





Adult

Different Truths?

Part 1

A. Which of these words do you associate with women and which with men? Put the words in the corresponding column in the chart.

ambitious soft kind sports technology family science love teacher
 peace boss money gossip doctor nurse intelligence professional
 children administrative assistant company cook car flower home

Women	Men
	
Empty space for writing	Empty space for writing

B. Work in groups. Discuss the questions.

1. Did most people in your group match the same words to women and to men?
2. Why did you match some words to women and others to men? Explain.



Part 2

A. Work in groups. Read the text. Circle the definition of *echo chamber* and underline the examples.

The Echo Chamber

What is an *echo chamber*? The literal meaning is *an enclosed space where sound bounces off the walls like a ball and repeats itself*. In the 21st century, an echo chamber has a different meaning. It is an environment where people only listen to opinions that are the same as theirs, and they don't trust anyone who has a different opinion. There are different types of echo chambers. For example, some people live in areas where most other people look like them or think the same way they do. In addition, people form social groups with other people like them. Furthermore, many people read **tabloid newspapers** or watch **programs** that support their opinions. However, none of those echo chambers are as large or as powerful as the echo chambers on the 21st century internet.

A study showed that over half of Americans get news from social media. The problem is that the "news" that many people get on social media is often not news at all. Instead, it is a collection of opinions and facts that are taken out of context (that is, only partly quoted so that the original meaning has changed) or invented entirely. Everyone tends to pay more attention to information that confirms what they already believe. This is called *confirmation bias*. It is easy to find people online who agree with you because internet search engines guide people to websites that reflect their interests.

How do you know if a group is an echo chamber? Ask yourself these questions:

- Do almost all of the opinions in the group support only one side of an issue?
- Do your information sources reject facts that don't support their side of the issue?
- Is there little evidence to support the opinions about the issue?
- Are there phrases like "Everyone says ..." or "I heard that ..."?

You can avoid echo chambers by doing just a few things. First, check different, reliable news sources to see if the "facts" on social media are true. Include people with different opinions in your social media contacts. If someone expresses a different opinion, use reliable sources to check what they are saying. Finally, **analyze** the information and be prepared to change your opinion if the facts don't support it!



tabloid newspapers
program
analyze



red tops
programme
analyse

B. Work in groups. Discuss the questions.

1. What are some examples of echo chambers that you know of?
2. Why do you think people stay in echo chambers?
3. What problems do you think echo chambers cause?




Part 3

A. Think about an online or real-life group that you are a member of. In groups, discuss the questions.

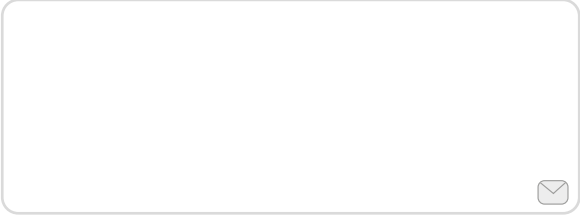
1. Does everyone in your group support only one side of an issue?
2. Do the people in your group reject facts that don't support their side of the issue?
3. Do the people in your group use phrases like "Everyone says ..." or "I heard that ..."?
4. Would you consider that group to be an echo chamber? Why or why not?
5. Do you think that men and women have different echo chambers? Explain.

B. Work in groups. Read the social media post and take turns responding to it.

socialmedia Home Posts Photos Friends



I am 15, and I think people should have the right to vote at age 15. High school and college students are getting an education and learning to be good citizens. If we have the right to vote, we will pay more attention to important issues and politicians' ideas about them. We are young adults, and we should have a voice in our government.





Extension

A. Work in pairs. Read the text. Summarize what each paragraph discusses.

Cancel culture is a new term meaning to exclude people from social or professional groups, either in person, online, or on social media. But people have excluded others from their groups long before this term was invented. In the 20th century, workers went on strike to force companies to give them benefits and better pay. Many people in the public supported the workers and refused to buy products from the companies until they made conditions better for workers.

With the internet, today it is much easier to “cancel” a company or a person. If a company does not support a social cause like gender equality, people begin to criticize the company on social media. This can lead to people who support the cause refusing to buy the company’s products. This type of cancelation can cause a company to lose a lot of money. In a similar way, social media can lead people to “cancel” a celebrity. Famous people have lost their popularity and sometimes their jobs because of things they said or did.

Is cancel culture a good way to force people and companies to make positive changes? Or is it just a way to frighten or hurt people who don’t think or act like we do? On the one hand, cancel culture can cause people to lose friends or their jobs. It can lead people to be less accepting of different opinions. On the other hand, cancel culture can be a faster way than the formal justice system to punish people or companies who do or say bad things. Public opinion can be a very strong voice for justice.

Paragraph 1: _____

Paragraph 2: _____

Paragraph 3: _____

B. In pairs, research a company or person that was canceled. Complete the chart.

Company or person that was canceled	
Where the company or person was canceled (e.g., social media sites)	
Why the company or person was canceled	
Effects of canceling the company or person	
Your opinion of canceling the company or person	