

No girls, no boys!

1 WARMER

Complete the sentences using your own words. Use a dictionary to help you.

Girls are _____.

Boys are _____.

2 WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Match the words with their meanings. These words will help you understand the article better. The paragraph numbers and the section title are given to help you.

- social life
- successful
- compete
- mixed school
- communicating
- annoying
- attention
- single-sex schools
- ~~mature~~

a word to describe someone who acts in a sensible and adult way mature (para 9)

1. schools that are only for girls or only for boys _____ (para 3)
2. talking to other people _____ (Teacher talks: Boys)
3. a school where both girls and boys go _____ (para 5)
4. the time that you spend enjoying yourself with friends _____ (para 5)
5. the interest or thought that you give to something you are listening to or watching _____ (para 5)
6. When you do this, you try to be better and more successful than someone else. _____ (para 7)
7. a word that describes something that makes you feel slightly angry or impatient _____ (para 9)
8. to be good at something _____ (para 9)

No girls, no boys!

NO GIRLS, NO BOYS!

by Talitha Linehan

1

Girls can't do maths and boys can't sit still. Boys and girls stop each other from learning. **Talitha Linehan** found out whether this is true and whether boys and girls learn better when they are in different schools.

2

Alexander McGuigan has never been in a classroom with a girl. Alexander, 16, has been going to an all-boys school in Melbourne, Australia, called Brighton Grammar School since he was four years old. He says, "With no girls in your class, you can be yourself."

3

Alexander is one of thousands of teens around the world who go to single-sex schools. Some people say single-sex schools are better than mixed schools. They believe that girls and boys learn differently and that it is important to teach them differently.

Teacher talks: Boys

John Philips has more than 20 years of teaching experience at Brighton Grammar School. He thinks boys learn more in single-sex schools because teachers know the best way to teach them.

"Studies show that girls hear better than boys and that boys can be noisy – even when they think they're being quiet. The studies also say that stress can help boys to learn and that they learn more when they are standing up. Boys seem more competitive than girls – but boys find it harder to pay attention for a long time and they're not as good at communicating. Making lessons competitive and changing activities often help boys to pay attention."

Alexander and **Tim Biggin**, 18, who also goes to Brighton Grammar, talk about what they think about learning in a classroom with no girls.

Do you think boys and girls learn differently?

4

Tim: Everyone learns differently – but most boys like numbers, and most girls like letters.

Alexander: There's not much difference. Mostly, boys and girls like the same subjects and teachers.

What's the best and worst thing about an all-boys school?

5

Tim: The best thing is that you don't have to worry about what other people think of you. You can just be yourself. But the social life is better in a mixed school.

Alexander: Teachers know how to keep our attention. That's cool. But you do miss being around girls.

Do you see girls outside of school?

6

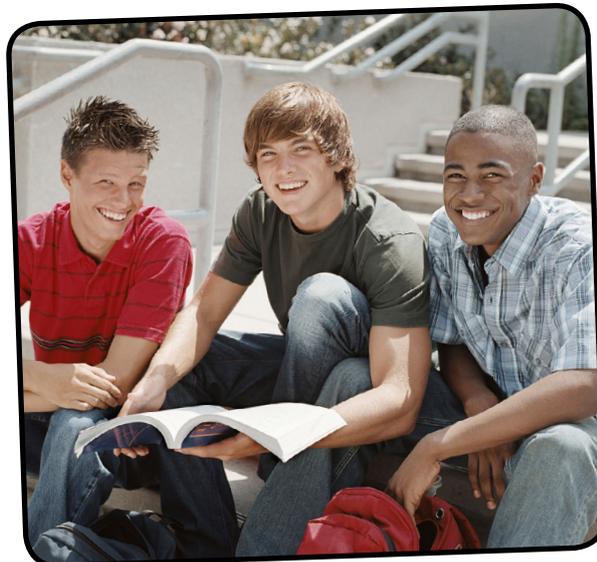
Tim: Yes, lots of my friends are girls. I've had a girlfriend for ten months.

Alexander: We sometimes meet the girls from our sister school for workshops and seminars. We can also invite girls to our school dance. But if you're not social outside of school, you don't meet many girls.

Tim, you've been to a mixed school too. Was it different?

7

Tim: Yes. In mixed schools, boys compete to be liked by girls. Here, they compete to get the best marks. When we read books about love, we can say something clever without anyone laughing at us.



No girls, no boys!

8

No boys allowed

Since 2002, more and more mixed public schools in the US have been offering pupils the chance to learn in single-sex classrooms.

Teacher talks: Girls

Lori Krohn teaches maths and science at New Washington Middle-High School. She says:

"We started single-sex classes three years ago. Since then, our boys and girls have behaved a lot better. They focus more on their lessons and less on who else is in the room. When boys and girls are together, the boys often want the girls to help them with their work. When we do group work in girls' classes, I call the groups 'families' – because girls enjoy working together. In boys' classes, I call the groups 'teams' – because boys enjoy competing with each other. Girls like to sit down, read and learn, but boys like to be active and competitive."



9

Alyssa Brewer, 14, is a pupil at New Washington Middle-High School, in the US state of Indiana. New Washington offers single-sex classes in some subjects to pupils in sixth, seventh and eighth grades. When Alyssa moved to an all-girls class, she got better marks. "I have a hearing problem, and it was hard to hear the teacher in mixed classes. Boys make noise for no reason. It's annoying," she says. "All-girls classes are a good idea. At age 11, girls are more mature than boys. They take their work seriously and want to learn. Boys just play around and have fun. But girls want to be successful."

© Spot on, September 2008, www.spoton.de

No girls, no boys!

3 FIND THE INFORMATION: GIRLS AND BOYS

1. Complete the table with the information from the article.

like letters	take their work seriously and want to learn	enjoy working together
can't do maths	play around and have fun	learn more in single-sex schools
can't sit still	make noise for no reason	are better at communicating
learn better standing up	find it harder to pay attention for a long time	like numbers
learn better when they are under stress	sit down to read and learn	hear better

School

Girls ...	I agree	Boys ...	I agree
... are more mature;			
		... are more competitive;	
... find it easier to pay attention for a long time;			

2. Which statements in the table do you think are right? Which do you think are wrong? Put a tick (✓) in the 'I agree' column if you think a statement is true. Have the other students ticked the same statements as you?

No girls, no boys!

4 DISCUSSION: WHAT WE THINK

Read what the pupils say and then write what you think.

- **Would you go to a single-sex school?**
Yes, I would. I wouldn't have to worry about how I look and dress. I could focus on school more and hang out more with girls. (Isaura, 14)
No, I wouldn't. At an all-girls school, you would get in more fights because there are no boys to separate you. Girls fight more than boys do. (Jasmine, 14)
No, I wouldn't go to an all-boys school. Girls are a distraction that needs to be there. (Rainer, 16)
No, I wouldn't. I'm friends with a lot of girls. If you want a girlfriend, it's harder to be with her if you're at a different school. (John, 16)

Cross out the words that are not true for you and complete the sentence below.

I would / wouldn't like to go to an all-boys / all-girls school because ...

Read out your sentence.

How many people in your class would like to like to go to a single-sex school and how many wouldn't?

Do you think your school marks would be better or worse in a single-sex school?

5 WEBQUEST

“What are little boys made of made of?” is the first line of a traditional British rhyme. Write the line into a search engine. Find out how the rhyme goes on and “what little girls [are] made of”.

No girls, no boys!

KEY

1

- Students' own answers

Teaching idea

To make this more fun, hand out slips of paper with the two sentence beginnings on them and ask the students to complete the sentences in secret. Then collect the slips of paper and redistribute them amongst the students. The students should read what is on their new piece of paper out loud and everyone in the class should guess who wrote it.

2

- single-sex schools
- communicating
- mixed school
- social life
- attention
- compete
- annoying
- successful

3

Girls ...	Boys ...
... can't do maths;	... can't sit still;
... like letters;	... like numbers;
... are more mature;	... make noise for no reason;
... take their work seriously and want to learn;	... play around and have fun;
... hear better;	... learn more in single-sex schools;
... are better at communicating;	... learn better when they are under stress;
... find it easier to pay attention for a long time;	... are more competitive;
... sit down to read and learn;	... find it harder to pay attention for a long time;
... enjoy working together.	... learn better standing up.

5

Teacher's notes

If you don't have internet access, either set this task as homework or write the complete rhyme on the board and discuss it in class. Ask the students to copy the rhyme and illustrate it.

*What are little boys made of?
Slugs and snails and puppy dogs' tails;
That's what little boys are made of!"*
*What are little girls made of?
"Sugar and spice and all things nice;
That's what little girls are made of!"*