

Debate: gender and single-sex education

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Good afternoon, today I am going to talk about whether single sex education is better than co-education. Let me define the motion. Single-sex education schools are where all students are of one gender, co-education schools are with both gender of students. Here is the construct of the motion; therefore, today's motion must stand. First, Students at single-sex schools perform better than those at co-ed schools. The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test tracked the performance of students in co-ed and single-sex classes. Before I read the results it should be noted that these students were learning the same curriculum. Girls in co-ed classes were 59% proficient, while girls in single-sex classes were 75% proficient. Boys in co-ed classes were 37% proficient while boys in single-sex classes were 86% proficient. Again, the co-ed and single-sex classes had the same demographics, the same class size, and the same curriculum. Second, Males and females have different learning styles which must be treated differently. Here I quote Leonard Sax, an advocate of single-sex education who is an American psychologist and family physician, famous for three books he wrote on gender issues. He speaks of the differences of learning styles between the two genders. " If you don't understand those differences and you teach boys and girls as if they were the same, the end result is a kindergarten classroom where the boys tell you drawing is for girls and a middle school classroom where girls tell you computers are for boys. " Kids learn differently depending on whether they are male or female. You can see it for yourself. Boys and girls are different. From an early age until high school and beyond they act differently, so treating their education separately is more effective than not. Third, Single-sex education promotes gender equality. As we all know, gender

stereotypes are a big issue in the world today. Many people believe that women are not suited for professions in sports, IT, contractors, electricians, soldiers, and more. Having an all-girl school can help promote ideas of gender equality. Girls in single-sex schools are less likely to see subjects like computer, or physics as “boy subjects” if there aren’t boys in the immediate environment to exaggerate these gender differences. One explanation is that girls at single-sex schools are more likely to explore non-traditional subjects, then, might be that the single-sex classroom encourages girls to be daring, to try things that they might otherwise not try. Another explanation is that girls in the girls-only setting have more freedom to explore non-traditional subjects. Imagine that you're a girl student trying to decide what courses to sign up for. You're choosing between an advanced Spanish class and a computer programming class. You visit both classes. The Spanish class is very familiar: basically the same thing you've been doing for that past several years. The computer programming class at the coed high school, you notice, has 18 boys and one girl. The boys are loudly boasting about how much they know and how proficient they are at computer programming. Which class will you choose? Most teenagers, female and male alike, will choose something they know they're good at rather than risking embarrassment -- and a bad grade on their transcript -- in a subject with which they have little experience. And, few girls want to be the only girl in a class of 20 boys. It's just not a real comfortable situation. So, you sign up for Spanish class. But, if you have the opportunity to sit in on an all-girls computer programming class, you might come away with a very different attitude. In such a class, you'd see other girls whose background is similar to

yours, and who are doing very well in the class. Isn't it more likely that you'd be willing to give it a try? This example leads to another explanation for the fact that girls at single-sex schools are more likely to explore non-traditional courses. Girls at single-sex schools have more diverse role models of their own sex. Forth, Students have a life outside of class. Many students take extra-curricular activities, summer camp, church, even students that have siblings of opposite genders get to spend time with children of the opposite gender. They are not shut off completely from kids from the opposite gender. Even kids with siblings spend time with the other gender. Therefore, you don't have to worry about that people in single sex schools don't interact much with the opposite sex. Some may say that many girls and boys at single-sex schools face problems in interacting with people of the other gender confidently as they cannot make students understand the whole gender completely. First of all, single sexes schools provide inter school events. Most schools belong to inter school groups where they can interact with other schools for things like prom night, debate competition, joint school city tracing. These schools compete together; have events together, do community service together, etc. As a result students in single sex school not only can interact with opposite sex but also can experience companionship of various people having different personality traits. So, all in all, single sex education is better than co-education in any circumstances. I would like to end up my speech by requesting all of you to support single sex education. Thank you