



MLA: Additional Information and Examples

Tips for Using Inclusive Language (MLA 89-93)

1. Do not draw attention to someone's ethnicity, religion, gender sexual orientation, disability, age, or economic status if it is not the main point you are making.

Example: Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, Ronald Reagan, and ~~African American~~ Barak Obama are former U.S. presidents who lived in Illinois.

2. Avoid gendered words or phrases that exclude large groups of people.

man-made → human-made
mankind → humankind or humanity
policeman → police officer
firewoman → firefighter

This is true but not appropriate, since the ethnicity of the other men is not included.

3. Be as precise as possible when referring to people groups.

Too General: College students like pizza.
Better Example: Most of my friends like pizza.

4. Respect your subject by writing about them rather than labeling them.

Labeling: Ella is depressed.
Better: Ella is experiencing depression.

5. When trying to be gender neutral, using plurals can be more concise.

Neutral but clunky: When a student wants to be his or her best, he or she should make sure to get plenty of sleep and eat healthy foods.
Better: When students want to be their best, they should get plenty of sleep and eat healthy foods.

6. *They/their/them* can be used as singular pronouns if they are someone's chosen pronoun or you are unsure which gender to use.

Example: Taylor is coming to the football game, so I am saving them a seat.

7. Avoid framing others' situations as negative.

Negative: Maria suffers from diabetes.
Neutral: Maria lives with diabetes.

For more information, please visit style.mla.org.



Citation Type/Notes:	Works Cited
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