

## LANGUAGE ACQUISITION STAGE 4

### INTERMEDIATE FLUENCY

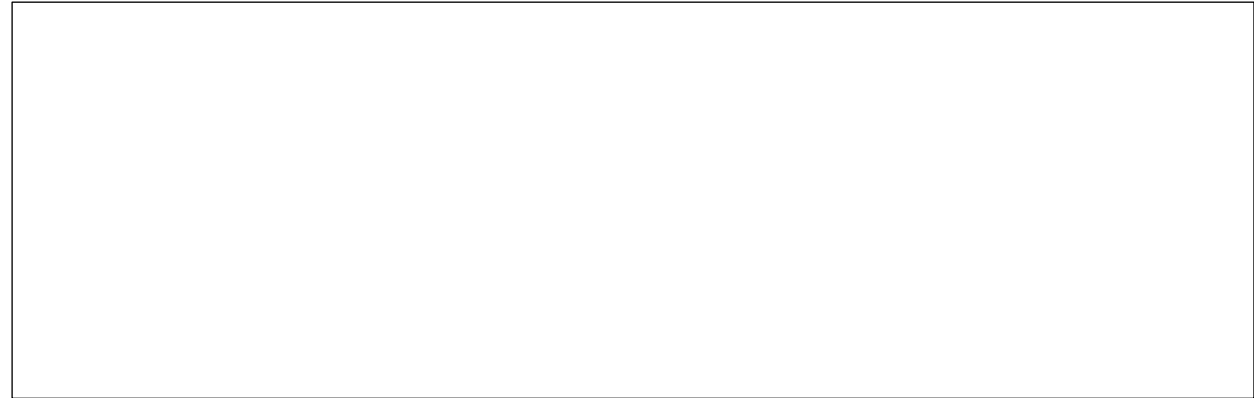
Stage four is known as “Intermediate Fluency” and takes about 3-5 years to achieve. At this stage, the student begins to use English conceptually and purposefully, to clarify ideas, concepts and other abstractions. The discourse is much more connected, and the student engages spontaneously in classroom dialogue. The student may seem fluent at this stage, but is still developing his/her CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) and therefore needs help to expand his/her academic vocabulary. The student’s vocabulary is somewhere between 3000-5000 words and the equivalent WELPA level is “Advanced”.



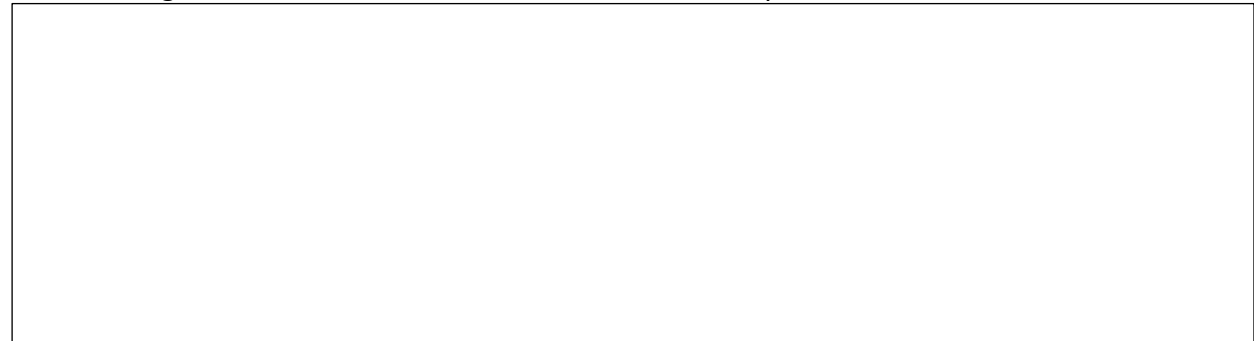
Some student behaviors that are apparent during stage four include frustration due to lack of vocabulary, mixing home language with English when trying to communicate complex ideas, and a noticeable influence of home language phonology and sentence structure. The student is able to communicate more abstract notions, and takes risks with unfamiliar words. The student is able to locate information in content area text but still looks for support in pictures, patterns and models. The student self-monitors and self-corrects while reading and is able to check comprehension with peers. The student needs formal support in the writing process, and needs to rehearse formal spoken English if required to give an oral presentation.



The teacher can support a stage four student in many ways. Provide opportunities for essay and other writing forms, directly teaching and modeling the desired forms. Provide time for students to talk over what is understood in a lesson, and provide more open-ended question prompts. Using organizers is still helpful and providing supplemental material in the student's primary language will help deepen concept understanding and will support the student's higher thinking processes.



At all stages of language acquisition students are able to think, but are not always able to demonstrate their understanding in English. Teachers must think carefully about what the student can do at this stage, and be intentional about the assessment tasks they give the student. The stage four student is able to demonstrate their understanding in ways other than oral, so encourage more formal writing, understanding that it will take the English learner longer to write than a student whose primary language is English. So an appropriate adaptation of a task might be a shorter written document, or shorter presentation.



At stage four, the student is able to provide longer and more complex sentences than in previous stages. Here are some examples for questions at stage four:

EVALUATION: "What would happen if you put a worm in the desert?"

SYNTHESIS: "What would a clam need to survive in the desert?"

ANALYSIS: "How does a bear use its claw to catch fish? Gather berries?"

APPLICATION: "How would you capture and transport scorpions to a zoo?"

COMPREHENSION: "Explain how a snake catches its prey."

KNOWLEDGE: "Give the definition of a mammal."

