of presented content
- ◯ Students connect ideas across representations
- ◯ Students use ASL to explain their thinking
- ◯ *(MS)* Students begin explaining connections across the representations with support
- ◯ *(MS/HS)* Students explain relationships between representations
- ◯ *(HS)* Students independently apply and transfer understanding of presented content (should include complex and abstract ideas)

Instructional Integrity (What to Monitor)

- ◯ Chaining supports deepening understanding, not surface-level exposure
- ◯ Representations are connected, not presented in isolation
- ◯ Instruction prioritizes meaning over coverage
- ◯ *(MS/HS)* Instruction reflects increasing student independence when sharing their understanding

Reflection (Coaching Prompts)

- ◯ How did the teacher determine which concepts required chaining?
- ◯ How were connections between representations made explicit?
- ◯ How does the teacher know students understood the concept (not just the word)?
- ◯ Where could students take more ownership in making connections?

NOTES