

Rainbow District School Board

Dealing Directly with Language

D

Direct

Address the disrespectful comment

I

Identify

Clarify why the language is disrespectful

R

Restate

Reinforce the use of appropriate language

E

Educate

Explain who is being hurt by the comment

C

Communicate

Emphasize the use of appropriate language

T

Thank

Act as a role model
and say thank you for listening

Approach and Possible Actions

■ Direct

Address the disrespectful language immediately.

"Let's talk about what I just heard you say." "That is not okay."

■ Identify

Try to be specific about the words that are used.

For example, whenever a comment defines someone by an ability, we need to rethink our language. Instead of saying "a special needs student", say, "a student with special needs."

■ Restate

"At our school/workplace, we believe that everyone is equal."

The language we use to talk with one another must reflect this belief.

■ Educate

Try to be specific.

For example, if the comment was homophobic, you might say, "When you use the word gay like that, you are discriminating against people who are gay or lesbian. You are also hurting people who may have parents or friends who are gay."

■ Communicate

Try to be specific.

"If you think that something is stupid, say stupid. Gay is not a synonym for stupid."

■ Thank

"Thank you for listening."

Each of us is a role model in building inclusive schools and workplaces.

