



Access English Centre  
Immigrant Centre Manitoba  
Activity Plan - Beginner



Daily Conversation Skills # 8 - Ask for Clarification  
- "I'm sorry. I don't understand."

90 minutes

**Objective/Goal:**

This activity requires the participants to work together to learn how to ask for clarification when they don't understand something and how to politely interrupt for clarification.

**Materials:**

Participants need: a worksheet of new words and picture, a matching game sheet, and flash cards.

Facilitator needs:

- whiteboard
- whiteboard markers

**Procedure:** Warm-up 15 min  
Work-out 60 min  
Cool-down 15 min

**Procedure: Asking for Clarification** - pre-teach the following phrases and vocabulary words:

1. Excuse me.
2. Pardon me.
3. Speak slowly, please.
4. Sorry, can you say again , please.
5. Sorry. I don't understand.
6. What do you mean?

**Before you begin:**

On the whiteboard write: "**Daily Communication Skills – how to ask for clarification.**" Lead the group to read aloud the new phrases and short sentences a few times. Make sure the participants understand the meaning of the phrases.

Ask the whole group "**What do you say to people if you don't understand something?**" Encourage the participants to say "**Sorry, I don't understand.**" Or "**Sorry. Can you say again, please?**" Or, "**Sorry, What do you mean?**"

## 1. Warm-up Activity

**Explain and model the activity** with a few volunteer participants. Then ask the group to follow the model and practice the short dialogue below:

**Susan:** Halima, can you work **together** with Lydia?

**Halima:** Sorry. **"together?" What does it mean?**

**Jashan:** Joanna. Can you practice this exercises with your **partner**?

**Joanna:** **Excuse me. What does the word "partner" mean?**

**Teacher:** Class. Please **repeat** it with me.

**Participant:** Sorry. What do you mean **"repeat with you"**?

## 2. Work-out Activity :

**Activity 1 - Whole class Practice Drill #1:** Have participants repeat the verbal phrases, vocabulary and the sentences with you a few times. Make sure they understand the meaning of the phrases or the new words.

Review the vocabulary by holding up the pictures and words and then asking the whole group to repeat the prompts.

**A:** "Please come school on time.

**B:** **"Sorry, What do you mean by "on time?"**

**A:** "I meant, **don't be late** for school."

**Activity 2 - Pair work: Matching the phrases with the pictures.** Divide the group into pairs and ask the participants to work together with their partner to match the words and phrases with the pictures.

**Activity 3 - Whole class Practice Drill #2:** Have participants say the correct sentence that matches the picture prompt.

This is how it works: Ask the group **"Can you give me a hand?"** and then ask them **"Do you understand the meaning of "give me a hand?"** Encourage the participants to ask for clarification, such as **"What do you mean by "give me a hand?"**

Alternate between asking the whole group, and individual participants.

- **Model all** of the partner activities before doing **Drill 2**, and make sure

that the participants understand your instructions.

- **Partner Practice Drill:** Give each pair of participants a set of the words and pictures. Ask participants to work with their partner to practice the frame sentences such as:

**"Sorry. I don't understand."** **"Sorry. Do you mean....?"** They then get a picture or word card from the pile and an answer to the frame sentence. For example **"On time** means you come to school at the right time."

- Play the memory game with the whole group by saying one word and then calling on a volunteer to use the word in a sentence. Then have the group repeat the sentence aloud.

### **3. Cool Down.**

Recap the activities by encouraging the participants to use the proper phrases to ask for clarification.

# I'm sorry. What do you mean?

I always **give a hand** to my friends when they need help.



I always come to school **on time**.



I practice with my **partner**.



I **repeat** answers with my teacher.



I register for my class **in person**.



I work **together** with my classmates.



## QUESTION CARDS (use with clarification gambits)

Learning how to ask for clarification Cut up the cards. Participants take one statement card, and then pick up a gambit card (on the next page) to use in getting clarification when listening to an answer, or giving an answer.

<p>I always <b>give a hand</b> to my friends when they need help.</p>	<p>I always come to school <b>on time</b>.</p>
<p>I practice with my <b>partner</b>.</p>	<p>I <b>repeat</b> answers with my teacher.</p>
<p>I register for my class <b>in person</b>.</p>	<p>I work <b>together</b> with my classmate.</p>

## Question Cards:

Sorry. What do you mean  
"repeat with me"?

Give a hand? What does it  
mean?

What does the word "partner"  
mean?

What do you mean by "in  
person"?

What does the phrase "on  
time" mean?

What does the word together  
mean?