

Discussion Strategies

Using Clarifying Questions



Sometimes when we are discussing a topic, we need to understand what the other person is saying. We ask these questions to get a better understanding of the meaning of the person who is talking.

Examples of Clarification Questions

- What/Who/Where did you say _____ is?
- Did you say _____?
- I didn't understand what you said. What did you say?
- You said _____, right?
- You did what?

Before we use these questions, we start by saying either:
Excuse me, sorry or pardon me.

Activity 1: Listen to your partner read a news article. After each sentence or two, ask a clarifying question. After your partner is done reading the article, switch roles and read a story to him or her. Answer his or her clarifying questions.

Activity 2: Ask your partner to tell you a story about something interesting that happened to them in the past year. Then listen to your partner tell his or her personal story. After each sentence or two, ask a clarifying question. When your partner is done, switch roles and be the storyteller.