

What is inclusive language?

Inclusive language is language that does not degrade, insult, exclude or stereotype people on the basis of their disability, race or gender.

Disabilities

- Put the person first, not the disability. Instead of *deaf people* say *people who are hard of hearing*.

Race

- Only refer to a person's race if it's relevant to the point you are making. Use adjectives, rather than nouns, when you need to identify someone's race.
- If it is important to refer to a person's cultural background, use the term preferred by the individuals themselves, e.g. *African-American*, *native Canadian*.

Gender

- Degender, don't re-gender.
a chairman → a chair (NOT a chairwoman)
- Replace occupational terms containing *-man* with terms that include both genders.
a policeman → a police officer
a postman → a postal worker
mankind → humanity
- Avoid occupational *-ette* and *-ess* endings.
- Avoid the pronoun *he* when both sexes are included. Instead use the plural *they*.
Give each pupil his books as soon as he arrives.
→ Give each pupil their books as soon as they arrive.
Anyone who wants to take part in the competition must sign his name on the list.
→ Those who want to take part in the competition must sign their names on the list.
- Do not define women in terms of men – use names instead of *John's wife* or *Winston's widow*.
- English often has lots insulting terms for women but no equivalent for men. It's worth avoiding some of the most obvious ones like *spinster*, *cow* and *bitch*.

Creed

- Avoid making assumptions about individuals based on their religion. Use adjectives when identifying people's religious beliefs.
the Jews/Muslims at our school... → the Jewish/Muslim students...

Traditionally exclusive activities

- Your language usage should reflect the fact that both men and women are involved in, for instance, sports and home life.
sportsmanship → fair play, sporting attitude
a housewife → a homemaker, a caregiver
mothering → parenting

degrade	halventaa
exclude	sulkea ulos, jättää pois
gender	sukupuoli
dgender	tehdä sukupuolettomaksi
re-gender	leimata toiseen sukupuoleen
creed	usko, vakaumus
assumption	olettaus
exclusive	poissulkeva

Exercise 1

Mankind, humankind or humanity?

Replace the insensitive term with a more appropriate one.

1. a fireman	
2. a chairman	
3. cavemen	
4. the handicapped	
5. old people	
6. a career girl	
7. an Indian (in America)	
8. a Negro	
9. blind	
10. a fat person	
11. an air stewardess	
12. an actress	
13. a spinster	
14. Oriental	
15. Merry Christmas!	
16. man-made	
17. politically correct language	
18. Everyone has a right to his opinion.	
19. The supervisor must give his approval for this.	
20. The chief-of- surgery hired a new surgeon. What's his name?	