

# 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.*

“Rather than saying a song is gay, say you don’t like the song.”

## ■ Thank

*“Thank you for listening.”*

We are all role models in building inclusive schools and workplaces.

