|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Say this | Instead of this |
| Person with a disabilityAccessiblePhysical disabilityPerson with a learning disability | Disabled, handicappedCrippledRetarded, slow |
| Native AmericanAmerican IndianIndigenous, First PeopleInuit Use the specific name of the group if knownMaya (person or adjective) | NativeIndianPrimitiveEskimoMayan (this is the language) |
| African American, Black Person of African ancestryPerson of colorMixed race, biracialPerson of mixed Afro-European ancestry | Colored, NegroMulatto |
| Latino or LatinaMexican, Puerto Rican, etc.Mexican American, Cuban American, etc.Spanish speakingBrazilianUse the specific country of origin if known | Chicano Hispanic |
| AsianIndianChineseJapanese Pacific IslanderUse the specific country of origin if known | Oriental |
| Self-taught artistAfrican American Art of the SouthAfrican Art, Oceanic Art | OutsiderPrimitive, Naïve |
| Middle Eastern Egyptian, Iranian, etc.Muslim (person) | ArabIslamic (adjective, but not person) |
| WomanLesbian, Gay, Bisexual, TransgenderSexual orientation | Squaw, girlQueer, homosexualSexual preference |
| Working ClassMiddle ClassUpper Class | Lower Class, poorElite, 1%, rich |
| Irish, Scottish, British etc.European descent, CaucasianUse the specific country of origin if known | AngloWhite |
| Immigrant | Illegal, RefugeeForeigner |
| Enslaved person/peopleOwners of enslaved people | Slave(s)Master |

Visitors First: Acknowledging Diversity

The words we use influence how we perpetuate attitudes about groups of people. We want to choose words that convey sensitivity and understanding, not to be “politically correct” but because what we say affects others.

**Language of diversity** is dynamic and constantly changing. Language changes as groups who have been historically oppressed speak from self-determination. Terms used to describe a group may be descriptive, but generally come from political or geographic designations. When determining how to address a person or speak about an object, take these questions into consideration:

* What do the people in question want to be called?
* What is the most precise term?
* When in doubt: ASK!
* If you are still unsure, use the most appropriate general term. (ex. Native Americans, people of color).

**People First Language** was created by an advocacy group for people with disabilities. People First Language means choosing kind, accurate words when speaking of this large and diverse group of people. Essentially, it means to put the person before the disability. Additionally, choose words that reflect that a person has something rather than is something. Finally, describe what a person needs rather than what problems they may have.

**For example:** **Instead of:**

She has autism. She is autistic.

He receives special education services. He is a special ed child.

She is living with dementia. She suffers from Alzheimers.

**What’s in a Word?**

Referring to people as slaves implies that their entire being is wrapped up in their oppression. Using the term **enslaved person** reduces the state of enslavement to an adjective—one of many that may describe an individual—and acknowledges that person’s full humanity.