Checking your understanding or checking their understanding card game
checking and clarifying phrases simplest responses

Without looking at the list below, listen to your teacher and rush to hold up the "Explaining" *card or* "Listening" *card depending on whether you think that phrase is used to check the other person's understanding or check your own. If you are not sure, your teacher will read out another phrase with the same function.*

When your teacher stops the listening game, mark the sections below with "L" *for the person listening or "*E" *for the person explaining. The phrases are arranged into sections which are all L or all E, so you don't need to be sure about each phrases to guess.*

(Are there) any questions before I go on?
(I guess) I haven't explained that very well, so…
(Is there) anything that needs clearing up before I continue?

(Do) go on.
(Excuse me but) did you say…?
(I think) I missed the bit where you explained…
(I'm afraid/ Sorry but) I didn't catch (all of) that.

(I'm afraid/ Sorry but) I'm not (really) following (you/ what you are saying/ your explanation/ your argument).
(I'm afraid/ Sorry but) I'm not keeping up with you.
(I'm afraid/ Sorry but) that hasn't (really) (entirely) cleared it up for me.

(Just) to check if I (fully) understand you,…
… is a new term/ new concept for me.
Am I right in thinking that it is…?
And that means?
And?

… , which is (commonly/ usually) defined as …
… could perhaps do with a bit more explanation.
… explains/ explained this by…
…, by which I mean…

…, meaning…
…, something whose (dictionary/ technical/ official) definition is…
…, which (basically) means (that)…
…, which can be defined as…

…, which I would define as…
…,i.e…
A (rough) synonym/ translation/ equivalent would be…
A simpler (but less precise) definition/ explanation is…

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Am I going through it too quickly?
Are you familiar with the term/ word/ concept (…)?
Are you still with me?
Before I go on, I should probably clarify…

Are you going to explain…?
Before you said that, I thought you meant/ were talking about…
But earlier didn't you say…?
Can/ Could I confirm (whether)…?

Can/ Could I take you back to the place where…?
Can/ Could you clear up for me whether…?
Can/ Could you confirm (whether)…?
Can/ Could you draw it for me?

Can/ Could you explain a little more about…?
Can/ Could you explain it /that / … just one more time?
Can/ Could you explain that another way?
Can/ Could you explain that in (a little) more detail?

Can/ Could you explain that in layperson's terms?
Can/ Could you give me an example (of the kind of thing you mean)?
Can/ Could you give me an example (of what you mean)?
Can/ Could you put that in other words?

Can/ Could you repeat (what you just said)?
Can/ Could you say that (just) one more time?
Can/ Could you say that again (another way)?
Can/ Could you speak (a little more) slowly, please?

Can/ Could you spell that/ … (for me)?
Can/ Could you start again right from the beginning?
Can/ Could you write it down for me?

Did you (already) explain…?
Did you mean to say…?
Do you (perhaps) mean…?
Does that mean…?

Do you understand the (meaning of the) word…?
Does anything need explaining (before I move on)?
For example,…
For those unfamiliar with the word/ term…, it means…

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E.g?
For example?
How do you spell that/…?
How would you (directly) translate that into (Japanese)?

Got it (so far)?
Have I explained myself properly?
Have you come across the word… (before)?
Have you heard of…?

Hopefully I've made it obvious that…
Hopefully it's clear that I mean…
I can explain that another way if you like.
I can illustrate this point with an analogy,…

How would you define…?
How would you say that in (Japanese)?
I (still) don't (quite) get it.
I (still) don't (quite) understand (…)

I basically know what you mean, but…
I beg your pardon.
I can't (really) picture it.
I can't hear you (very well).

I can see from your face/ expression that…
I can tell from your voice/ body language that…
I don't mean by that… (but rather…)
I have another explanation (up my sleeve) if that one's no good.

I could (still) do with a little/ some (more) explanation of…
I don't know if you've come across that (word/ term/ concept) before.
I don't know much/ anything about this subject, so…
I get the general drift, but…

I got (a bit) lost (about) halfway through.
I have (absolutely) no idea what you are trying to say!
I have a question about…
I haven't come across that use of… (before)

I imagine you mean…
I might be starting to understand, but…
I mostly understand what you're saying, but…
I think I understand, but…

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I thought I was following you, but (then)…
I understood this to be/ mean…
I was following your argument (up) until you got to…
I was with you up to (the point that)…

I'm guessing that means…
I'm having difficulty understanding you/ following you/ hearing you.
I'm having problems understanding you/ hearing you/ following you.

I'm not (very) familiar with the word/ term/ meaning of…
I'm not (very) familiar with this topic, so…
I'm not sure I (fully) understand you.

I'm using that term here with its (usual) sense of…
I've never (even) heard of…
I've never heard the word/ term… before.
If I understand you correctly,…

If a simpler explanation is needed/ would help,…
If you need a simpler explanation,…
In case that isn't clear,…
In layperson's terms,…

In other words,…
In simpler terms,…
In words of one syllable,…
In… this is explained as…

Is that (all) clear (so far)?
Many people think that means, but in fact…
Please let me know if that isn't clear.

Is that a different meaning of.. (to…)?
Is that the same as…?
Is there a more straightforward way of explaining…?
Is there another way of saying…?

It all sounds like gobbledegook.
It's all Greek to me.
It's going in one ear and out the other.
It's quite loud in here, so…

Just guessing from context,…
Like what?
Meaning?
Meaning…, right?

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My English isn’t very good, so…
Now I’m (even) more confused.
Obviously I mean…

Please repeat.
Please say that again.
Please spell that for me.

Say again?
Say what now?
Say what?

Simply put,…
That’s probably not a good enough explanation, so…
The meaning is (somewhat) ambiguous but…
The most common definition of that is…

So, basically…
So, if I understand you correctly,…
So, would I be right in saying…?
So, would it be correct to say that…?

Some more explanation (of…) might make it a bit clearer for me.
Sorry?
Such as?

Surely you mean...
That can't be right.
That doesn’t make sense (to me) (yet).

That’s (about) as clear as mud.
There seems to be a contradiction between… and…
There’s one thing I don’t (quite) understand.
This is a little tricky for me to understand, so…

The term… is (commonly/ usually) used to mean…
To be more precise,…
To clarify what I mean,…
To explain further,…

This is probably just me being thick, but…
What do you mean by…?
What does the last word/ bit/ sentence/ idea/ the word…/ the expression… mean (in this context)?

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To put it another way,…
To show you what I mean,…
To simplify (somewhat/ quite a lot),…
Was that clearer?

What I understand from that is…
What on earth does… mean?
What you want to say is…, right?

What's that in normal/ everyday English?
What's the difference between… and…?
Would you define… as…?

You don't seem (entirely/ very) happy with my explanation, so…
You look like you have no idea what I'm talking about.
You might think that means, but in fact…

You don't seem to be using… to mean…
You lost me at…
You may as well be speaking a foreign language.
You meant to say…, right?
You said…, right?

You seem to be assuming that I know about/ understanding…
You seem to be using… to mean…
You're going to have to explain it for me from first principles.
You've (totally) lost me.

Check as a class.

Play the same listening and holding cards game in groups.

Choose one phrase, tell your partner if it is an L phrase or an E phrase, then help them make the phrase by giving them key words, a gapped sentence, etc. Then take turns doing the same.

As two people roleplay a communicative situation, they should react to a third student holding up the "Listening" *card or holding up the* "Explaining" *card by that person using language like that above each time. Then switch roles and take turns doing the same.*

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Cards to give to students
Give each student one of each card.

Listening	Explaining
Listening	Explaining
Listening	Explaining
Listening	Explaining
Listening	Explaining
Listening	Explaining
Listening	Explaining
Listening	Explaining

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