



Tips on Using Inclusive Language

Avoid Using Stereotypes and Generalizations

Why? To be accurate and specific (and therefore respectful) when writing about people.

Example of Language that May Not Be Inclusive	Why it May Feel Non-inclusive	Suggested Revision to be More Inclusive
"A lot of African Americans are in the medical schools in the Ukraine because the schools are very cheap."	This statement paints African Americans as opportunistic without explaining why.	Research the issue and use source materials to make and defend a more accurate claim.
"Chinese parents are naturally strict."	This statement lumps all Chinese parents into the same category—whether it's seen/intended to be positive or negative, it's still a sweeping stereotype that assumes all Chinese people have this same trait.	"Chinese parents tend to be strict." "Parenting practices that seem unusually strict to Westerners seem normal in Chinese culture."

		“In general, the tradition of parenting in Chinese and Chinese-American cultures is stricter than in U.S. culture.”
“Immigrant parents shame their children into feeling like they have to master the English language to be successful in their new country because their parents sacrificed a lot to move here.”	This example stereotypes and generalizes immigrant parents as strict or cruel. Stereotypes are oppressive and are not reliable sources of evidence. Stereotypes will weaken an argument as well as perpetuate stereotypes against marginalized communities.	“Many immigrant parents pressure their children to master the English language. They want their children to become successful because the parents gave up their stability in their home countries to start fresh in the United States; here, they hope their children can fulfill their dreams.”
“Women love Starbucks.”	All women ever? Doubtful. Use evidence to discuss trends, but avoid making blanket statements about entire groups.	“According to [credible source], Starbucks is popular among [these specific demographics] . . .”

Brown, Shan-Estelle and Mandy Suhr-Sytsma. Addressing the Everyday Language of Oppression in the Writing Center. Weblog. 21 Oct. 2008. Web. 25 May 2011.