



Gender-Inclusive Language Learner Material

Practice:

A. Edit these sentences to make them gender-neutral.

1. Our group is an inclusive place for people of both genders, and we recognize the important contributions of the men and women who attend weekly meetings.
2. Each person is allowed to bring one guest, such as his/her husband or wife.
3. We need volunteers to man the station for three hours.
4. Councilman Smith hosted the ceremony honoring policemen and firemen from across the city.
5. Dear Sir or Madam, please submit the name of your employment reference and his/her contact information as soon as possible.
6. I'd like to extend a warm welcome to the ladies and gentlemen joining us from Washington for this meeting.

B. Transgender-Inclusive Language Practice

Transgender-inclusive language is different from gender-neutral language.

- Just like cisgender (non-transgender) people, transgender people can have binary gender identities (male/man or female/woman).
- Always using gender-neutral language can be invalidating for some transgender people with binary gender identities.
- Transgender-inclusive language promotes inclusion and recognition of the transgender community by treating transgender identity equally to cisgender identity.

Edit these sentences to make them transgender-inclusive:

1. Please share your name, role, and preferred pronouns.
2. This space is welcoming to all people who identify as women.
3. He was born a woman, and he's a transgendered male.
4. There are more transgenders in Dane County than in Rock County.
5. She's biologically male but had a sex change.

C. Pronouns Practice

- Mistakes will happen. When we mess up someone's name or pronouns, we should apologize and remember:
 - Be sincere
 - Keep it brief
 - Focus on doing it differently next time
 - Don't expect a response from the person
- When someone else corrects us, we should accept the correction, say thank you, and continue the conversation.
- How can we practice using the correct pronouns?
 - By talking aloud or to yourself and using the correct name and/or pronouns.
 - By writing a sentence or story about them using the correct pronouns.
 - By introducing yourself with your pronouns and ask someone theirs.
 - By adding your pronouns to your email signature or display name for a virtual meeting.
- What are some examples?
 - Brief, sincere apology, followed by change:
 - Susan: "This is my co-worker, Mica. He just started last week."
 - Mica: "Actually, my pronouns are they/them."
 - Susan: "I'm sorry. Thanks for letting me know. They just started last week."
 - Correcting yourself in the moment:
 - First try: "I heard Liza has been joined our team. I am looking forward to working with her. This project is really going to benefit from her expertise."
 - Second try: "I heard Liza has been joined our team. I am looking forward to working with her...him. This project is really going to benefit from his expertise."
 - How to correct someone else:
 - Abby: "Sam needed to leave early, so I just left her a note."
 - Kyle: "Sam's pronouns are he/him."
 - Abby: "You're right, I'm sorry. I left him a note."

Tips:

Gender-Neutral Language Practice

- Find gender neutral alternatives when addressing individuals or groups of people
 - Avoid gendered honorifics such as Mr., Mrs., Ms., ma'am, and sir when gender is unknown.
- Take unnecessary references to gender and the gender binary out of interactions, content, and communication
 - The gender binary is a system of understanding gender with only masculine/male or feminine/female and no in-between or fluidity.

Practice Gender-Neutral Language in Spanish

- Spanish uses "-o(s)" or "-a(s)" endings to denote gender for words describing people or groups of people.
- Inclusive Spanish word endings you may be familiar with include "-o(s)/a(s)", "-@s)", or "-x".
 - Latino(s)/a(s)
 - Latin@s
 - Latinx
- "-e(s)" is a gender-neutral ending that comes from Latin.
 - Latine(s)
 - Neighbors: *vicines* in place of *vicinos*
- *Elle* is a gender neutral third person pronoun in Spanish.
 - Use in place of *él/ella*.
 - Use *elles* in place of *ellos/ellas*