



Questions for Classroom Discussion

Gender-Specific Classrooms

- **What are “gender-specific classrooms,” and how can they change what currently happens at a school?**

- ⇒ Consider the literal definition of “gender-specific classrooms” (*i.e. having classes with all boys or all girls*), and how this is different from the mixed-classes that currently exist
- ⇒ Consider how the overall atmosphere of the school might change if boys and girls are separated throughout the day
- ⇒ Consider changes that might happen in individual classrooms, such as different curriculums, different teaching techniques, and perhaps different disciplinary rules

- **Why are many educators and parents excited to make “gender-specific” classrooms an option at more schools?**

- ⇒ Consider that there is research to show that boys and girls learn differently, and that gender-specific classrooms are the only way to take advantage of that
- ⇒ Consider that boys and girls being together is often a distraction, and in many ways it reinforces stereotypes when they compete for attention (for example, a boy is hesitant to write poetry when it's always compared to what was written by the girls in the class)
- ⇒ Consider that gender-specific classrooms are usually voluntary and it is supported by the law, so there is no downside for a school to at least provide the option

- **Why are many educators and parents hesitant to make “gender-specific” classrooms an option at more schools?**

- ⇒ Consider that simply placing boys and girls in different classrooms won't do much... the teacher must be specially trained and would have to know how to cater to boys or girls
- ⇒ Consider that not every girl or boy fits the mold of what gender-specific classrooms stress (for example, not all girls are quiet and thoughtful)... the overemphasis on different learning styles between genders (even if it's true to a degree) will reinforce stereotypes
- ⇒ Consider that boys and girls must co-exist in all walks of life, and this is an important social skill that must be developed in school at an early age