



Should single-gender education be an option for everyone?

GETTING ORIENTED

The weekly passage introduces issues related to single-gender classrooms. Here is some information that might be helpful to students less familiar with the topic.

Single-Gender Classrooms

The idea of single-gender classrooms is not new. Single-gender classes—classes made up of all boys or all girls—were normal in many public schools across America before the 1960s. Boys and girls were separated into different classes based on the kind of jobs people thought they would have when they graduated. For example, girls took home economics classes, where they learned to sew and cook. Boys took classes where they learned to farm and work with wood. This separation resulted in girls being excluded from, or left out of, many occupations or jobs.



Title IX Law

In 1972, the U.S. government passed laws that protected every student's right to have an equal education called Title IX. This led to an increase in coeducational classes—or mixed classes with girls and boys—and programs. However, some research studies have suggested that sex discrimination continues in less obvious ways. For example, boys are encouraged more to pursue math and science, while girls are encouraged more to take English and social science classes. These studies indicate, or show, that when boys and girls are separated into single-gender classrooms, they do better in school. This difference in performance is especially true for girls, who are more likely to excel, or do well, in math, science, and engineering in single-gender settings. These findings have renewed interest in promoting single-gender classes and schools in our society today.



Public, Charter, and Private Schools

Most public schools in the United States are run by local governments who hire superintendents, principals, teachers, and others who work in the schools. These schools are funded with taxes and other money from the local, state, and federal governments and are free for students. In order to use public money, these schools need to follow certain rules. Sometimes, a school gets special permission to receive public funding but to operate separately, without having to follow all of the rules and policies that public schools have to follow. These schools are called charter schools. Sometimes, charter schools get special permission to try new things, like requiring students to go to school on Saturdays or during the summer. Charter schools are still free for students to attend. Just like public schools, sometimes charter schools are very successful and many students want to attend them, while other times they perform poorly. Private schools are schools that do not use taxpayer money. Parents pay to send their children to private schools.





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EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

	<i>Some may have this view:</i>	<i>But others may think:</i>
Teachers	Teachers may think it will be easier to manage classrooms that are separated by gender, believing more can be done in a class period. They feel they can better cater activities toward the group of students they have.	Other teachers may worry boys and girls won't learn how to work together if they are always separated. Separation may limit job opportunities and direct male teachers to all-boy classrooms and female teachers to all-girl classrooms.
Students	Students may think they can concentrate more in the classroom and not be distracted as easily. Boys can be more active in class. Girls will not feel scared to speak up in math and science classes.	Other students may feel that they will only be able to make friends of their same gender. Social activities at school might be boring. They may not feel confident or prepared to talk to members of the opposite sex and might feel held back in their social development.
Parents	Parents may want students to be more focused on school and not on the drama that comes with boy-girl relationships. Parents of girls may want daughters to have more opportunities to gain confidence in science and math classes. Parents of boys might want sons to have more interactive educational experiences so that they find school more relevant or meaningful.	Some parents might worry that students are not prepared for today's workplace. Parents may think that children will develop an unrealistic view of how the world works. Some may worry that they are sheltering their children too much and that children will not have opportunities to learn how to work productively with the opposite gender.
Administrators and Policy Makers	Administrators may expect fewer behavioral issues if boys and girls are separated. They want to increase academic success for all students and may think that single-gender education can help do that.	Other administrators might say it's difficult to establish single sex classrooms in a public school setting, and there's not enough money to create enough classrooms. They may also say it will be difficult to find enough teachers to teach in this setting.
Employers	Single-gender classrooms could lead to more equal representation in science and math jobs. Employers may have larger groups of job applicants that include women.	Employers may worry workers don't know how to communicate effectively with colleagues of the opposite gender.

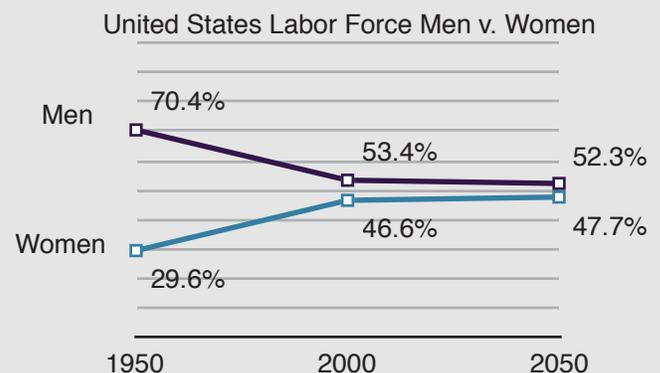
Additional Information

- In 1950, men comprised 70.4 percent of the labor force in the United States. Women comprised 29.6 percent.
- In 2000, men comprised 53.4 percent of the labor force in the U.S. Women comprised 46.6 percent.
- The U.S. Department of Labor predicts that in 2050, men will comprise 52.3 percent of the labor force in the United States, and women will comprise 47.7 percent.
- Percentage of students scoring proficient on a 2008 Florida state subject test according to the National Association for Single Sex Public Education. <http://www.singlesexschools.org/evidence.html>

	Boys	Girls
Coed	55%	59%
Single-gender	85%	75%

Single-Sex Schools: Separate but Equal?
<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2011/10/17/single-sex-schools-separate-but-equal>

Single-Gender Education
<http://www.nea.org/tools/17061.htm>





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ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Features of Academic Text: *Academic words for “say”*

When explaining what people say, think, or believe, writers of academic texts will vary the words they use.

An example of a more academic way of saying “say”:

Teachers of single-gender classes *report* that both genders pay attention and participate more when separated.

We can use “report” when people had a real experience and can tell what happened.

Students might also be confused by the use of the word “argue” in nearly every Word Generation article. They might think that we only argue when we are mad at someone because we disagree. Sometimes, people will say they are having an argument with someone when they stop talking to them!

This kind of argument is different than the more academic use of the word “argue”. Authors or experts argue by saying what they believe about a topic and then giving reasons and evidence to support their belief, or claim. We can argue without getting mad or angry. We just have to be informed.

Jenny lives with her mother, grandmother, and little sister. She is a junior at an all-girls high school where she is an excellent student. Jenny has applied to the University of New Mexico. She is concerned about living in a co-ed dorm. She has not spent much time interacting with boys her own age. Has Jenny’s high school experience prepared her for the real world?

For years, many private schools have separated boys and girls. Today, single-gender education can also be offered in public schools, making it available to students who cannot afford to go to private schools.

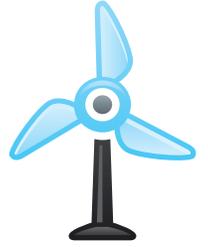
Supporters of the single-gender **paradigm** in education **say that** boys and girls learn better in separate settings. Some research has shown that single-gender education improves learning. Supporters say that in coeducational settings, the pressure to impress the opposite sex distracts both **genders** from their studies. Students focus on looking attractive or acting cool instead of concentrating on schoolwork. Some students hesitate to participate in class because they worry about what students of the opposite sex will think.

Teachers of single-gender classes **report that** both genders pay attention and participate more when separated. Teachers can plan activities specifically to address boys’ and girls’ needs, such as adding movement and competition to lessons for boys and creating collaborative lessons for girls. The learning environment can also be tailored; classrooms for girls are often kept warmer and quieter than those for boys. Having only one gender present can weaken stereotypes about boys being better at math and girls being better at literacy.

However, opponents say that single-gender schools actually reinforce gender

stereotypes. In reality, some girls prefer competition, and some boys are collaborative learners. Some studies show that teachers interact with students differently in single-gender classrooms. Teachers might assign less reading to boys and easier math to girls. Opponents think it is better to work on improving student achievement without separating boys from girls.

Many people also point out that schools are supposed to prepare students for the future. Men and women **comprise** the workforce. If boys and girls grow up without working together, they may have trouble **adapting** to mixed-gender situations. For students to succeed as adults, they must learn how to **conduct** themselves around the opposite sex. What do you think? Do the academic advantages of single-gender education outweigh the social learning opportunities provided in regular schools?



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GENERATING WORDS

Cognates

Cognates are words that have similar spellings in English and Spanish or other languages and are related in meaning. For example, what do you think *teléfono* means in English? Or *océano*?



English	Spanish
_____	teléfono



English	Spanish
_____	océano

Three of our focus words this week have Spanish cognates.

adapt | adaptar

conduct | conducta

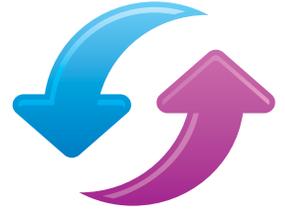
paradigm | paradigma

With a partner, write a sentence using each of these English words. If you speak Spanish, write the sentence in Spanish.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Many of the other words from this week's passage are also cognates. Below are a few of the Spanish translations of these words. Try to find the English word in the passage. Some may not be very obvious.

Spanish	English
excelente	_____
actividades	_____
opuesto	_____
científicos	_____
participar	_____
aplicar	_____
privado	_____
Nueva York	_____



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DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS

Opinion Continuum

Procedure:

1. Ask 3-4 of your classmates to place their name on the opinion continuum. Ask them to place an "X" on the continuum to represent where they stand on the issue and then write their name below the "X." Do not allow anyone to choose the middle.
2. Ask your classmates to explain why they placed their name where they did. You can ask them to elaborate if you don't understand. You might want to take a few notes under their names to remember the important reasons and evidence they use.
3. Be prepared to give your opinion to several of your classmates, as well.



Example:



Thinks that she and some of her girlfriends might get to participate more if the boys were not in the classroom

Make single-gender schools an option



All public schools should be coed.



Class or small group discussion:

With a large or small group, share what you learned from talking to a few classmates.

Phrases you might use in today's discussion:

- why do you believe this?
- Can you give me an example?
- Can you paraphrase that?
- If I'm hearing you right, you are saying that _____.
- _____ believes that _____. According to her, _____.

Notes: