



8 STEPS TO INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

1. Recognize diverse family formation.

For example, some families are headed by single parents, grandparents, foster parents, two moms, two dads, and more: consider “parent or caregiver” instead of “mom and dad.”

2. Use language that reflects what people call themselves.

For example, taking the time to find out what labels or words a person or group uses for their identities and experiences rather than making assumptions, and always respecting the language a person uses to self-identify.

3. Use “person-centered” language as a general rule.

For example, when talking about groups you aren’t a member of, not using an identity as a stand-in for a person or a group: “people with disabilities” instead of “the disabled”; “transgender people” instead of “transgenders” or “the transgendered”; etc., remembering that any aspect of a person is just that: an aspect of a person.

4. Understand and respect the [difference](#) between sexual orientation and gender identity



8 STEPS TO INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

Not saying “LGBT” if you are only talking about sexual orientation; not using “straight” as the opposite of “LGBT” (transgender people can be any sexual orientation, including straight); etc.

5. Be intentional about representing diversity in stories and curricula.

For example, representing a variety of family structures, races/ethnicities, gender identities and expressions, and sexual in stories or media shared in the classroom.

6. Use words that encompass all genders rather than only two.

For example, “people of all genders” instead of “women and men”; “children” instead of “boys and girls”; “siblings” or “kindred” instead of “brothers and sisters.”

7. Use language that does not assume all people are heterosexual.

8. Avoid negative or demeaning language for people with disability.

For example, “people living with HIV/AIDS” rather than “AIDS victims”; “people who use wheelchairs” rather than “wheelchair-bound” or “someone confined to a wheelchair.”



8 STEPS TO INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

(Retrieved from: <http://www.uua.org/lgbtq/welcoming/ways/200008.shtml>)

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE.

Welcome dialogue and interaction with the LGBT community requires the use of inclusive language, avoiding stereotyping, providing a “safe zone”, and maintaining confidentiality.

Words to Avoid	Try These Instead!
Husband, wife, girlfriend, boyfriend	Partner, spouse, significant other
Homosexual	Gay man or lesbian
Sexual preference	Sexual orientation
"Lifestyle" or "Alternative Lifestyle"	Sexual orientation

SOURCE: [HTTP://WWW.AUBURN.EDU/AGLBC/ALLY.HTM](http://www.auburn.edu/aglbc/ally.htm)