

# 4



## Battle of the Sexes

**WARM-UP:** Does your family take traditional male and female roles during holidays?

Are the roles of men and women changing in society? What roles will never change?

### Useful Vocabulary

masculine	outlier	vantage point	composition	homicide
feminine	generalization	prominent	cortex	perpetrator
instinct	stereotype	landmark	criminology	testosterone
hedge maze				

### Gender Gaps

Many American men do not like to stop and ask for directions for fear that it shows a lack of masculine navigational instinct. Professor Peter McLeod put male navigational ability to the test by having boys and girls compete in a series of hedge mazes. While there are bound to be some outliers, he was looking to see if there was some biological truth to the generalization that men have a better sense of direction than women. In an interview with National Geographic, McLeod said, “When you find the same stereotypes in all countries and all over the world, you can’t help thinking; there must be some truth in them.”



Fig. 4a: Hedge Maze

### READING

Read the article and discuss.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How well do you perform when it comes to remembering directions? Do you think you would do well in a hedge maze?
2. Do you believe that men are generally better than women when it comes to navigational sense?
3. Do you agree that if a stereotype is the same across cultures all over the world, it must be true?

McLeod found that boys tended to win in the mazes that require more focus on “big picture” thinking, such as looking at the layout and overall design of the maze from vantage points. On the other hand, girls take the honors in mazes that have more prominent landmarks. Rather than looking at the whole maze, they are more aware of small details,

such as noticing the differences in how the hedges are cut. Neuroscientists believe that this is because of differences in brain composition. Males have a thicker cortex in the right brain, which excels in logical thinking. But females have a more developed corpus callosum, which connects the two halves of the brain, meaning they use more of their left-brains than men tend to.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

4. Do you believe the results of this research study and the neurological explanation?
5. Do you think that these jobs have a gender gap because of brain composition?
6. Which jobs below would you categorize as masculine, feminine or gender neutral?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chef             | <input type="checkbox"/> Nanny            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor           | <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flight Attendant | <input type="checkbox"/> Police Officer   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Florist          | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Leader |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hair Stylist     | <input type="checkbox"/> Wedding Planner  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Masseuse         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga Instructor  |

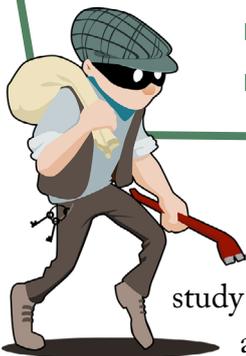
### USEFUL IDIOMS & PHRASES

“Girls take the honors in mazes that have more prominent landmarks.”

☞ **“Take the honors”** (*verb phrase*): to succeed in gaining special recognition.

EXAMPLE: Michael Phelps took the honors in more swimming events than anyone in history.

EXAMPLE: The Korean soccer team took the honors of fourth place in the 2002 World Cup.



An interesting gender gap can be found in the field of criminology. A 2013 global study on homicide by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime found that males accounted for about 96 percent of all homicide perpetrators worldwide.

Interestingly, the study also reported that 78.7% of homicide victims are male.

Observable differences in crime rates between men and women might be due to social and cultural factors, such as crimes going unreported when the perpetrator is female.

However, criminologists also point to biological factors such as higher levels of testosterone in men. But are those two factors enough to explain a lopsided homicide ratio of twenty-four to one?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

7. Why do you think men are so much more likely to commit crimes like homicide than women? Why do you think men also tend to be the victims of homicide?
8. Which behavioral generalizations do you think hold some biological truth and which do you think are cultural? Why do you think these generalizations in gender differences exist?
- ☞ Women mature faster than men.
  - ☞ Men are more likely to have risky behaviors than women.
  - ☞ Women are cleaner than men.
  - ☞ Men are more likely to commit suicide than women.
  - ☞ Women are more religiously pious than men.
9. Which ability-based generalizations do you think hold some biological truth and which do you think are cultural? Why do you think these generalizations in gender differences exist?
- ☞ Men can drink more alcohol than women.
  - ☞ Women live longer than men.
  - ☞ Men are physically stronger than women.
  - ☞ Women are better at learning languages than men.
  - ☞ Men are better at getting leadership roles than women.

## USEFUL SENTENCE STRUCTURES

“Rather than looking at the whole maze, they are more aware of small details.”

☞ “Rather + than” is a comparative structure used to express preference

**Pattern 1:** Rather than (object 1), (subject) + (verb) + (object 2)

EXAMPLE: Rather than playing tennis, I prefer playing baseball.

EXAMPLE: Rather than extra study time, he recommends more sleep.

**Pattern 2:** (subject) would rather (verb 1), than + (verb 2)

EXAMPLE: I would rather sky dive than bungee jump.

EXAMPLE: He would rather quit his job than apologize to his boss.

**Practice:** Discuss the following by using the grammar point.

- ☞ Mountains vs. Beaches
- ☞ Extra time off vs. more pay
- ☞ Watch a movie vs. read a book
- ☞ Save money at home vs. take a vacation abroad