

3. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?

EXPLORE YOUR IDEAS



What to Do

Read the introduction and story below, then write your thoughts on the facing page.

Why do I think this? Why do you think that? Many things shape our opinions, including the groups and communities we are a part of and our personal history. Unlike a *fact*, which is something that can be proved with certainty, an *opinion* is based on someone's ideas and beliefs and can vary from person to person.

How do your own opinions reflect your identity? To find out more, read the following story and opinion question about boys and girls playing sports:

For many years, girls who wanted to compete in school sports or organized leagues were not allowed to do so. In 1972 that changed, however, when the U.S. Congress passed Title IX to end discrimination against girls and women in federally funded education and sports programs. What this law means is that schools have to provide the same sports opportunities to boys and girls. Before Title IX there were only a handful of sports programs for girls to participate in, such as swimming, golf, and track. Because of Title IX, girls are now able to participate in a growing number of sports that previously were just open to boys, including baseball, soccer, basketball, and even football.

Opinion Question: Should Title IX Go Farther?

Laurel is a 6' 2" senior at Main East High School and an exceptional basketball player. She has played with the varsity team since she was a first-year student, and led her school to the girls' state title for three years. This year she has decided to try out for the boys' team because she no longer feels challenged, and hopes to be noticed for college scholarships on a more high-profile team. She has played with many of the boys from the team informally and finds it much more fun. The school rules, however, forbid a girl from trying out for a boys' team, and the boys' varsity coach doesn't want her on the team because of all of the problems it would cause with locker rooms, uniforms, etc.

1. What is your opinion: Should a girl be allowed to try out for and play on a boys' basketball team? Explain your opinion.
2. Are you a boy or a girl? How do you think your being a girl or a boy affects the opinion you expressed responding to question 1?
3. Do you play on any all-girl, all-boy, or mixed boy-girl teams? How do you think that fact might influence your opinion expressed in question 1?
4. What other influences can you think of that might help determine your response to question 1?