

Inclusive Alternatives for Commonly Used Phrases

The following chart provides alternatives for commonly used phrases with racist and microaggressive origins and connotations.

Phrase	Context	Alternative
Powwow	A powwow is a sacred gathering of Native people. Using it to refer to an informal meeting is offensive appropriation of a term of cultural importance to Indigenous American	meeting, discussion, gathering, brainstorming session
Gypped / Gyp / Jipped / Jip	The term, gypped, comes from the word Gypsy which is a derogatory name and slur for the Romani people (also known as Roma) who originated in northern India and migrated around the world for more than a millennium. This culture has been stereotyped as thieves and child abductors which led to the use of the word “gypped.”	Ripped off or cheated
Low Hanging Fruit	From a business perspective calling something “low hanging fruit” often means it can be easily accomplished, yields low risks and high returns, or is a no-brainer. While this phrase is not inherently racist, for some, it may bring about memories of lynchings in the American Antebellum South.	Easy, low risk, manageable
Guru	In the Buddhist and Hindu traditions, the word is a sign of respect. Using it casually negates its original value.	Expert, teacher
Picnic	The origin of the term “picnic” derives from the acts of lynching African-Americans. Individuals would	Gathering, barbeque, cook out

	“pic” a Black person to lynch and make this into a family gathering. There would be music and a “picnic.”	
Blacklist	Any language that reinforces the symbolism of white as pure and good, and black as dirty and bad, needs to be re-examined.	Banned, avoid, exclude
Grandfathered in	The American South created voting requirements referred to as the ‘Grandfather Clause’ that targeted Black people and restricted their access to vote. The restricted also required literacy tests but did not apply to people who had voted before 1867. This deliberately excluded enslaved Africans.	Legacied, exempted, preapproved
Master	In some contexts, it connotes a hierarchical relationship of control and ownership. In any form, it’s connected to the idea of dominance and is a harmful term that comes with a history of oppression.	Main or primary
Spirit Animal	A spirit guide or Spirit Helper is sacred and represents a larger spiritual culture within Indigenous and other cultures.	Kindred spirit

Resources

[Canadian Race Relations Foundation. \(2019\). "CRRF Glossary of Terms"](#).

[Cornell University. "DEI Glossary"](#).

[Center for the Study of Social Policy. "Key Equity Terms & Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding"](#).

[Berkeley Disability Lab. "Intro to Disability Studies: Glossary of Terms"](#)

[Boston University AntiRacism Center. "Moving Towards AntiBigotry"](#)

[Boston University Diversity & Inclusion. "Fundamental Concepts"](#)

[Brandeis University. "Glossary of DEI Terms"](#)

[Duke University School of Nursing. "DEI Glossary"](#).

[Fitzgerald. \(2006\). Grandfather Clause. In Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History \(Vol. 3, pp. 938–939\).](#)

[Georgetown University. "Glossary of LGBTQIA+ Terms"](#)

[Greenblatt, Alan. \(2013, October 22\). The Racial History of the 'Grandfather Clause.' NPR Code Switch.](#)

[Harvard Human Resources. "Glossary of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging \(DIB\) Terms"](#)

[Intuit Content Design: Abolish Racist Language](#)

[Koltko-Rivera, M. E. \(2004\). The Psychology of Worldviews. Review of General Psychology, 8\(1\), 3-58.](#)

[Larson, A., & Choate, R.O. \(2011\). The Able Privilege Scale: A New Educational Tool.](#)

[National Association of Counties. "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Key Terms and Definitions"](#).

[National Center on Disability and Journalism "Disability Style Guide"](#).

[National Museum of African American History and Culture. "Talking about Race"](#)

[National Science Teaching Association. "Glossary of Disability Terminology"](#)

[PFLAG National. "PFLAG National Glossary"](#).

[Princeton: Gender and Sexuality Resource Center. "LGBTAIQ+ 101"](#).

[Racial Equity Tools. "Glossary"](#).

[Reader's Digest. "What Does AANHPI Mean? A Proud Asian American Explains"](#).

[Social Sciences Library: LibreTexts. Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism.](#)

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. "Key DEI Terms"](#)

[Syracuse University Libraries. "Intersectional Self"](#).

[The University of Arizona. "Antiracist language guide"](#)

[Tribal-Institute. “Walking in Two Worlds: Understanding the Two-Spirit & LGBTQ Community”.](#)

[University of California Davis. “Defining DEI Glossary”](#)

[University of San Diego. “Quick Guide: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Definitions”.](#)

[University of Washington. “Glossary of Disability-Related Terms”.](#)

[University of Washington- School of Public Health. “Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Glossary of Terms](#)

[YMCA. “What it Means When We Say BIPOC”.](#)