

Males and females compete in the same arena



The Television and Film Arena

The Hunger Games trilogy, by Suzanne Collins, centers on a yearly competition where one boy and one girl from each of

12 districts in the fictional country of Panem fight to the death in a dangerous arena until only one remains. The district representatives, or “tributes,” are chosen from a boys’ lottery and a girls’ lottery consisting of all boys and girls in each district between the ages of 12 and 18. While they are initially separated by gender in order to be chosen, they compete in an arena with little care or emphasis on their gender.

Think about your favorite TV shows and movies. When there is a competition in the storyline (i.e. sports, music, dance, chess, acting, student government, etc.) there are times when boys and girls compete with one another and other times when they compete within their own gender. Give two examples of TV shows or movies that portray boys and girls competing separately and together:

Boys and girls compete separately

(Example: *American Idol* – The top 24 girls and top 24 boys are chosen from thousands of contestants. Elimination of contestants continues to remain gender-specific until they arrive to the “top ten” contestants.)

1.

2.

Boys and girls compete together

(Example: *Glee* – Both boys and girls are members of the Glee Club and work together to compete against other schools.)

1.

2.

Do you think that it is fair for boys and girls to compete with one another in ALL arenas? Explain your answer in the space below.

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The Sports Arena

Read excerpt on the following page from USA TODAY, *Coed teams provide twist to Youth Olympics*, to find out more about how students are leading the world as they compete in mixed-

gender events in the Olympic Games. As you read the article, highlight information that will help you respond to the "CLIP" questions listed below. Once you have finished reading the article, take out a separate sheet of paper and respond to at least one of the questions listed in each box. Be prepared to share your responses.

"CLIP" Questions

<p>Creative question If this article were a kind of clothing/music/weather/food what would it be? Explain your answer</p>	<p>Interpretive questions What fact or quote stood out to you the most? What is the most important part of the article?</p>
<p>Literal questions Summarize the article Give the main points of the article Write a new headline or title for the article</p>	<p>Personal questions How does this article relate to you? What feelings to you have after reading the article? Why?</p>

The Future Arena

After exploring how mixed-gender competition is portrayed in the media and reading USA TODAY's article about mixed-gender events in the Olympics, think about how competition between

males and females might look twenty years from now. In the space below, draw a picture or write words to create an image showing how you predict competition between genders will look in the future. Be prepared to share your creation.

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International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge started the Youth Olympic Games, for athletes ages 15-18, primarily to encourage children to be more active.

It is too early to tell whether the Games, the first winter edition of which are being held in Innsbruck, Austria, are influencing any pre-teen couch potatoes. But the Youth Olympics could have an impact on the full-grown Olympic Games.

The Youth Olympics feature many of the same sports as the regular Olympics, but often with a mixed-gender and/or team twist. Some of those variations could find their way onto the Olympic program, as sports try to widen their appeal and offer more medal opportunities to participating athletes.

"With this particular event, you have a little more flexibility," Alan Ashley, the U.S. Olympic Committee's chief of sport performance, says of the Youth Olympics. "I think a little creativity is fun."

The first Summer Youth Olympics, held in 2010 in Singapore, [introduced] a mixed-gender triathlon relay that the sport's international governing body is now proposing for inclusion at the 2016 Summer Olympics.

The triathlon currently has just two Olympic events — separate competitions for men and women. "Other sports have four or five medals, but we only have two," International Triathlon Union president Marisol Casado told Chinese press agency Xinhua last year. "I think our athletes deserve to have more."

The Winter Youth Olympics include mixed-gender events in alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, curling, figure skating, luge, short-track speed skating and ski jumping.

"The athletes love it, because it builds camaraderie of teams beyond just men or women," Ashley says.

"It's a change, a different thing," Sarah Anderson says of playing on [the U.S. curling] team. "The guys are a lot stronger. Tom [Howell] is a really, really strong sweeper and he can throw a lot of weight (when throwing stones). That's really different for us, because no girls can really do that. So we can call different shots when we're playing with them."

[Korey] Dropkin, the team's skip, who has finished in the top five twice at junior nationals, never had played on a mixed team before participating in qualifying for the Youth Olympics.

He could see it being added to the Olympic program, he says, but "as a separate category from men's and women's. They need to keep those."

Source: *Coed teams provide twist to Youth Olympics, January 12, 2012. USA TODAY*

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Extend Your Learning

Check out the following websites:

- ▶ Find out more about the Youth Olympic Games:
www.olympic.org/content/yog_/yog-2/#/News
- ▶ Read an article by Dr. Virginia Savage who says that girls should be allowed and encouraged to play little league baseball with boys and decide if you agree:
www.savageperformance.net/2010/12/mixed-gender-on-youth-sports-teams/.
- ▶ Have you seen or read The Hunger Games trilogy? Find out why so many people are talking about it: www.hungergamesmovie.org
- ▶ According to research conducted by the Geena Davis Institute, boys and girls are not equally represented in film and television. In fact, girls are outnumbered by boys three-to-one. Find out more about how the media portrays females in television and film:
www.seejane.org/research/