INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

CLERC CENTER
AT GALLAUDET

Bilingual Strategy: Chaining

TEACHER 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 teacher reflection and decision-making on how instruction supports students in building and connecting concepts across ASL and English with increasing independence.

Planning

- ◯ I identify key concepts (not just vocabulary) that require deeper understanding
- ◯ I intentionally plan multiple representations (ASL, print, visuals, examples, real-world connections, etc.)
- ◯ I determine how concepts will be connected across representations
- ◯ *(MS/HS)* I prioritize complex, abstract, or discipline-specific concepts

Implementation

- ◯ I establish the concept clearly in ASL
- ◯ I intentionally connect multiple representations (e.g., ASL ↔ print ↔ visual ↔ example)
- ◯ I make connections explicit for students (not assumed)
- ◯ I build understanding step-by-step rather than all at once
- ◯ I check for understanding throughout the lesson
- ◯ (MS) I prompt students to explain connections between representations
- ◯ (MS/HS) I support students in making connections across ASL and English
- ◯ (HS) I release responsibility to students to independently connect ideas and representations

Engagement

- ◯ Students can demonstrate understanding of the concept (not just the word)
- ◯ Students can make connections between different representations
- ◯ Students can use ASL to explain concepts clearly
- ◯ (MS) Students can begin explaining connections with support
- ◯ (MS/HS) Students can explain how different representations relate to each other
- ◯ (HS) Students can independently connect and apply concepts across contexts

Reflection

- ◯ Did I prioritize concept-level understanding rather than focusing on vocabulary alone?
- ◯ How did I intentionally connect multiple representations to build meaning?
- ◯ Did I make connections between representations explicit for students?
- ◯ How did I check for and respond to student understanding throughout the lesson?
- ◯ How did I support students in making and independently applying connections across ASL and English?

NOTES