

# BOYS VS GIRLS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUxnBZxsfoU>

- Describe the key distinction between the ways boys and girls sit when talking to their best friends.
- Why does Tannen open with this example? How does this pattern set the stage for the rest of her analysis of communication between women and men?



# STATUS AND CONNECTION

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzQK0JigAf8>

- What is the key distinction Tannen makes about the character of boys' and girls' play?
- Discuss Tannen's examples of boys and girls at play. What do these examples demonstrate about the use of language to negotiate status and establish connection? (Bear in mind that the same way of speaking can do both at once.)
- Tannen argues that boys and girls both are interested in status and connection, but that the difference lies in which dimension they focus on and how their conversational rituals address these concerns. How do girls manage differences in status? How do boys create connection through competition for status?
- Citing the examples of asking directions and apologizing, discuss the various reasons men and women give for asking directions (or not) and for apologizing (or not).
- Can you think of other examples where the same conversation can look very different depending on whether it is approached from the perspective of status or of connection?



# DIRECT AND INDIRECTNESS

- In this section Tannen introduces the terms “message” and “meta-message.” Define and discuss these terms.
- In this context, discuss how a “yes/no” answer can have different meanings to different people.
- Discuss whether Americans of different ethnic backgrounds may have different conversational rituals regarding directness and indirectness.
- Can you think of other examples of different habits regarding directness and indirectness?
- When does Tannen suggest men are more likely to be indirect than women? Relate these patterns back to the perspectives of status and connection.



# PUBLIC & PRIVATE TALK

- Discuss the scene in which a woman and a man answer the question “How was your day?” Why do they often give such different responses?
- How does Tannen define and distinguish “public talk” and “private talk?” With reference to these concepts, how do women’s and men’s uses of language often differ?
- How would Tannen account for both impressions — that women talk more than men, and that men talk more than women?



# RITUAL OPPOSITION

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lXLSL\\_P8ZQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lXLSL_P8ZQ)

- What is “ritual opposition”? Connect this idea back to the way girls and boys play as children. Also relate this concept to the perspectives of connection and status. How does ritual opposition play a role in negotiating status and creating connection?
- What examples does Tannen give to illustrate misunderstandings that arise when conversational rituals of opposition are not shared. Can you think of others?
- What does Tannen mean by “re-frame” and “re-key?” Can you think of examples where re-framing helped improve a situation?

