

# The colour **pink** and gender roles (C1)

## Warmer Video

Watch the clip and answer the following questions:

The name “pink” comes from flowers in French, Japanese and English	T	F
Pink is the colour of Thursdays in Thailand	T	F
It is a symbol of trust in Korea	T	F
To “tickle (someone) pink” means to annoy them	T	F
The colour pink has always been known to be a feminine colour	T	F

## Gapped text

Read the text and fill the gaps with the removed paragraphs found below. There is an extra paragraph, which you do not need to use.

### The complicated gender history of pink

By Puja Bhattacharjee, CNN

When you think about the color pink, you are probably **conjuring up** images of little girls in pink dresses, with pink toys like Barbie or a Disney princess in a pretty gown. The color is **overwhelmingly** associated with delicacy and femininity. That, however, is a recent development.

[1]

In fact, pink was even considered to be a masculine color as late as the 1920s. In old catalogs and books, pink used to be the color for little boys, said Leatrice Eiseman, a color expert and executive director of the Pantone Color Institute.

"It was related to the color red, which was perceived as ardent and passionate and more active, more aggressive. Even though you reduce the shade level, it was a color that was more **suitable** for boys," Eiseman said.

[2]

"In America by the 1890s and the early 20th century, manufacturers attempted to sell more children's and infants' clothes by **color-coding** them," she said. In 1927, there were a lot of regional differences reported between how stores characterized the color.

[3]

Steele believes that the acquisition of two 18th-century paintings by American millionaire Henry Huntington started turning the tide in favor of pink being a girls' color. "The Blue Boy" **depicted** a boy dressed in blue, and "Pinkie" **portrayed** a girl in pink attire.

[4]

Today, a boy or man can't wear pink without it being some kind of **statement**, said Jo Paoletti, academic and author of "Pink and Blue: Telling the Girls From the Boys in America." Paoletti says that men who wear pink clothing are often trying to make it clear that they are not tied to gender roles.

[5]

Eiseman, on the other hand, thinks that although the **bias against** pink comes naturally to some men, things are changing.

[6]

### **Removed paragraphs:**

**[A]** For example, Best & Co. in Manhattan and Marshall Field in Chicago branded pink as a boy's color. Other outlets like Macy's in Manhattan and Wanamaker's in Philadelphia identified pink as a girl's color.

**[B]** This purchase was widely publicized in the American press, Steele said. People started thinking that for hundreds of years, blue had been for boys and pink had been for girls.

**[C]** "If you go all the way back to the 18th century, little boys and little girls of the upper classes both wore pink and blue and other colors uniformly," said Valerie Steele, director of the Museum at FIT, the Fashion Institute of Technology, in New York.

**[D]** While Paoletti believes that we haven't yet reached the point where pink is just a color, she is hopeful this can change. However, she thinks this won't happen unless men stop justifying or defending wearing it.

**[E]** So when did the reversal happen? According to Steele, the gendering of pink in America is complicated.

**[F]** "Now, we see young women wearing black all the time, and nobody asks them who died. It's just a color," she said.

**[G]** "I think in general, the younger generation simply don't have some of the prejudices about certain colors that perhaps their fathers and grandfathers do, who were raised with that idea that pink is only for little girls or a boy should never wear pink," she said.

### **Video (listening sentence completion)**

*Watch the clip and fill the gaps below by typing the words exactly as you hear them.*

1. Ross is looking for \_\_\_\_\_ from his friends
2. Rachel admits that, while she knows a lot about fashion, she doesn't know who is \_\_\_\_\_

3. Phoebe offers to help Ross when she tells him that he's \_\_\_\_\_ to come shopping with them
4. Ross' date \_\_\_\_\_ him about his style
5. Joey complains that there's a GAP on every \_\_\_\_\_
6. Ross wrongly thinks Rachel \_\_\_\_\_ "his" new shirt for him when they went shopping
7. Ross is pretty happy about all the attention he got on the way to the café, when his new "shirt" \_\_\_\_\_ a few heads
8. According to Ross, Joey is \_\_\_\_\_ of competing with him for women's attention
9. Ross also believes that if Joey wore that shirt, he couldn't pull it \_\_\_\_\_, and that's why he's jealous

## Discussion time

*Randomly pick one of the categories and discuss a question:*

ATTRIBUTES	GENERAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are men and women equal in their physical and mental ability?</li> <li>• Which stereotypes do we associate with women and men?</li> <li>• How are friendships between men different from friendships between women?</li> <li>• Who is a better communicator?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who has an easier life, girls/women or guys/men?</li> <li>• Are gender roles changing in your country?</li> <li>• What could be some of the negative effects of gender roles on a person?</li> </ul>
WORK	FAMILY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any jobs only men or only women can do?</li> <li>• What used to be a typical job for women of your parents' generation? And of your grandparents' generation?</li> <li>• What does "glass ceiling" mean in the professional context? What can be done to get rid of it?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the responsibilities of fathers and mothers in your country?</li> <li>• Are there different expectations for daughters and sons?</li> <li>• </li> </ul>