

### **CD 3, Track 13**

#### Chapter 5: Listening Perfect Flowers

**Narrator:** Listen to a lecture in a botany class. The professor is discussing perfect flowers.

**Professor:** Okay. So, today we're going to discuss perfect flowers—those flowering plants with both male and female components. And what we'll be investigating in some depth is how these male and female parts contribute to the life cycle of a plant. So a mature flower... a mature perfect flower consists of both male parts that contain sperm and female parts that include eggs. To be more specific, let's look at his diagram here. Now as you can see the stamen or male component includes an anther, that houses the pollen, and there are two sperm cells per pollen grain. And next we have the pistil, or female part of the flower, that houses the ovary. The ovary is like a protective covering for the ovules or egg cells contained within.

Now, in the cross-pollination scenario, typically an insect such as a bee will visit a flower, attracted by its bright color and scent, to find nectar. And during this search, pollen grains will inevitably rub off onto the bee's body. And then, as it moves on to the next flower, these pollen grains will attach themselves to the sticky surface of the stigma on top of the pistil. And that's what we call pollination. So pollination happens when the male and female parts of the flower come into contact. Next, the pollen grain migrates down the style of the pistil where a sperm cell fertilizes an egg. And once the fertilization process is complete, the egg... it eventually grows into a seed that's dispersed by animals, wind, or water. Then this new seed begins to sprout or germinate. And after germination, the plant continues to grow until it reaches full maturity and the flower blooms. And at this point, the life cycle repeats itself.

### **CD 3, Track 14**

#### Chapter 5: Listening Conversation

**Narrator:** Listen to a conversation between a student and a clerk in the registrar's office.

**Student:** Hi. I'm here about my transcripts.

**Clerk:** Yes.

**Student:** Well, the thing is that there are a number of errors on the form.

**Clerk:** What kind of errors?

**Student:** Well, for starters I'm listed as a male, when you can clearly see that I'm a female.

**Clerk:** Unbelievable. I don't know how this happened, computer errors and all... crazy! Nevertheless, I'm going to have to see a birth certificate. Do you have one?

**Student:** Yes, right here.

**Clerk:** Well, this does confirm that the mistake is on our end. Sorry for the inconvenience.

**Student:** Yeah, but that's not all. My mark for economics last term is listed as 120, and I really don't think I'm that smart.

**Clerk:** 120! Incredible. What was your score? Do you remember it?

**Student:** 82. And another thing, this says my grade point average is 2, when it clearly should be 3.6 according to my records.

**Clerk:** Wow! Okay. I am going to have to show this to my supervisor and we'll try to get this whole thing straightened up as soon as possible.

**Student:** Thanks, I really appreciate that, but the thing is that I need the transcript by Friday to meet the scholarship application deadline.

**Clerk:** Oh, I see...okay. Let me talk to my supervisor right now and see what we can do about this. Since you did hand in your transcript request on time, and these errors are obviously not your fault, there is no way you should be penalized. So, normally what we do in these cases is make the changes by hand and then send an explanatory letter. I'm sure we could get that done by tomorrow. Would that work for you?

**Student:** Yeah, great. But eventually I would like to see my transcript free of errors.

**Clerk:** Of course, but I hope you understand that might take a couple of weeks.

**Student:** Sure.

**Clerk:** But you won't have to pay the usual fee. You'll receive the corrected transcript free of charge.

**Student:** Great. Thanks for your help.

### **CD 3, Track 15**

Chapter 5: Listening

Sex Selection

**Narrator:** Listen to a lecture in a bioethics class. The professor is discussing sex selection.

**Professor:** All right. Our next topic on the agenda is sex selection. So, what is sex selection? Well...it's any technique that allows parents to choose the sex of their children. And there are three basic methods: pre-pregnancy or making sure the child is the correct sex before pregnancy....post-pregnancy or ways to choose gender used during pregnancy...and post-birth or ways to select for sex after birth.

Pre-pregnancy techniques include sperm sorting and pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, more commonly known as PGD.

Okay, so sperm sorting. Well sperm sorting is just that—the separation of sperm into two categories: your X-chromosome sperm that produces females and your Y-chromosome sperm that results in males. Once classified, a qualified physician simply takes the sperm of the desired gender, either male or female, and inserts it into a woman’s reproductive tract.

In PGD, a second pre-pregnancy technique, a woman’s eggs are fertilized outside the womb in a lab. So then, these eggs or embryos are genetically tested for X and Y chromosomes. And then after that, a doctor implants an embryo of the desired gender into the mother’s womb and disposes of the others. And this is what makes the procedure somewhat controversial... I mean because of the fact that human embryos are destroyed. Even still, both sperm sorting and PGD are currently legal in the United States.

Now, let’s move on to methods used after a pregnancy is in progress. First, there is amniocentesis, and of course amniocentesis is when you use a needle to draw fluid from the womb to determine sex. And second there is ultrasound, where you can see an image of the fetus to see whether you have a boy or a girl. And so let’s say if parents find they have a boy when they wanted a girl, they can, at this point, opt to abort the child. So this method, post-pregnancy sex selection or abortion is the most common form of sex selection in the world today...And that’s probably due to the high costs involved in pre-pregnancy techniques.

Finally we have post-birth sex selection. These methods include infanticide or killing children of the unwanted sex, child abandonment, and sex-selective adoption. Now, while the first two of these techniques may seem rather severe and even unethical, they are still practiced in various regions internationally.

### **CD 3, Track 16**

Chapter 5: Listening

Gender and Comfort Food

**Narrator:** Listen to a lecture in a marketing class. The professor is discussing marketing strategies that focus on specific groups.

**Professor:** All right...let’s begin. To continue with our discussion about marketing strategies that focus on specific groups, we’ll be looking at research that shows how males and females have different ideas about comfort food. And your assignment, after we finish, will be to apply this research in developing one ad for males and one for females based upon their comfort food preferences.

**Student 1:** So...comfort food? How would you define that?

**Professor:** Well, comfort food, by definition, is any food that delivers psychological feelings of well-being when consumed. And these feelings, these positive feelings, may be driven by a number of factors like...physiological mechanisms or even early childhood experiences. First,

research shows that certain foods such as chocolate, sugar, cheese, and fat may trigger the release of trace amounts of brain opiates. In other words, eating them is going to make you feel good. Ice cream, cookies, potato chips, and pizza would fit into this category. Second, early childhood experiences can also set a person's food preferences for life. So, for example, if your mom made you feel loved and cared for as she dished out a steaming hot bowl of chicken soup, you may forever afterwards associate chicken soup with feelings of comfort.

**Student 2:** But how does this relate to gender?

**Professor:** Well, the study I'd like to look at today makes the hypothesis that gender has an influence on the selection of comfort food because it's likely that males and females perceive their early childhood experiences in different ways. What I mean is that, in the typical case where the mother prepares the food, maybe with help from younger females in the family unit...well, males and females might look at this event differently, and this difference could have a definite impact on the items they choose as comfort food.

**Student 3:** And did it? I mean, in this study?

**Professor:** Yeah, as a matter of fact it did. Results confirmed that a person's comfort food choices did vary according to gender. But more than that, they were related to positive and, in some cases, negative associations formed early on in life. In particular, researchers found that males find comfort in hearty home-cooked meals their mothers used to prepare for them, with the majority of men choosing hot substantial food items rather than snacks as comfort food items. For example, they found comfort in mashed potatoes, meat, pasta, pizza, and soup. And the reasons they gave for why they chose such foods had to do with a feeling of being at the center of attention, feeling spoiled, served, and cared for. Women, on the other hand, preferred snack type foods that involved no preparation whatsoever. We are talking about items like chocolate, cookies, candy, and ice cream. Of course, it's true that women enjoyed hot home-cooked meals, but they did not connect these foods to feelings of comfort. Instead they symbolized work. Snack foods, on the other hand, implied freedom from the drudgery of meal preparation and clean up.

### **CD 3, Track 17**

Chapter 5: Listening

Gender and Communication Styles

**Narrator:** Listen to a lecture in a Communications class. The professor is discussing gender and communication styles.

**Professor:** So, what we're going to be looking at today is gender and communication styles. And there are a large number of researchers who suggest that males and females are like two different cultural groups. Some even go so far as to suggest they are from different planets. I'm sure you've heard of the book *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus*. Let's have a look at what these writers and researchers have to say.

First, they claim that the sexes deal with problems in different ways. For instance, they say that women are more likely to talk things over... problems they have and decisions they need to

make. Men, on the other hand, prefer to deal with personal issues on their own and see no point in sharing them. And if a woman should happen to offer advice when a man has not asked for it, he will see this as an attack. Why? Because he feels that the woman doesn't have faith in his ability to deal with his own stuff.

And when a woman brings up a problem, what she really wants is a good listener—someone who will understand her feelings. Instead, a man tends to look at a problem in an analytical sort of way and offer a solution. But this can end up making a woman angry because all she wants is to have her feelings validated. More often than not, disagreements will result. And in any reaction to stress, women will reach out, but men will withdraw.

Second, those who view gender as culture claim that men and women interact for different reasons. For men, conversation is a way to report information and establish status. Men want to maintain a sense of power, a sense of hierarchy, especially in talking to other men. For instance, they may list activities in order to impress the listener... to establish status. Women, on the other hand, share personal stories as a way to strengthen a personal bond. For women, conversation is all about intimacy...building a stronger rapport. So men report and women want rapport. That's why we often refer to male...., to differences between male and female communication styles as the report versus rapport distinction.

A third difference is that men are goal-oriented, while women are relationship-oriented. If we look at the workplace for example, women build relationships in order to get the job done. But men...they develop friendships as a result of working closely with others on a task. For women, the relationship is primary, but for men the task is what really matters.

And so, these gender-based ideologies have been bandied about for over a decade or so at this point. New research, however, suggests that these so-called communication differences between males and females are by and large unfounded.

In one recent university study of some 750 individuals, for instance, researchers found that there was only a two percent difference in the ways men and women express support to their friends. For example, both genders used empathy, shared similar experiences, and told friends not to worry. Okay, it's true that women were just a bit more likely to validate feelings and men were just a little more inclined to offer advice, but there was, in fact, only a two percent difference.

In a second study that looked at how each gender reacted to advice, both males and females were grateful to receive it as long as it had to do with to their specific problem, was positive...a positive solution, and was expressed with kindness and respect. This contradicts what our gender-as-culture experts say about how men feel threatened by advice.

In a third study, participants listed the types of supportive comments that they found most helpful. And again there was only a very small difference between male and female responses...this time three percent. All in all, the researchers note that both genders prefer the typical feminine style of validating emotions and ideas, and dislike the male style of dismissing feelings or invalidating the importance of a problem. The authors also point out that everyone needs support, and supportive people in their lives. In addition, they mention the large body of

evidence that links a good support system with health, longevity, personal fulfillment, and improved relationships.

### **CD 3, Track 18**

Chapter 5: Listening Test  
Conversation

**Narrator:** Listen to a conversation between a student and his professor.

**Student:** Hi Professor.

**Professor:** Hi Jack.

**Student:** I'm here to talk to you about the upcoming class debate on...working mothers. I submitted my main arguments last Tuesday, and I was wondering if you've had time to review them.

**Professor:** Yeah, sure. Let me get my notes...okay... right, here they are. So, you have four fairly solid arguments, providing the child with the best possible start in life, the lack of comparable child care options, the support of various religious and cultural groups, and the valuable community contributions stay-at-home mothers can make.

**Student:** So you think my arguments are valid, then?

**Professor:** Valid, yes—but well-researched, no.

**Student:** What do you mean?

**Professor:** Well, what I'm not seeing here are statistics to back up your claims. You really need to research each of these points so that your arguments come across more strongly. Take poor childcare options for instance, what you need to do is find studies that compare children raised at home to those who go to daycare and that kind of thing, and document the results. How's their school performance, grades? Any discipline problems? Mental health issues? You see what I mean?

**Student:** Research—right.

**Professor:** And another thing. You have to anticipate the other team's arguments. You know you are going to have to counter every point they make, so you need to think of at least four or five points you think they might discuss and prepare counter-arguments. So what do you think they might say?

**Student:** Well, they could bring up the fact that...a woman has the right to do whatever she wants with her life.

**Professor:** Uh-huh, and how would you dispute that?

**Student:** Well, I could say that a child's rights are just as important as, if not more important than, the mother's.

**Professor:** Okay, but you need to support that with research. What rights does a child have by law and how do these rights compare with the mother's? Get some hard facts to back up your points.

**Student:** Right.

**Professor:** So, what other arguments do you think the opposition will raise?

**Student:** That it's the quality of time, not the quantity, that matters.

**Professor:** And how would you counter that?

**Student:** Well, I guess I could counter with something about the working mother burn-out syndrome, and say that after a full day of work, there would, in fact, be little quality left in a mother's time.

**Professor:** Good, but again you need facts and figures to back up every word you say. Now, what I want you to do is go home and brainstorm three more arguments from the opposing side and points you intend to make to dispute them. And I want to see a full complement of research for every single argument—and that includes arguments for your side as well. Then bring back what you have in a week or so I can see how you're doing.

**Student:** Sounds good, professor. Thanks for your help.

### **CD 3, Track 19**

**Narrator:** Listen again to part of the lecture.

**Professor:** Well, what I'm not seeing here are statistics to back up your claims. You really need to research each of these points so that your arguments come across more strongly. Take poor childcare options for instance, what you need to do is find studies that compare children raised at home to those who go to daycare and that kind of thing, and document the results. How's their school performance, grades? Any discipline problems? Mental health issues? You see what I mean?

**Narrator:** Why does the professor say this?

**Professor:** Mental health issues?

### CD 3, Track 20

#### Chapter 5: Listening Test Gender-Bending Chemicals

**Narrator:** Listen to a lecture in a biology class. The professor is discussing endocrine disruptors.

**Professor:** All right. So, what we're looking at today is an alarming trend that has a large number of scientists deeply concerned. In brief, the Scientific Committee on the Environment has reported that gender-bending chemicals also known as endocrine-active substances or endocrine disruptors are affecting over 200 species worldwide to the point of causing permanent gender changes. And this is affecting not only wildlife, but also humans. Now I've asked several of you to prepare a summary of various aspects of this issue—so, May, could you give us a rundown of the types of chemicals are we talking about?

**May:** Well, we're looking at chemicals that mimic, block, or trigger the release of male and female hormones such as estrogen and testosterone. More often than not, these chemicals tend to mimic estrogen and block testosterone. So in this way, they intensify or exaggerate the feminine aspects of a species. What we're talking about are human-made chemicals produced after the First...I mean the Second World War. We're talking about chemicals like phthalates used in perfumed cosmetics and flexible plastics like soft-drink bottles and food packaging. And then there are the plastics used in baby bottles and to line tin cans for food and beverages. As well, there are by-products of the pills, pesticides...industrial chemicals, and steroids used to promote growth in livestock. And all of these find their way into the food supply. According to scientists, there are currently over 500 endocrine disruptors in official use. And what happens is that these chemicals accumulate in the environment. They leach into the soil, sediment, and water and end up as part of the food chain, with aquatic organisms usually the first to be affected.

**Professor:** Thanks May. Now Frank, can you go over some of the various species affected?

**Frank:** Well, as May mentioned, aquatic organisms are usually hit first because of sewage runoff into rivers. In the UK, for instance, a survey of 42 rivers showed that one-third of male fish are developing female reproductive organs. And this could have dire consequences for future fish stock... What I mean is that it could lead to a serious decline in population size. Similar trends have been noted all over the industrialized world. In the US, for example, scientists did a DNA analysis of what they thought were female salmon in the Columbia River. Well, it turns out they were actually males, with XY chromosomes. Apparently, the estrogen-heavy sewage in the river had begun to turn these males into females.

**Professor:** So the situation is quite serious, then?

**Frank:** Yes, and the impact of these endocrine disruptors is now being felt all the way up the food chain. Scientists have found that endocrine-active substances are now affecting a diverse selection of wildlife including turtles, seals, dolphins, alligators, polar bears, birds, honeybees, and even panthers. And while many species have been feminized, a masculinization process is also possible. Take the case of Norwegian arctic polar bears exposed to PCBs. While banned in the

1970s, PCBs are persistent organic pollutants. In other words, they do not degrade but accumulate in the environment over time.

So the effects of endocrine disruptors can be anything from a sex change to the disturbance of hormone function to the point where we're seeing males with smaller reproductive organs and lower sperm counts leading to decreases in population size.

**Professor:** And now, as I'm sure you've all been wondering, just how are these endocrine disruptors affecting humans? Ah...Jill?

**Jill:** Well, I'm afraid that the situation does not look very good. From my research, I've learned that the sperm count of the average US male is now half of what it was four decades ago. And, of course, this means a lower fertility rate for men. In addition, there has been a noted reduction in the average size of male reproductive organs and an increase in testicular and prostate cancer. As for women, there has been a trend towards the early onset of puberty and a rise in breast cancer. And the global sex ratio also appears to be changing. For instance, last year in the US and Japan, there were 250,000 fewer males born than predicted. And in various communities in Greenland and northern Russia, sex ratios are now being reported at two to one instead of the approximate standard of one to one. And in one Inuit community in Greenland, only girls are being born. Scientists conclude that the high amounts of estrogen-mimicking chemicals in the food chain end up in a pregnant woman's blood through the foods they eat. And these chemicals have the power to alter the sex of an unborn fetus from male to female. And in Greenland...scientists tell us that this is exactly what is happening.

### **CD 3, Track 21**

Chapter 5: Speaking

Missing Partner

**Narrator:** In this question, you will listen to a conversation. You will then be asked to talk about the information in the conversation and to give your opinion about the ideas presented. After you hear the question, you will have 20 seconds to prepare your response and 60 seconds to speak.

**Student 1:** Hi. How's it going?

**Student 2:** Not bad, but I have to do this oral presentation for my Gender Studies class and my partner dropped out—well, not dropped out—he was called home for a family emergency, and the presentation is next week. So, I'm going to have to present by myself when everyone else has a partner. I'm not really into it.

**Student 1:** Hmm. Why don't you talk to your professor? Maybe he's not even aware of the situation. I mean, the class is fairly large. Why don't you ask to be re-assigned to a new partner? You never know—maybe someone else is in the same position you're in.

**Student 2:** Well, I suppose I could talk to the professor.

**Student 1:** And another thing you could do is call your partner. You have his cell number, right?

**Student 2:** Yeah.

**Student 1:** Well, call him and find out when he's coming back. You know, if it's not too far off, maybe you could get your professor to push the date forward for your presentation and you and your partner could just present a little later.

**Student 2:** I could call, but what if he's busy? I mean, it might not be appropriate to call considering the situation, don't you think?

**Student 1:** Well, there's always email.

**Student 2:** Yeah, that's true. But I still wonder if I should contact him when he's going through some kind of family issue.

**Student 1:** It's up to you. He might thank you for it. He's going to have to do some kind of presentation when he comes back anyway, right?

**Student 2:** Yeah, maybe.

**Narrator:** Now get ready to answer the question.

The students discuss two possible solutions to the woman's problem. Describe the problem. Then state which of the two solutions you prefer and explain why.

### **CD 3, Track 22**

Chapter 5: Speaking

Gender Stereotyping Problem

**Narrator:** In this question, you will listen to a conversation. You will then be asked to talk about the information in the conversation and to give your opinion about the ideas presented. After you hear the question, you will have 20 seconds to prepare your response and 60 seconds to speak.

**Advisor:** Hi Jeremy. How's it going?

**Student:** Not so good.

**Advisor:** What's the problem?

**Student:** Well, as you know, I made the switch from biological sciences into nursing...

**Advisor:** Right.

**Student:** ... and the thing is I'm getting a lot of razzing from my friends, you know. Like they're saying things like, There she goes, and What's for dinner sweetie?

**Advisor:** Really?

**Student:** Yeah, they don't seem to realize that this is what I want to do with my life. And you know what? I just don't know how to respond.

**Advisor:** Well, it's not uncommon for people to make jokes based on gender stereotypes, but you have to wonder if these people, the ones making the jokes, really deserve you as a friend. I mean, you can just ignore them and move on with your life—make new friends.

**Student:** Yeah, that may be a good idea.

**Advisor:** On the other hand, if you feel strongly enough, you could ask these so-called friends, or one of these friends to sit down and talk to you and explain that you just don't appreciate the implications of what they are saying.

**Student:** Yeah.

**Advisor:** Explain to them just as you've explained to me that this is the career path you've decided to follow and that you'd value their support.

**Student:** Yeah, I could do that, but I'm not sure it would work.

**Advisor:** You never know until you give it a shot.

**Narrator:** Now get ready to answer the question.

The speakers discuss two possible solutions to the man's problem. Describe the problem. Then state which of the two solutions you prefer and explain why.

### **CD 3, Track 23**

Chapter 5: Speaking  
Gender Bias Problem

**Narrator:** In this question, you will listen to a conversation. You will then be asked to talk about the information in the conversation and to give your opinion about the ideas presented. After you hear the question, you will have 20 seconds to prepare your response and 60 seconds to speak.

**Student 1:** Hi Mark, how's your Economics class going?

**Student 2:** Well actually, the professor is really getting on my nerves.

**Student 1:** How so?

**Student 2:** Well, she seems to have it in for guys. I mean, she's always answering the women's questions first and, my last paper, I got a D. I really think she has a gender bias issue and some of the other guys think so as well. Like, when we have to give presentations, she's so

complimentary towards the women but when it comes to the men, she always has something negative to say. You know, I feel like dropping the course. Who needs this?

**Student 1:** Wow, this sounds serious. If I were you, I'd make a formal complaint. I mean, well, first...talk to your TA. Get him to review your paper to see if the mark was justified, just so you have some support, right. And then talk to some of the other guys, even girls, in the class to see if they notice that anything is off. That's what I'd do, and then if you have a case, make a formal complaint. I'm pretty sure you could do it anonymously.

**Student 2:** Yeah, that's one option. Maybe I should just switch classes. They do have other sections of Economics, you know. I could get my advisor to arrange the switch. And that way, I wouldn't have to deal with any interpersonal hassles.

**Student 1:** Yeah, you could do that. But, do you want this woman to stop what she's doing or do you just want to pass Economics? I mean, she really is out of line.

**Student 2:** Hmmm. I'll have to give that some thought. Thanks for your input. This has really been getting me down.

**Narrator:** Now get ready to answer the question.

The students discuss two possible solutions to the man's problem. Describe the problem. Then state which of the two solutions you prefer and explain why.

### **CD 3, Track 24**

Chapter 5: Speaking

Roommate Hassles

**Narrator:** In this question, you will listen to a conversation. You will then be asked to talk about the information in the conversation and to give your opinion about the ideas presented. After you hear the question, you will have 20 seconds to prepare your response and 60 seconds to speak.

**Student 1:** Hey Rita, what's up?

**Student 2:** Well aside from doing a lot of cleaning around the house, not too much. How about you?

**Student 1:** Pretty good. What's with all the cleaning? I never thought of you as the domestic type?

**Student 2:** Well a girl's gotta do what a girl's gotta do.

**Student 1:** Okay.

**Student 2:** It's my roommate. She is really a piece of work. She has people over—they make a huge mess, and she just leaves it there and says she has to study. I mean, I don't know what to do

because she's failing all her courses, and I'm afraid to put any more pressure on her. But she never does a single thing. And I mean nothing—no cooking, no dishes, no laundry, no shopping. I tell you, I've really had with this woman.

**Student 1:** Yeah, she sounds like bad news, but you've got to do something. Why don't you refuse to do any of her chores—like don't do her dishes, don't do her laundry—and don't allow her to eat your cooking and tell her the food you buy is off limits. Sooner or later, she's going to realize she has to make some kind of contribution.

**Student 2:** Yeah, I'm just too nice. I have to put my foot down.

**Student 1:** Better yet, come on over and stay at my place for the next two weeks—longer, if you like, and don't do any clean up before you go. In fact, mess the place up a bit and then leave her a note explaining you are tired of always having to clean up after her and you need a break. What do you think?

**Student 2:** Maybe. I have to do something.

**Narrator:** Now get ready to answer the question.

The students discuss two possible solutions to the woman's problem. Describe the problem. Then state which of the two solutions you prefer and explain why.

### **CD 3, Track 25**

Chapter 5: Writing  
Single-sex Schools

**Narrator:** Now listen to part of a lecture on the topic you just read about.

**Professor:** Okay. Today we're going to examine a number of studies that suggest single-sex schools don't really offer students a better an education than co-ed programs.

First, after looking at all of the research in the field, a leading British educator concluded that there's no reason to believe that single-sex schools are the best option. To illustrate, he discusses Belgium, where only a small number of students attend co-ed schools. Surprisingly, he found that it was these students who achieved the highest scores.

Second, there's a survey from the American Association of University Women. And according to the survey, single-sex schools do not reduce sex stereotyping. Instead, it suggests that teacher training is the key factor. So according to the survey, it is the way the instructors are trained, not the educational setting, that reduces gender stereotyping. And then the survey also goes on to say that while girls in single-sex schools may be more likely to take math and science courses, these choices may not be the result of the single-sex environment. Rather, they could be due to other factors... like a focused academic curriculum, for example. In other words, it's the program of study, not the single-sex school that's the main reason for the girls choosing math and science.

In another related study, a European researcher predicted that females, who generally tend to apply themselves to their studies, might serve as positive role models for males... males being typically less academically oriented. And as for the results, he found that the greater the number of girls in the classroom, the better the boys performed. And so, according to this researcher, males would benefit from placements in co-ed schools, where females could serve as a positive influence.

**Narrator:** Now get ready to answer the question.

Summarize the main points in the lecture, making sure to show how they cast doubt upon points made in the reading passage.

### **CD 3, Track 26**

Chapter 5: Writing

Sex Selection

**Narrator:** Now listen to part of a lecture on the topic you just read about.

**Professor:** So today, we're going to discuss sex selection and various reasons why it has come under attack.

First, the basic human right to freedom of choice does not give parents the right to choose the sex of their child. This is because freedom of choice is not an absolute good... especially when it leads to a negative result. And the negative outcomes of sex selection are many and varied. For example, an ultra-sound during pregnancy may indicate the need for an abortion, which many people equate with homicide. What's more, post-birth acts like infanticide and child abandonment are out-and-out crimes. And parents who want to have a child of a specific gender... these parents are placing a condition on the love they have to offer a child. But children—they need to be loved unconditionally.

Second, when parents fear they may pass on a sex-specific genetic disease, many will opt for new procedures... methods like sperm sorting or pre-implantation genetic diagnosis. But because sperm sorting is nowhere near being 100 percent effective, parents may end up paying out almost \$10,000 only to get the wrong result. And in PGD, an even more costly procedure where embryos are developed outside the womb, over a dozen healthy unused embryos are simply thrown out. Doesn't this raise moral questions?

Third, cultural expectations such as a preference for having one male to carry on the family name must be weighed against the discrimination of one gender over the other. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights advocates the equal treatment and status for women. So... it follows that any bias against them would be unethical. And then there's the issue of gender imbalances... favoring a specific gender... within a cultural and geographical context can result in gender imbalances in a population. And this can create serious social problems, like a lack of potential mates, for example.

**Narrator:** Now get ready to answer the question.

Summarize the main points in the lecture, making sure to show how they cast doubt upon points made in the reading passage.

### **CD 3, Track 27**

Chapter 5: Writing

Beauty Pageants

**Narrator:** Now listen to part of a lecture on the topic you just read about.

**Professor:** Now...as you all know, beauty pageants have come under serious criticism in recent years and there are a number of reasons for this.

For one thing, beauty pageants are, for the most part, focused on an idealized vision of female beauty. Worldwide, there are currently around 200 official female contests and only 15 for men. And the male contests are only held every so often. Plus they have low participation rates. For instance, in the most popular competition, fewer than 50 men participated. Compare that to the 12,000 women who compete in local pageants every year to try to make it to the Miss America Pageant. What this tells women is that beauty is a key factor in assessing female worth. And of course, this runs contrary to the goals of the women's movement, which strives to empower women based upon their skills and abilities, not their appearance.

Secondly, beauty contests serve to undermine the confidence and self-esteem of the many young girls and women who do not meet the current standard of beauty. As a result, these women...many of them resort to dangerous diet and exercise regimes that lead to eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. In an effort to qualify for a pageant, some may even go so far as to have plastic surgery. So, instead of sending the message that women need to epitomize beauty, we need to be telling them to value themselves for who they are.

And while it is true that Miss America offers women more scholarship funding than any other organization in the US, the question we should be asking ourselves is *why*? Why is beauty the most important criteria for women who want to get scholarships in the US today? This is an outrage. Scholarship money should be awarded on academic merit, not looks. Colleges and universities should do their part in correcting this social injustice by providing funding based upon grades and other relevant factors. A swimsuit competition should never be part of the decision.

**Narrator:** Now get ready to answer the question.

Summarize the main points in the lecture, making sure to show how they cast doubt upon points made in the reading passage.