



Should adoption information be kept from children?

GETTING ORIENTED

The weekly passage covers issues related to open and closed adoption. Here is some information that might be helpful to students less familiar with the topic.



Adoption Laws

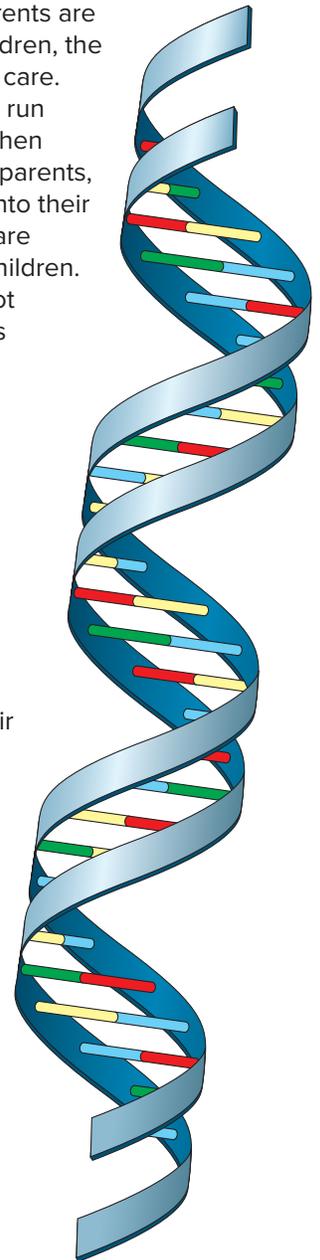
Not only are adoption laws different in every country, but also, in the U.S., adoption laws are different from state to state. If adoptive parents want to adopt a child from a different state, they must know the laws of both states in order to adopt that child. Some states no longer allow closed adoptions. Officials in those states believe children have the right to be able to obtain, or get, information about their birth parents. Even if a state does allow closed adoptions, children are allowed to seek, or search for, information about their birth parents once they become of legal age. If someone wants to adopt a child, they should become familiar with all of these different laws.

Foster Care

Sometimes children need foster parents. If a child's parents die, or if the parents are not able to take care of their children, the children may be placed in foster care. Foster care agencies are usually run through the state government. When adults choose to become foster parents, they agree to take the children into their homes and care for them. They are given money for caring for the children. Unlike adoption, foster care is not permanent. However, sometimes foster parents adopt their foster children.

Hereditary Health Problems

Hereditary health problems are diseases or tendencies that are passed from parents to children. Since children have the same genes as their parents, children are more likely to be affected by the diseases that show up in their parents' genes. Some diseases, such as sickle cell anaemia, are directly caused by genes passed down from parents. Other conditions, such as diabetes and some types of cancer, may be more likely because of parents' genes. For example, parents who have trouble with high cholesterol levels in their blood are more likely to give birth to kids who will have high cholesterol later on. Though unhealthy habits can lead to high cholesterol levels, people may also inherit genes that can cause the body to produce excess cholesterol.





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EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

	<i>Some may have this view:</i>	<i>But others may think:</i>
Adoptive parents & birth parents	Adoptive parents and birth parents may feel strongly about keeping adoption information from children. For birth parents, giving up their child may have been an extremely hard choice. To be able to move on, they may want to make sure their privacy is protected, and they can't be contacted. For adoptive parents, they may be afraid their adopted children will reach out to their birth parents and be hurt or disappointed by them.	Adoptive parents and birth parents both go through a difficult process, and they may want to share that information with their children. Adoptive parents may want to learn medical information about their children, and birth parents may want to know how their children are doing as they grow into adulthood. Birth and adoptive parents may want to help adoptive children learn about their heritage.
Adopted children	Some adopted children may not want to know anything about their birth parents or the adoption process they went through. It may be easier to fully identify with their adoptive family if they don't have knowledge about their birth parents. They may not feel that knowing about their birth parents will make them happier or healthier.	Adopted children may naturally desire to learn about their birth parents. As they get older, they might want to know if they have family medical issues they should be aware of or additional extended family they may not know about. They may want to learn about what their birth parents are like or why they were put up for adoption.

Additional Information

- An average of 55,000 children are adopted in America every year.
- Over 90% of adopted children 5 and older have positive feelings about their adoption.
- Today most adoption professionals agree that at least a semi-open adoption—the post-placement exchange of pictures and letters through agency mediations—is good for all because it creates healthy relationships.
- Nearly 3 out of every 4 adopted children ages 0-5 are read to or sang to every day, compared with only half of non-adopted children.
- Researchers estimate that 26 million people have diabetes and another 79 million have pre-diabetes.

Adoption Information

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/>

“Open Adoption: A New Kind of Family?”

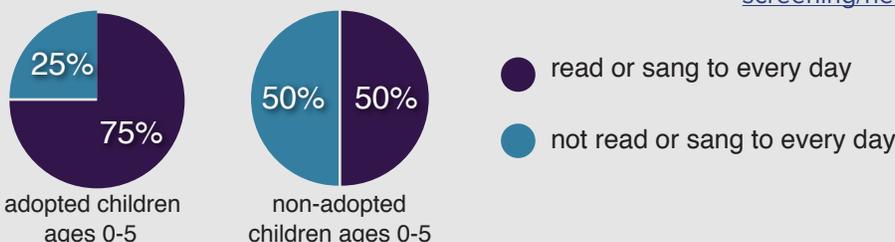
<https://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/24/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/24Rparent.html>

Adoption from Foster Homes

www.childwelfare.gov/foster-hild.adoption.com

Hereditary Cancers Information

www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/risk-assessment-screening/hereditary-genetics





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ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Features of Academic Text: *Abstract entities as subjects*

While *Word Generation* articles tend to be less academic than most textbooks, features of typical academic texts, such as abstract subjects, can be found throughout the program.

Twelve-year-old Phelan was **adopted** as a baby. He loves his adoptive parents, but he has questions they cannot answer. Will he be tall or short when he grows up? Do health problems like diabetes, high cholesterol, or cancer run in his biological family?

He wishes he could ask his birth parents, but he is not allowed to know who they are.

Phelan's situation is called a "closed" adoption. This means that the child and the adoptive parents have no contact with the birth family. Phelan's birth records will be kept secret for the **duration** of his life. Sometimes, in other closed adoptions, the child's birth records will become available once he or she turns 18.

People prefer closed adoptions for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, birth parents believe it will be too painful to see the child they gave up. In some cases, birth parents may not tell friends or family that they have had a baby. A closed adoption **ensures** that the child cannot appear someday and reveal the secret.

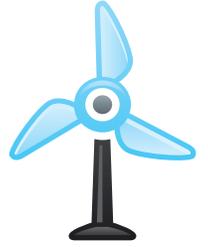
Sometimes adoptive parents are the ones who want adoptions to be closed. They might fear **tension** between the two families. They worry that the birth parents will disagree with the adoptive parents' parenting decisions. They also worry that the birth parents may be involved with drugs or alcohol, or may disappoint the child.

Other people, however, believe that adoptions should be "open." This means that the child can have contact with the birth parents. In many cases, the child and the birth parents exchange letters and photographs. Some adoptive parents choose open adoptions because they want to be straightforward with their child about the adoption. They want to be able to answer all the child's questions. Some birth parents **consent** to open adoptions because they still want to be involved in the child's life.

Should all adopted children like Phelan have the right to know their birth parents? Or should some parents be allowed to keep adoption information private?

Texts are more accessible to students when the subject is a concrete object like a person, place, or thing. Look at the circled subjects. These are all examples of concrete subjects – things that students can easily imagine in their minds while reading.

In academic texts, however, the subjects are often abstract ideas, frequently a new idea that is introduced early in the text. "A closed adoption" is an example of an abstract subject.



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GENERATING WORDS

Word Endings: -tion, -sion

The words *adoption*, *tension*, and *duration* all end with a similar sound of “shun.” Words ending with -tion and -sion are usually nouns. These two endings are frequently added to verbs or adjectives in order to name an action. Below is an example.

When you look up the verb ‘to adopt,’ you will most likely see the following definition.

to adopt – to take into one’s family as one’s own

My parents adopted my little sister six months ago.

When you look up the noun ‘adoption,’ you will most likely see the following definition.

adoption – the process of adopting someone

My parents were on an adoption list for more than two years before they finally received my baby sister.

Nearly everyday, we will come across words with a -tion/-sion ending in our textbooks. Here are some examples. See if you can add a few more under each subject.

📖 Language Arts	📖 Math	📖 Social Studies	📖 Physical Ed.	📖 Science
fiction	subtraction	revolution	motion	pollution
discussion	expression	constitution	_____	eruption
_____	solution	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Word Ending: -cian

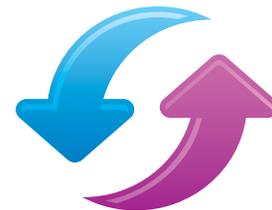
Words that end in -cian also sound like ‘shun’ when spoken aloud. The ending -cian usually refers to a person and the kind of job he or she has. Can you think of other words that end in -cian?

Examples:

musician

beautician

magician



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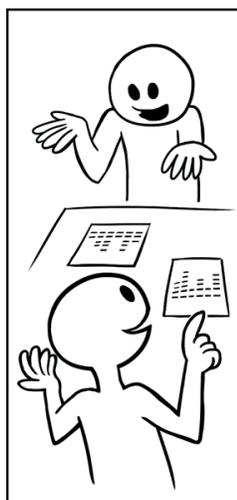
DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS

Persuasion Balance

People on both sides of a controversial issue can always find good reasons and evidence to support their opinions. If that weren't the case, the issue wouldn't be considered controversial. But some reasons and evidence will "weigh" more. In class discussions, we want to be sure to explore both sides. Then we choose to defend the side of the issue that seems to have reasons and evidence that carry more "weight," or significance. This weight will be different for every person because we value different things. This is called a person's **persuasion balance**.

On the lines below, brainstorm reasons and evidence for both sides of the issue: *Should adoption information be kept from children?*

Reasons and Evidence for My Position		Reasons and Evidence for the Opposing Position
1. _____ _____		1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____		2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____		3. _____ _____



Academic Conversation:

Explain your persuasion balance to your partner. Why did you think some reasons and evidence had more weight than others? Why did one side weigh more than the other for you? When your partner has a turn, ask your partner to elaborate if you need them to be more clear about their persuasion balance.

Words and Phrases You Might Use

- "I believe that _____."
- "This evidence weighs more for me because _____."
- "I think this is less important due to _____."
- "While _____ is a good reason, I think that _____ is more convincing because _____."
- "Overall, I think the argument that _____ carries more weight because _____."
- "Some people would argue that _____, but I think they should consider _____."