Clarifying strategies help students make connections between the words and real life. Clarifying can also be used to help students understand phrases, sentences or the body of the text.

Gain prior knowledge by asking students,

What does it mean to “clarify” something? (make the meaning clear)

Have you ever done something that you thought was “just right” only to find out that you did not do what the other person expected of you? Share that experience with a neighbor. (Examples—I thought I was supposed to get the milk out and I was really supposed to get the bread. I thought I was supposed to walk home from school, but I was supposed to wait for my dad to pick me up.)

What about clarifying is important? (Helps you be sure that you are on the same page, know what you are to do)

Information for you:
Clarifying is an opportunity for youth to be sure that they have an understanding of what’s going on. We all know what happens when we make assumptions that something is “true” or that our understanding is the beginning and end of everything that can be known. Clarifying gives everyone an opportunity to “get on the same page”. Clarifying is finding the meaning of vocabulary words. Reading is really an exercise of “making meaning” out of the printed word. Clarifying strategies help students to do this.

There are several things that students can do to clarify words.

- **Consider the Context:** Words do not happen in isolation, they are found in the context of a sentence, a paragraph, and ultimately the story. This is a particularly effective strategy when working with multiple meaning words. The context will often let the reader know what meaning the word has.

- **Substitute a Synonym:** While all words do not have synonyms, many of them do. If you do not know the meaning of the word “guffawing”, and you are reading the sentence, “He was so happily surprised he could not stop a giggle, and soon all of them were guffawing.” you would first consider the context (seems to be a happy surprise, person is laughing, and then substitute the word “laughing” because it makes sense. This too can help you make meaning.

- **Study the Structure:** Words all have structures. When looking at particular words students should ask themselves if there is a prefix, a suffix, or both attached to a root word. They need to ask themselves if in that structure they can think of any other word that is similar and might have the same meaning. An example would be dynamic, dynamite, and dynamo have a similar structure and begin with “dyna”. If you knew the meaning of one of those words, say dynamite, and you knew that this was an explosive, you might wonder if dynamic and dynamo meant something similar.

- **Mine Your Memory:** All of us have previous knowledge and sometimes we just need to tap into it. We have been
exposed to many words that may have gone unnoticed at the time, but as we revisit conversations and activities, those words may resurface and we can use that remembrance to support the current learning.

- **Ask an Expert**: Experts come in all shapes and sizes. Asking another student or adult to clarify a word for the student might just work. Sometimes the experts will insist that the student think more deeply by asking some probing questions.

- **Place a Sticky-Note**: If you just can’t come up with a clarification for a word or a phrase, simply mark it with a sticky note and plan to come back to it. If it is not a word that will change the entire meaning of the story, it is sometimes best to return at a later time which will allow you to continue with the flow of the story and then pay close attention to that detail at another time.

When teaching young people to clarify, help them to utilize these strategies.

### Content (the “Meat”)

**Instruction / Demonstration (“I do” – “We do”)**

**Purpose**: Select words from the story that can be acted out or combined into action (obviously the, was, etc. are not good choices).

**Directions**:
1. Review the words that you have selected with the students
2. Ask students if they have any words that they would like to add from the story (be sure to explain that these words must be action words or things you can see and touch
3. Choose a student to act out his own Secret Word from the word list Word List
4. Give the student 30 seconds to act out the word
5. Begin the charade with, “ACTION.”
7. Encourage students to get into the moment using facial and body movements
8. Continue the process with 2 more students

**Students practice (“You do”)**

- Now it is time for the student to practice the skill of clarifying by practicing with peers.
- Give each group (3-4 students) a book
- Ask them to find words in the story that they can clarify by acting them out for one another.
- Have students create a list of the words
- Students take turns acting out the words on the list for one another

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*Activity → Teachable Moment(s) throughout*

When you are intentionally teaching the skill of clarifying, take the time to point out the many times during each day that clarification makes things easier. The ability to clarify is what keeps all of us on the same page. Stop to help students understand how to ensure that they are on target. Take time to stop the class and ask them to clarify what something means in a given situation. Check in often to see if they have ideas for making the lesson more fun and enjoyable. Listen for “how” and “what” questions. Ask students to explain what is going on.
## Consult 4 Kids Lesson Plans

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Say:
- Please recap what we did today.
- Did we achieve our objectives?

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**DIGA—Describe, Interpret, Generalize, Apply**

Ask the children the following four questions:
1. What did we do today? Describe
2. What skills did you use? Interpret
3. How did you feel about what we did today? Generalize
4. How will you apply these skills tomorrow? Apply

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Ask students to think about what they did today in English/Language Arts.

Ask them to comment on what they did today was something they already knew how to do. (Confirmation)

Ask them to comment on what they did today that was like something they had done before except in one particular way which was new to them. (Tweak)

Ask them to comment on something (if anything) they have learned today that was brand new to them.

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