WebJunction

DESIGNING FOR DIVERSITY IN YOUR LIBRARY'S COMMUNICATION

Presentation by

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eLearning Librarian,
Appalachian State University

WHAT WE'LL TALK ABOUT TODAY:

- Neurodiversity & Communication
- Representation & Communication
- Language & Communication

Photo: Justin Katigbak for Disabled and Here

WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD ‘COMMUNICATION’ WHAT IMMEDIATELY COMES TO MIND?

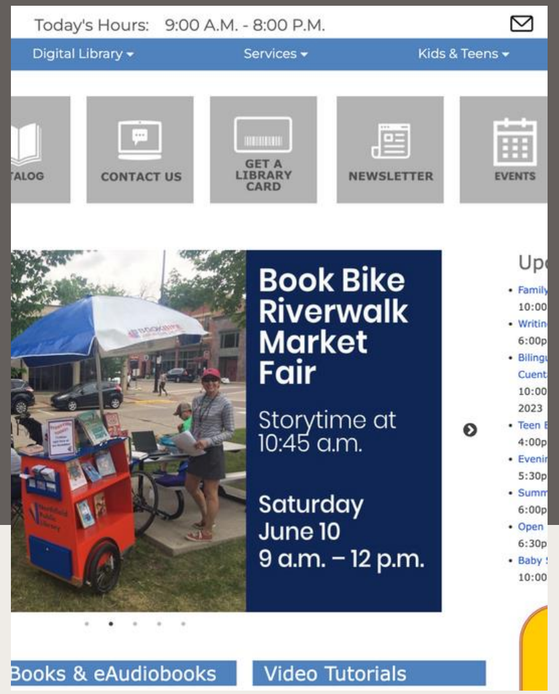
Respond in the chat box

Photo: David Tett for Age-positive image library

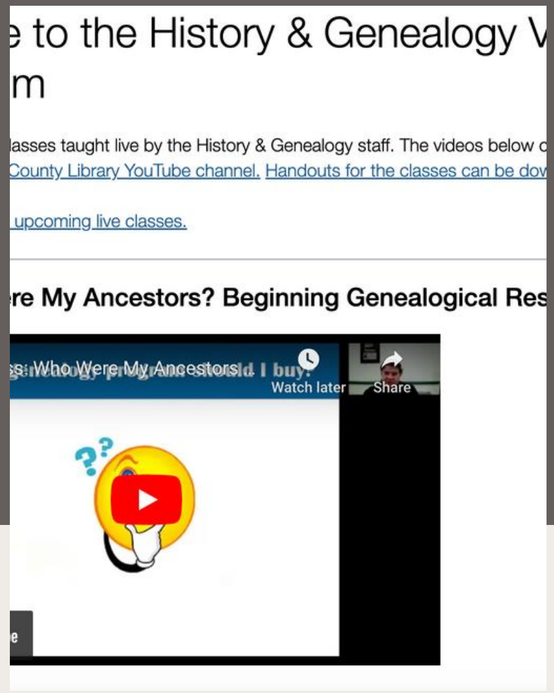
COMMUNICATION:

The act or process of transmitting information, ideas, emotions, skills, etc., by the use of words, pictures, figures, graphs, etc. (Berelson & Steiner 1964).

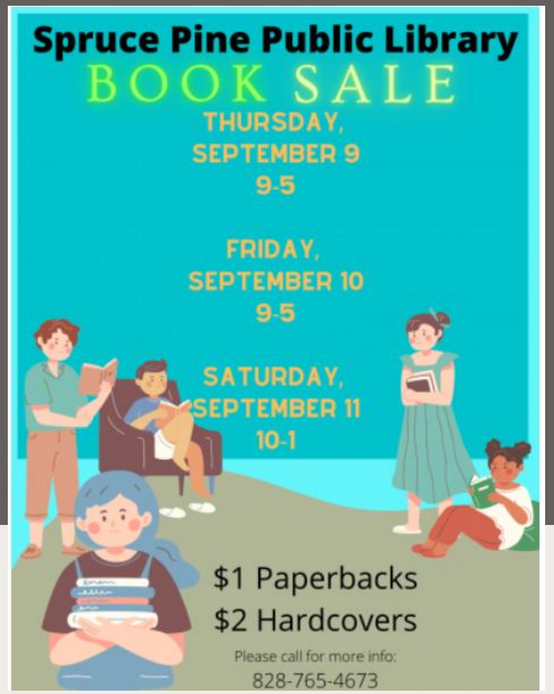
Website



Online classes & tutorials



Flyers



In-person events

Some ways that libraries communicate

WHAT OTHER WAYS DO YOU OR YOUR LIBRARY COMMUNICATE?

Respond in the chat box

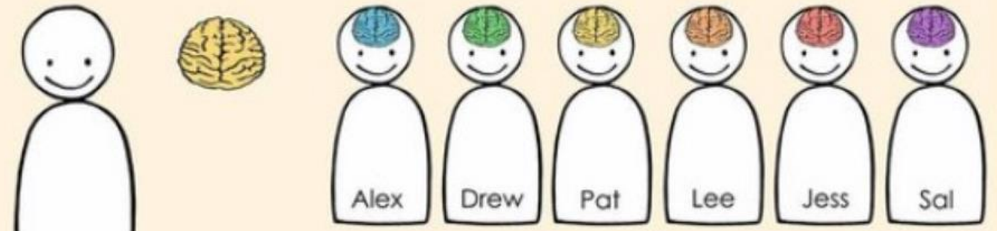
NEURODIVERSITY

“Neurodiversity is a natural, healthy, and important form of human biodiversity — a fundamental and vital characteristic of the human species, a crucial source of evolutionary and creative potential.”

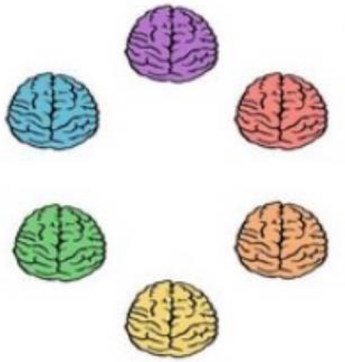
Dr. Nick Walker (she/her)

Photo: Pexels.com

What is Neurodiversity?



These are Pat's friends.
They all have brains too.
No two brains are exactly alike.
This is Neurodiversity.



neuro-
relating to nerves or the nervous system

diversity
the state of being diverse

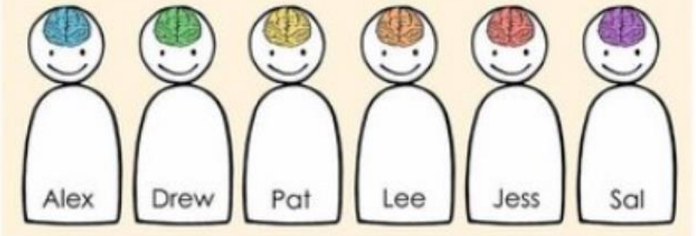
diverse
showing a great deal of variety; very different

Some people's brains are similar enough that they behave in ways that are categorised and labelled. Some of these labels are typical, schizophrenic, bipolar, autistic, and epileptic.

All of these labels (except "typical") indicate neurodivergence, that is, a deviation of a brain from society's expectation of normality

Not all neurodivergence is diagnosed, or even diagnosable.
This means that not all people who are perceived as neurotypical are in fact so.

Neurodivergence is neither "good" nor "bad." A person can be born with it, or it can be acquired. It is up to each neurodivergent individual to decide what help they desire.



Pat and friends are comfortable with their individual divergences and their diversity as a group. They support each other's rights to self-determination, and they value the strengths they each bring to their group of friends.

For more resources visit hellomichelleswan.com

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Adapted from Dr Rebekah Cumming's Neurodiversity in Libraries

NEURODIVERSITY

“54% of the disclosed disabilities among App State’s students are attentional or cognitive differences like ADHD and learning disabilities.”

Office of Disability Resources, October 2021

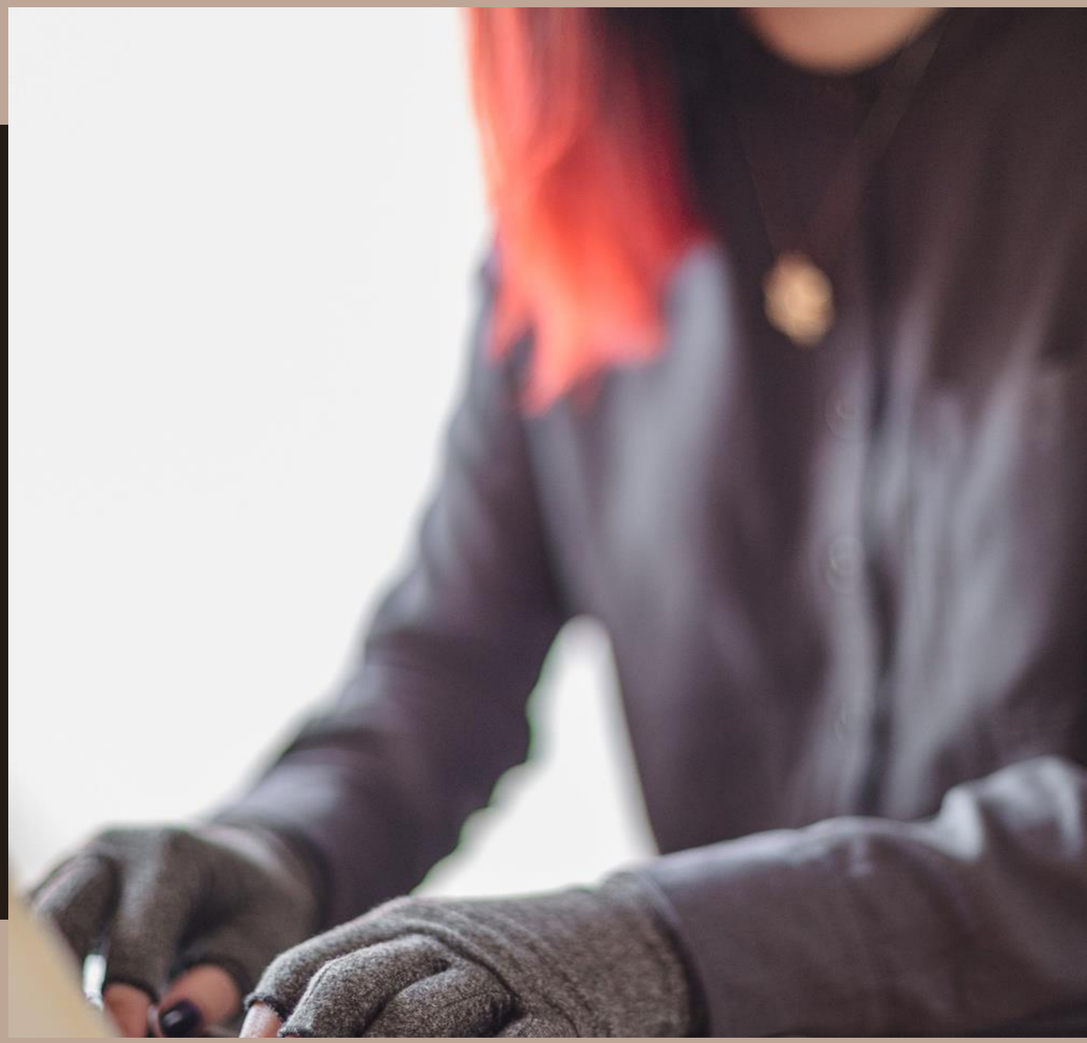

Photo: Tojo Andrianarivo for Disabled and Here

Accessibility according to actual people with disabilities

Published 4 June 2017, by Hampus Sethfors

“If you have a disability, what’s the hardest thing about browsing the web?” The answers to Safia Abdalla’s tweet are truly eye-opening and shows us what web accessibility should really be about.

Wall of text

Many replies, especially from people with dyslexia or cognitive impairments, were about large chunks of text.

> “
>
> Huge paragraphs. A page on Wikipedia often consists of many long paragraphs with long sentences. I lose my place within seconds.
>
> — Ava Jarvis Art (@AvaJarvisArt) 3 juni 2017

Personas

§ 6.10 Yuki: A Yoga Teacher who has AD(H)D

Problem: " If I come to a web site that has lots of banners automatically flying by it really distracts me and I want to turn them off!"

Works well: " I find an option on my computer to say I want less movement and the web site stops all the flying things."

Yuki found concentrating at school difficult. When she got into college and started taking a course in business studies life became even more stressful. She knew she could cope with the studies, but never seemed to get her work completed on time. She found it hard to start a report and even to create a plan for a project. When working with others she always had good ideas but somehow they were never taken up. She became frustrated, often failing to keep her feelings in check. Luckily, a tutor suggested she look for help. When a psychologist mentioned Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder or AD(H)D, Yuki was relieved to have a reason for her planning and organizational difficulties and other executive functions. She did not want to draw attention to her difficulties, but knowing what caused the challenges helped her find solutions. She learnt that if she could make use of her constantly active brain and body as well as manage her time better, she could turn her hobby into a very successful Yoga business.

§ 6.10.1 Yuki Scenario 1: Gathering Key Points from a Heavy Text Based Document or Web Page

Yuki could not really explain her apparent forgetfulness and not being able to focus or complete tasks. She knew that if she came across a long document or web page with dense text she had to find the key points. If the web page failed to have a clear structure, well-spaced and highlighted headings she would be lost and lose concentration. Yuki also said that if she was reading her mobile screen, advertisements appearing between chunks of text upset her focus and she had to stop reading. However, when there was good use of white space, recognizable icons linking to simple bold text clarifying the important points, Yuki could target these areas and find out what she needed. A clear summary helped Yuki understand and she could remember much of what she had read.

Source: Making Content Usable for People with Cognitive and Learning Disabilities

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Keep content as short and simple as possible.
- Avoid walls of text and layouts that may be too cluttered.
- Consider using bullet pointed lists rather than paragraphs.

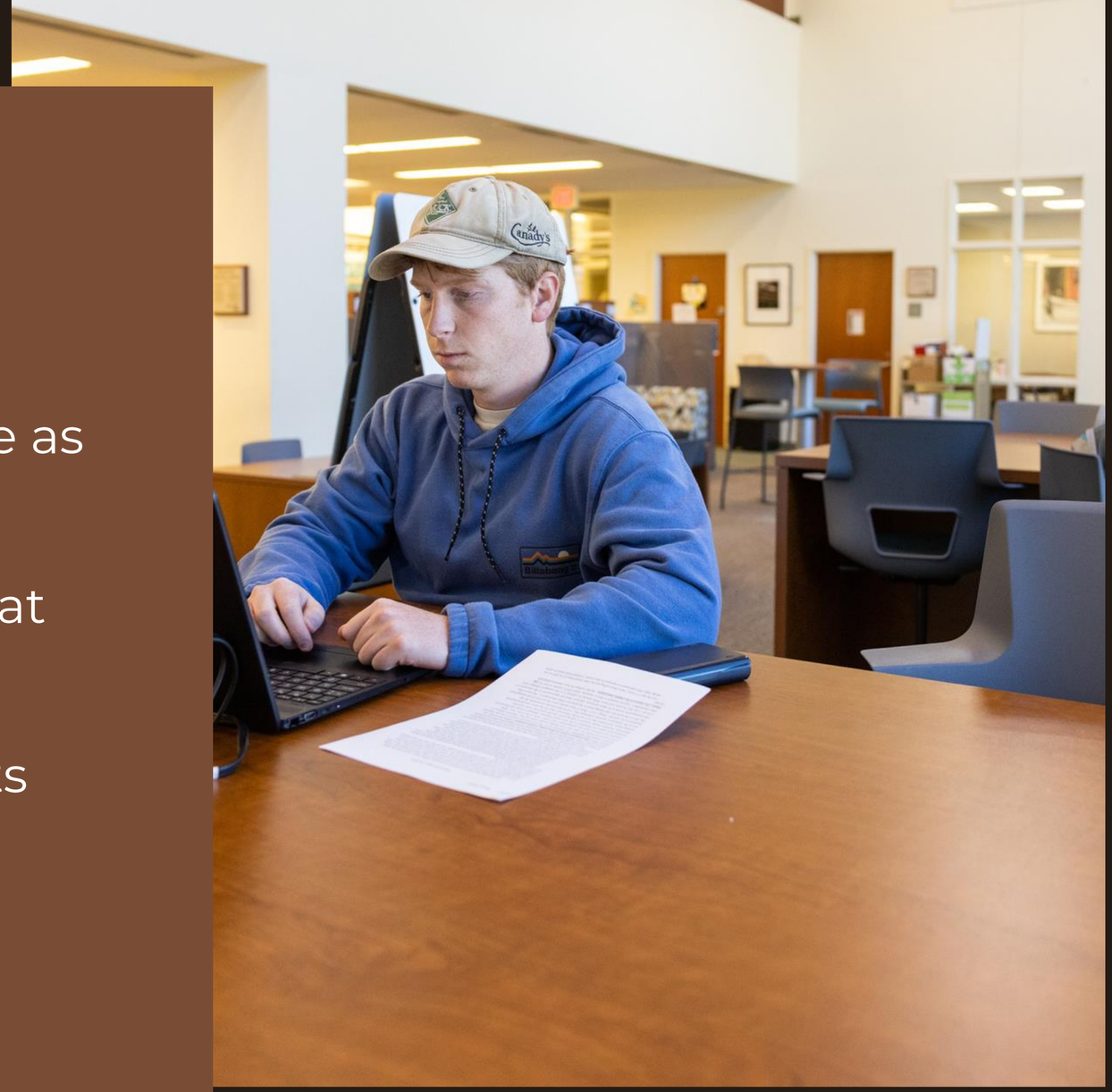

Photo: Appalachian State University

BEFORE

HOP Distance Library Services: Virtual Study Rooms

Services

oms »

Faculty

Your
n

llie Peuler

Zoom Web Conferencing

Appalachian's web conferencing tool, Zoom, allows faculty, staff, and students to interact live via a web interface. Web conferencing allows anyone with a computer and Internet connection or a mobile device with the app installed to interact with two-way audio, video, chat, screen sharing, breakout rooms, recording, and more. Users can send invitations to any email address, so it is easy to bring in participants from outside the University. All Appstate students have Zoom 'Pro' accounts, and are equally able to use this product, both to host and to attend meetings.

You can use Zoom web conferencing tools to create online study rooms of up to 50 participants from a computer or mobile device, "Winterize your study group" and meet virtually during inclement weather, bring in guest speakers from distant locations, including those external to the University, Hold virtual study group hours. Users can access Zoom via our custom landing page at: https://appstate.zoom.us ; via the Zoom Mobile apps; or via the Zoom activity in AsULearn (for Teacher role in AsULearn only).

AFTER

Distance Library Services: Zoom Improved

Zoom Web Conferencing

All Appstate students have Zoom 'Pro' accounts, which they can use to host and attend online meetings. To learn more about Zoom, visit the AppState Student Zoom page.

Here are some examples of how you might use your student Zoom account:

- Create online study rooms of up to 50 participants.
- "Winterize your study group" and meet virtually during inclement weather,
- Bring in guest speakers from distant locations, including those external to the University

Neurodivergence: How might you apply what you have learned at your library? What are you already doing?

Respond in the chat box

REPRESENTATION

Some of the literature provides practical techniques to aid librarians in creating inclusive in-person instruction (Roth & Turnbow, 2021).

How can these techniques be prioritized in other scenarios?

Photo: WOC inTechChat

VICE: The Gender Spectrum Collection

REPRESENTATION

“Even a relatively simple act of displaying images and book jackets representative of students' cultural backgrounds can help students feel accepted and better connected to the library as a place where they belong". (Lori Mestre, culturally responsive instruction for teacher-librarians, 2009)

Provide culturally relevant examples, including:

- images
- topics
- authors

Disabled and Here: disability-led effort

Photo: Haadia Khan Art for Disables and Here

Centre for Ageing Better: Positive and realistic images of over 50s

Photo: In-Press Photography for Age-positive image library

Nappy: Aim to make it easy to be purposeful about representation

Photo: Alyssa Sieb for nappy

WOCINTECH: Stock photos of women of color in tech

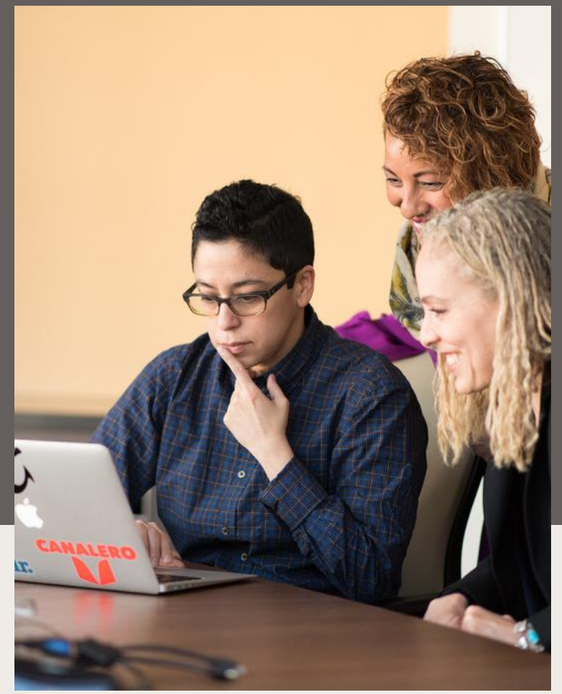

Photo: WOCinTech Chat

Consider using images and photographs from more diverse collections.

Photos About

GUIDELINES

f trans and non-binary hotos for stories on topics like be
n, relationships, or well ate depiction of the world we live

Images of trans and non-binary people can illustrate any subject matter.

rms of the Creative C yond these basic license stipulati
e using this resource t nying headline could reflect on t
ty. Understanding the s only as sex workers, portrayed s
nt victimhood or crisis se photos could feed into a stere
stigma, you probably s pression correlate with other aspe
ex assigned at birth, race, age, sexuality, and class. There is not one way to "look transgender," and no one model can represent the trans and non-binary community. All trans
ok transgender because they are transgender. Some transgender people may be immediately perceived as transgender by others, while some transgender people may be pe
r. Select photos in the collection reflect this range of expressions. Additionally, transmasculine people often get left out of media representation. Don't immediately assume yo
otograph of a trans woman to represent the trans community. Not all transgender people medically transition using hormones and/or surgeries, and their identity is not less vali
enting people who are transgender but have not medically transitioned helps reflect the diversity of the community. In this library, we included each model's gender identifica
f each photo, in order to help editors avoid making assumptions when choosing images. In editorial contexts, however, gender identity should not be used in a caption or arti
o the story.

ngage with these images, don't make these editorial decisions alone. Talk with your teams, work with LGBTQ colleagues who have offered to help, and reach out to third-party
ions like GLAAD, the National Lesbian and Gay Journalist's Association, and The Trans Journalists Association to educate yourself and your staff about best practices a
tation of trans and non-binary people.

VICE: The Gender Spectrum Collection

sources cont.

1.14. Source types defined

1.15. Scholarly & popular source examples

1.16. Activity: Which of these is a scholarly source?

1.17. Scholarly & popular source chart

1.18. Video: Peer Review

1.19. Closing: scholarly & popular sources ✓

1.20. Primary & secondary

This is the end of Scholarly and Popular Sources, section two of three.

To return to the Main Menu, press the Main Menu button in the top right corner.

To continue to the next section, click the Next arrow.

Photo: The Gender Spectrum Collection by Broadly

Representation: How might you apply what you have learned at your library? What are you already doing?

Respond in the chat box

LANGUAGE

“Language impacts people and workplaces every day. Language can make people feel like they belong, or be used to discriminate and advance divisiveness and inequity. Simply put, language matters”

Advancing Language for Racial Equity and Inclusion, An Equity Fluent Leadership Playbook

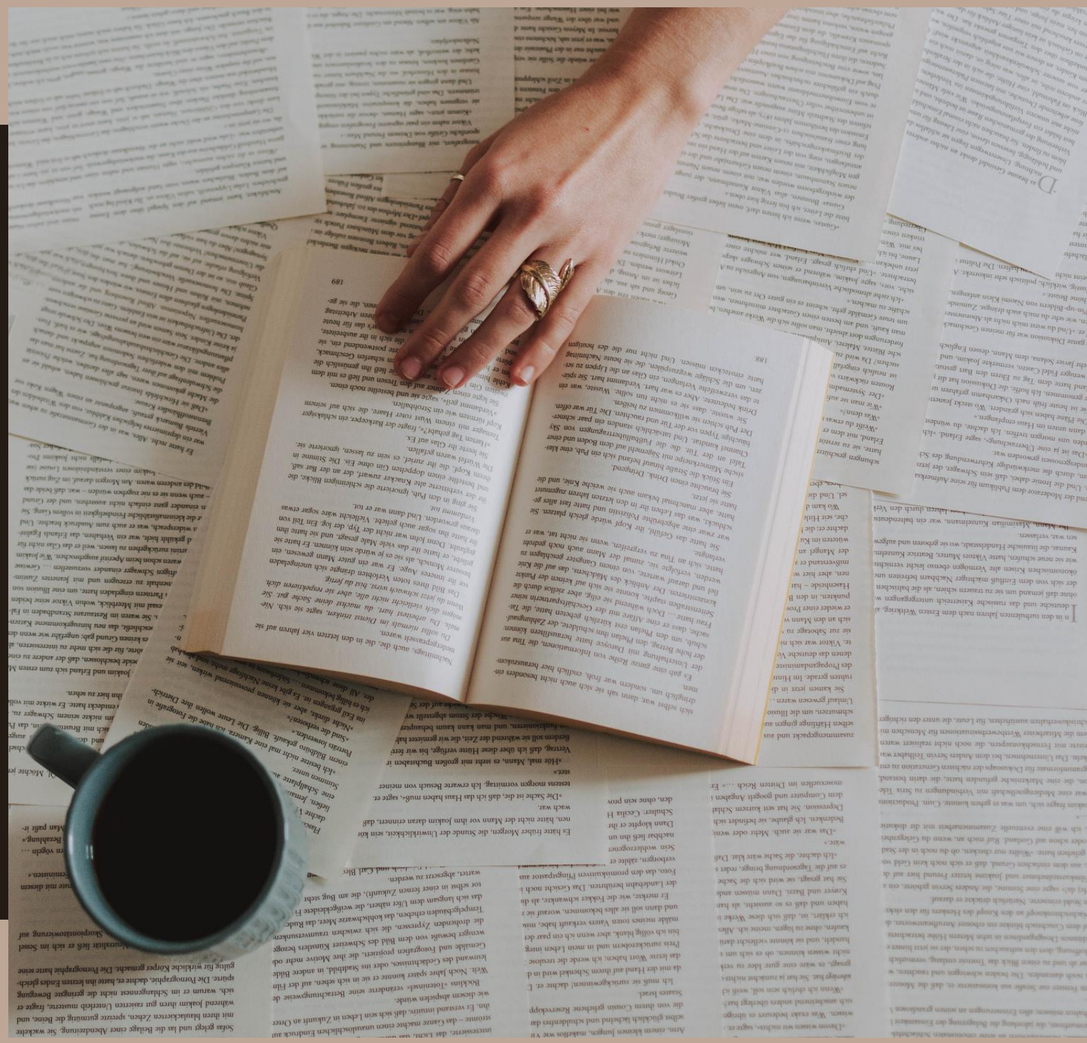

Photo: Pexels.com

MISCONCEPTIONS RECONSIDERED

"That's so PC"

Inclusive language is not about being 'politically correct' – it is about using language which is respectful, accurate, and relevant to everyone.

"People are too sensitive"

Making a conscious decision to avoid particular words and phrases is not about coddling people or shielding them from offense – it's about chipping away at the idea that alienating people through language is acceptable in the first place.

"There are more important issues"

Talking about language might seem small, but changing our language is an easy way to create productive workplace cultures which are inclusive of everyone.

Adapted from #WordsAtWork

Bias-Free Language

The American Psychological Association emphasizes the need to talk about all people with inclusivity and respect. Writers using APA Style must strive to use language that is free of bias and avoid perpetuating prejudicial beliefs or demeaning attitudes in their writing. Just as you have learned to check what you write for spelling, grammar, and wordiness, practice reading your work for bias.

The guidelines for bias-free language contain both general guidelines for writing about people without bias across a range of topics and specific guidelines that address the individual characteristics of age, disability, gender, participation in research, racial and ethnic identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and intersectionality. These guidelines and recommendations were crafted by panels of experts on APA's bias-free language committees and should be used in conjunction with APA's inclusive language guidelines.

Bias-free language is covered in Chapter 5 of the APA Publication Manual, Seventh Edition

- GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR REDUCING BIAS
- HISTORICAL CONTEXT
- AGE
- DISABILITY
- GENDER
- PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH
- RACIAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY
- SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Source: APA, Bias Free Language

Language Example

USE OF PICTORAL METAPHORS AND NEGATIVE TERMS

PROBLEMATIC	PREFERRED
wheelchair-bound person	wheelchair user, person in a wheelchair
AIDS victim	person with AIDS
brain damaged	person with a traumatic brain injury
defective, nuts	person with a physical disability
alcoholic, meth addict	person with a mental illness
	person with alcohol use disorder
	person with a substance use disorder

Photo: Pexels.com

Consider this research question and brainstorm what search terms you might use to begin your research:

Problematic: What impact does gerrymandering have on racial minorities?

Preferred: What impact does gerrymandering have on Asian Americans?

Photo: WOCinTechChat

Consider this library policy manual language:

Problematic: Not all areas of the library are accessible to individuals with special needs.

Improved: Not all areas of the library are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Language: How might you apply what you have learned at your library? What are you already doing?

Respond in the chat box

FINAL THOUGHTS

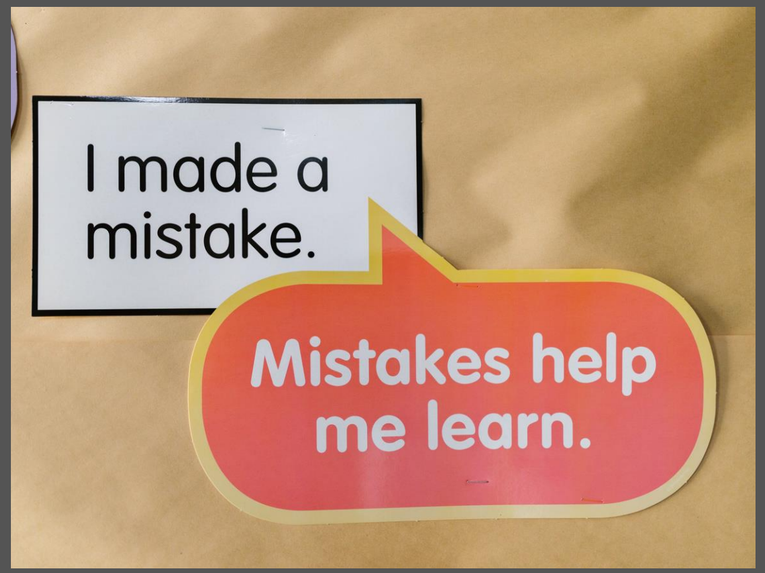

Photo: Pexels.com

You will make mistakes

The goal is not perfection, but progress.

Take the time

When you are editing libguides, marketing, etc. for spelling, grammar, and wordiness, ALSO check your work for bias and representation.

Accept that norms change

Language in particular changes over time. Commit to learning over time.

RESOURCES TO MOVE YOU FORWARD

Neurodiversity

- Accessibility according to actual people with disabilities
- Supplemental Guidance to WCAG 2

Image Collections

- Disabled and Here Collection
- Centre for Ageing Better Image Collection
- Nappy Photo Collection
- The Gender Spectrum Collection, by Broadly
- WOCinTech

Language Resources

- APA Style Bias-Free Language
- Words at Work

Learn More About Critical Design

- Equitable But Not Diverse: Universal Design for Learning is Not Enough
- Inclusive Design and Design Justice: Strategies to Shape Our Classes and Communities

Mollie Peuler

THANK YOU!

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