|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Say this | Instead of this |
| Person with a disability  Accessible  Physical disability  Person with a learning disability | Disabled, handicapped  Crippled  Retarded, slow |
| Native American  American Indian  Indigenous, First People  Inuit  Use the specific name of the group if known  Maya (person or adjective) | Native  Indian  Primitive  Eskimo  Mayan (this is the language) |
| African American, Black  Person of African ancestry  Person of color  Mixed race, biracial  Person of mixed Afro-European ancestry | Colored, Negro  Mulatto |
| Latino or Latina  Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.  Mexican American, Cuban American, etc.  Spanish speaking  Brazilian  Use the specific country of origin if known | Chicano  Hispanic |
| Asian  Indian  Chinese  Japanese  Pacific Islander  Use the specific country of origin if known | Oriental |
| Self-taught artist  African American Art of the South  African Art, Oceanic Art | Outsider  Primitive, Naïve |
| Middle Eastern  Egyptian, Iranian, etc.  Muslim (person) | Arab  Islamic (adjective, but not person) |
| Woman  Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender  Sexual orientation | Squaw, girl  Queer, homosexual  Sexual preference |
| Working Class  Middle Class  Upper Class | Lower Class, poor  Elite, 1%, rich |
| Irish, Scottish, British etc.  European descent, Caucasian  Use the specific country of origin if known | Anglo  White |
| Immigrant | Illegal, Refugee  Foreigner |
| Enslaved person/people  Owners 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.