Piaget’s 4 Stages of Development

Stage	Approximate age	Characteristic change	Useful teaching response
Sensorimotor	Birth to 2 years	Knowledge develops through perception and action. Intentional action and object representation become more organised.	Provide safe opportunities to look, reach, move, repeat and search. Use language alongside action without expecting verbal explanation.
Preoperational	About 2 to 7 years	Language, images and pretend play support symbolic thought, while logical coordination is still limited.	Use stories, pictures, objects and modelling. Ask the learner to show and explain one relation at a time.
Concrete operational	About 7 to 11 years	Learners can coordinate several features and use reversible logic when the problem is grounded in familiar or visible material.	Begin with manipulatives, diagrams, examples and observable comparisons, then connect these to notation and general rules.
Formal operational	About 11 years onwards	Some learners reason systematically about possibilities, variables, propositions and abstract relationships.	Teach how to form hypotheses, control variables and justify claims. Restore concrete support when abstraction overloads the task.

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