

**Graphic Organizer Activity**

**3**

**How Knowing Changes**

**Directions:** Jean Piaget studied thousands of children in order to understand how their thinking changed over time. Piaget concluded that children pass through four stages of cognitive development and that each stage has several distinct characteristics. As children pass through these stages, their schemas—mental representations of the world—change. Complete the graphic organizer by listing Piaget's four stages in the first column. List the characteristics of each stage in the second column. Then, in the third column, give an example of a schema that is characteristic of each stage. Two examples of schemas have been provided.

Piaget's Stages	Characteristics of Stage	Example of Schema
Sensorimotor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no object permanence</li> <li>• no concept of conservation</li> <li>• respond to stimuli</li> </ul>	Clay balls do not exist unless I see them.
(later in year 1) Preoperational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no concept of conservation</li> <li>• has representational thought</li> <li>• uses mental symbols/words</li> </ul>	Clay balls exist even when I can't see them. I flattened a clay ball and it now has less clay.
(age 5-7) Concrete Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has concept of conservation</li> </ul>	I flattened a clay ball but it still has the same amount of clay.
(early teens) Formal Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands abstract + hypothetical ideas</li> <li>• can use logic and reason to reach an answer</li> </ul>	If I cut a clay ball in half, I will have two balls each with half the clay of the original ball.