

HEY Y'ALL, IT'S OK TO USE COLLOQUIALISMS IN WRITING (SOMETIMES)

Consider this question: How do colloquialisms make our language confusing or clearer?

Strict grammar and vocabulary rules were drilled into us throughout our school years. Most English teachers were adamant that sentences shouldn't begin with a conjunction, shouldn't end with a preposition, and slang and colloquialisms should never be used.

Writing for blogs, social media, and other digital media has made some of these age-old rules no longer necessary. In particular, using colloquialisms and slang is often acceptable. Though, there are a few things to consider before incorporating this verbiage into your writing.

Know Your Audience

The audience dictates many aspects of writing — tone, information provided, and word usage. Generally, this type of language is not appropriate for academic writing or professional communications. If you are writing for highly professional business people, use of colloquial language or slang probably wouldn't be appropriate. However, industry-specific jargon likely should be used.

But, when it comes to blogging and writing for social media, the rules aren't as strict. For the general public or when writing about less technical topics, colloquialisms and sometimes slang are more than appropriate.

You Can Connect with People

Sometimes using a friendly and conversational tone establishes better connections with readers. Similarly, more conversational writing can establish relationships with customers. Using more casual language that resembles a personal exchange often has more of an impact, and sometimes the colloquial terms are the most easily understood.

You Can Show Personality

Digital spaces are full of content, and more and more is produced every day. Using colloquialisms is a way for writers to distinguish themselves and show some personality. For brands, colloquial language can establish a connection with their audiences or customers, because the terminology can seem more familiar.

However, you don't want to take it too far. Make sure every word — even the slang and colloquialisms — has a clear purpose. A good mix of colloquial and standard language leaves the biggest impression.

Language Constantly Evolves

Many colloquialisms have been part of spoken language for generations, but others may come and go. Slang, especially, goes in and out of fashion. Because so many of us communicate so

regularly on digital platforms, language evolves very quickly. What's considered colloquial today may be standard English in a month or two.

A little color and variety in language is what makes writing great. And, the best writers choose the words that effectively connect with their unique audiences, regardless of formality or grammatical correctness.

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