SKILLS FOR LEARNING
Development

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Lesson 29
Male and female

In this third lesson on behaviour you will get an opportunity to assess the views of various writers on male and female behaviour and to compare your views with those of the writers. At the same time you will be able to use some of the skills you learnt in earlier lessons, e.g. finding the main point and deciding on relevance.

Activity A
Are sex roles instinctive or learned?

Here are two statements about men and women.

Decide whether you agree with the statements or not. Note down your answers.

1. We know instinctively how to behave as a man or as a woman; this knowledge is not learned.

2. Because societies differ, each society has different ideas about how men and women ought to behave.

Activity B
What does the writer think? (1)

This is a step-by-step activity. At each step in the text there is a question. The text gives the opinions of one writer on the behaviour of men and women.

Read the text step by step and answer the questions. Note down your answers.

Step 1
There is an interesting and important learning process which begins with the family and to some extent continues throughout our life. This is the learning of the male and female roles.

Is the writer talking about instinct?

Step 2
In some respects this may sound a curious statement. Surely little boys grow into men and little girls grow into women in the same way everywhere? How else could matters be arranged?

Does the writer expect many people to think that little boys and girls grow up into men and women in the same way everywhere?

Step 3
As a matter of fact, matters can be, and are, arranged very differently in other parts of the world.

Is the writer beginning to say what he thinks in this sentence?
Lesson 29

Step 4 Our concept of what is ‘natural’ to men and ‘natural’ to women, like many of our concepts is culture bound. What we think of as natural is simply what we are used to. In other words, sexual identity is not biologically inevitable, it is partly a product of social learning in the family and wider community.

*Do these three sentences say more or less the same thing in different ways?*

Now decide if the writer agrees with Statements 1 and 2 in Activity A and note down your answers.

**Activity C**

**Find out how boys and girls behave**

Here is the data on the behaviour of boys and girls collected by a writer. What he needs is a suitable sentence to introduce his data.

**Step 1** *Read the data and think about the main point that the writer is making.*

They are given different sets of toys to play with (boys are not encouraged to play with dolls, they get tools instead); they are taught different games, recreations and hobbies (netball for girls, football for boys); they are dressed differently, have their hair cut differently, and so on. Boys are expected to be rough and tough (‘boys don’t cry’), to take risks and be assertive, girls to be quiet, gentle and well-behaved. Boys who do not conform to the expected pattern are ‘cissies’ and girls who try to break free from the female role are ‘tomboys’. A lot of social pressure is spent in making sure that most people conform to these roles.

**Step 2** *First ask yourself the following questions.*

a  Is the writer comparing boys and girls?

b  Is the writer telling us about similarities between the behaviour of boys and girls?

c  Is the writer explaining differences between societies?

**Step 3** *Now use your decisions to choose the best sentence from the three given below to introduce the data on boys and girls.*

a  While there are many differences in the ways that boys and girls are brought up in different societies, it is clear that boys and girls are the same all over the world.

b  If we compare Western and Eastern societies, we will find that there are many differences in the way boys and girls are expected to behave.
c In much of Western society, boys and girls are treated differently; different demands are made on them and they are expected to behave in different ways.

Step 4

**Complete this table using the information from the text given above.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of difference</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Toys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Expected behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity D**

**INDIVIDUAL WORK**
**PAIR WORK**

**What effect has culture on sex roles?**

Here is a text which describes what is ‘natural’ to men and women. An incomplete table is given after the text.

*Read the text and note the differences in behaviour between men and women in Western society and Tchambuli society. Then complete the table.*

So although in Western society it is ‘natural’ for men to be more aggressive than women, this tells us something about one society but very little about human nature. In other societies the sex roles are arranged differently. One set of child-rearing practices among the Arapesh, for example, produces what some would regard as a female type of adult in both sexes. The Tchambuli go one better by producing males that play the female role – the men being the domestic creatures, shopping, gossiping, looking after the children, curling their hair, and garlanding themselves with flowers while the undecorated women with shaven heads are off hunting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of behaviour</th>
<th>Tchambuli society</th>
<th>Western society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
<td>women</td>
<td>men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting their hair short</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorating their bodies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing up children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing housework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 29

Now say what the evidence of Arapesh and Tchambuli behaviour proves. Choose the correct answer.

a That human nature is the same the world over.
b That men are naturally more aggressive than women.
c That behaviour in Western Society tells us little about behaviour in other societies.

□ □ □ □

Activity E

What does the writer think? (2)

Here are six statements.

Consider each statement and decide whether it is supported, contradicted or not supported by the text given below. Note down your answers.

1 Among animals, man is the most aggressive.

2 When protecting her young, the female animal can be as aggressive as the male.

3 In the Arapesh and Tchambuli societies, the women and not the men go hunting.

4 The Arapesh and Tchambuli are unusual because the men go to war.

5 There is no historical evidence of women going to war.

6 Among humans, the male is normally larger and stronger than the female.

Animal studies, however, indicate that although it is not only the male that is aggressive, it is certainly the male of the species who is the more aggressive on nearly all occasions. The most obvious exception to this rule is that of the female defending her young. In the human sphere, unquestionably the male is, on average, the larger and stronger of the two sexes and is better equipped for fighting in every way. Even among the Arapesh and Tchambuli, it is the men who are warriors. No society, present or past, has ever expected women to carry the main responsibility for combat in warfare.
Lesson 29

**Activity F**

**INDIVIDUAL WORK**

**PAIR WORK**

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**Complete a summary of what you have read**

Here is a text with blanks. It summarizes the main points in the texts you have read. A choice of words for each blank is given before the text.

*Complete the text by filling in the blanks with the correct words from the list.*

1. physically
2. behave
3. their
4. whereas
5. assertive
6. but
7. roles
8. however
9. but
10. moreover
11. especially
12. consequently

Sex roles are determined (1) _______ rather than biologically. People learn to (2) _______ in a way that (3) _______ society considers as "natural" in man or woman. For instance, in western society, boys are encouraged to be tough (4) _______ girls are expected to be (5) _______. In other societies the sex (7) _______ are different. Among the Tchambuli, (8) _______, hunting is done not by the men (9) _______ by the women. Animal studies (10) _______ have shown that the female is never as aggressive as the male (11) _______ when she is defending her young. Among humans, the male is clearly superior to the female. (12) _______ he is mainly responsible for warfare.

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**SELF-STUDY**

**Build your word power**

*Choose the appropriate word or phrase to complete each of the texts given below.*

1. _______ football and rugby are similar. But in most respects they are different.
   a. Usually  b. To some extent  c. To a great extent

2. It was a _______ sight: a horse-drawn laundry cart in the heart of such a modern city.
   a. curious  b. normal  c. familiar

3. In _______ concerning pollution it is often difficult to tell what is cause and what is result.
   a. discussions  b. matters  c. innovations
4 The whole family was_______for three weeks. The doctor said they should not go out until they were all free from the disease.
   a secure   b house-bound   c unreliable

5 The police have only one clue concerning the_______of the thief. He left a fingerprint on the door.
   a character   b identity   c appearance

6 Day follows night and night follows day. This sequence is_______; it is certain to happen.
   a inevitable   b satisfactory   c sufficient

7 Every group has its rules of behaviour or conduct. If we belong to a group we are expected to_______its rules.
   a react to   b conform to   c violate

8 The actress said that her favourite forms of_______were swimming and playing badminton.
   a recreation   b survival   c labour

9 The executive said that he had to have a rest because the_______of work was too great.
   a height   b pressure   c order

10 The crowd became_______when they realized that they would not be able to enter the football stadium.
   a aggressive   b extraordinary   c compatible

11 When people first heard that the earth was round they thought it was a very strange_______.
   a category   b notion   c record

12 Many tribes in Africa have colourful marriage ceremonies and their_______are unique to each.
   a practices   b matters   c influences