

Second Language Acquisition Stages

Stage & Approximate Time Frame	Characteristics	Sample Teacher Behaviors	Sample Teacher Prompts
Preproduction 0–6 months in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimal comprehension ▪ Non-verbal responses ▪ Draws and points ▪ Actively listens ▪ Responds to commands ▪ Able to recite memorized phrases (i.e. May I go to the restroom?) ▪ Able to: observe, locate, label, match, show, classify, categorize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gestures ▪ Language focuses on conveying meaning ▪ Vocabulary development ▪ Repetition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show me ... ▪ Circle the ... ▪ Where is ... ? ▪ Who has ... ?
Early Production 6 months – 1 year in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited comprehension ▪ Produces one- or two-word responses ▪ Uses key words and familiar phrases ▪ Uses present-tense verbs ▪ Able to: name, recall, draw, list, record, point out, underline, organize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asks questions requiring ‘yes/no’ and ‘either/or’ responses ▪ Models correct response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes/no questions ▪ Either/or questions ▪ Who ... ? ▪ What ... ? ▪ How many ... ?
Speech Emergence 1–3 years in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good comprehension ▪ Produces simple sentences ▪ Makes grammatical and pronunciation errors ▪ Frequently misunderstands jokes ▪ Able to: tell, describe, restate, compare, question, map, dramatize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focuses content on key concepts ▪ Provides frequent comprehension checks ▪ Uses performance-based assessment ▪ Uses expanded vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why ... ? ▪ How ... ? ▪ Explain ... ▪ Questions requiring phrase or short-sentence answers ▪ Open-ended questions that stimulate language production
Intermediate Fluency 3–5 years in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excellent comprehension ▪ Makes few grammatical errors ▪ Able to: imagine, create, appraise, contrast, predict, express, report, estimate, evaluate, explain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce figurative language ▪ Develop academic language (oral & written) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What would happen if ... ? ▪ Why do you think ... ? ▪ How...? ▪ Questions soliciting opinions, judgments, explanations
Advanced Fluency 5–7 years in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Near-native level of speech ▪ Able to: relate, infer, hypothesize, outline, revise, suppose, verify, rewrite, assess, justify, critique, summarize, illustrate, judge, demonstrate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate how to verify answers (oral & written) ▪ Expand figurative language (idioms) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decide if ... ▪ Retell ...