

A few examples of today's politically-correct expressions:

Old people = "senior citizens" or "seniors"

Handicapped people = "disabled" or "differently-abled"

Fat, obese = "person of size", "differently-sized person"

Blacks = African-Americans

### Ebonics (African American English)

#### What does Ebonics sound like?

Ebonics pronunciation includes the omission of the final consonant in words like 'past' (*pas'*) and 'hand' (*han'*), the pronunciation of the th in 'bath' as t (*bat*) or f (*baf*), and the pronunciation of the vowel in words like 'my' and 'ride' as a long ah (*mah, rahd*). Some Ebonics pronunciations are more unique, for instance, dropping b, d, or g at the beginning of auxiliary verbs like 'don't' and 'gonna', yielding "Ah 'on know" for "I don't know" and "ama do it" for "I'm going to do it."

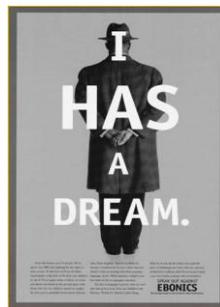
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For instance, Ebonics speakers regularly produce sentences without present tense *is* and *are*, as in "John drivin" or "They allright". Alternatively, Ebonics speakers use an 'invariant' *be* in their speech (as in "They be goin to school every day").

What happened in Oakland, California, in December 1996? The Board of Education officially recognized the existence of "Ebonics" as the predominantly primary language of African-American students in Oakland schools. The Board of Education declared Ebonics to be a language in its own right, not a dialect of English. **Schools were instructed to create the best possible global academic program for the education of African-American students in their primary language (ebonics)**

#### How did some representatives of the African American community react to this initiative?

They published this in the *New York Times*, in October 1998:



"Does this [poster] bother you? It should. We've spent over 400 years fighting for the right to have a voice. Is this how we'll use it? More importantly, is this how we'll teach our children to use it? White America couldn't care less what we do to segregate ourselves.(...)

The fact is language is power. And we can't take that power away from our children with [teaching them only] Ebonics. Would Dr. Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and all the others who paid the price of obtaining our voice with their lives embrace this? If you haven't used your voice lately, consider this an invitation".

Docs 8 & 9. In some ways, is today's world an Orwellian world? Observe politically-correct expressions and compare them with Newspeak in doc 7. Briefly explain what Ebonics is and briefly say what happened in December 1996, share your reactions.

