



3. HOW TO AVOID SEXISM

LEARNER WORKSHEET 5: HOW TO AVOID SEXISM IN LANGUAGE

How to change our language to become polite, modern and benevolent

Instead of:

Try:

Actress

Actor

Hostess

Host

Waitress

Server

Policewoman

Police officer

Spokesman

Spokesperson

Does everybody know what

Does everybody know what

he wantS

they want

Man is a species who suckles his young

Humans are a species who suckle their young

The man we want for the job

The person we want for the job

The man on the street

The average person

The ordinary person

People in general

Manning the office

Staffing the office

Change to the plural form

Each student must complete his

Students must complete their assessments by Friday

assessment by Friday.

Change to the passive form



He must return it by the due date.

It must be returned by the due date

Use indefinite pronouns and articles:

A student who wants his essay returned.

Anyone who wants an essay returned...

Anyone wanting essays returned...

Instead of:

Try:

She's a tomboy

She's an adventurous/daring girl

He's a sissy

He's a sensitive/caring boy

Men and Women

Women and Men

Boys and Girls

Girls and Boys

Husbands and Wives

Wives and Husbands

Fathers and Mothers

Mothers and Fathers

Sir or Madam

Madam or Sir

manpower

personnel, staff, workforce,

available workers, human resources

workman

worker

workmanship

quality of work, work skill

REMEMBER: Do not overdo it; try to be moderate and follow your common sense:

Instead of

Try

A baby cries when he or she is tired

Babies cry when they are tired

In an excerpt of a feminist church service

This is surely taking the sexism of

the hymns were referred to as "hers"

English a little too far!

and instead of "Amen" they said "Awomen".



Now try to find similar examples in yours and other languages

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