



Should adoption information be kept private or made public?

GETTING ORIENTED

The weekly passage covers issues related to open and closed adoption. Here is some information that might be helpful to students less familiar with the topic.



Adoption Law

Adoption laws are different from state to state. If adoptive parents want to adopt a child from a different state, they must know the laws of both states in order to adopt that child. Some states no longer allow closed adoptions. Officials in those states believe children have the right to be able to obtain, or get, information about their birth parents. Even if a state does allow closed adoptions, children are allowed to seek, or search for, information about their birth parents once they become legal age. The laws for international adoptions are also different than state laws. If a couple wants to adopt a child, they should become familiar with all of these different laws.

Foster Care

Sometimes children need foster parents. If a child's parents die, or the parents are not able to take care of their children, the children are placed in foster care. Foster care agencies are usually run through the state government. Adults can become foster parents. When adults become foster parents, they agree to take the children into their homes and care for them. They are paid some money for caring for the children. Sometimes people who are foster parents adopt their foster children.

Hereditary Diseases

Hereditary diseases are diseases that are passed from parents to children. Since children have the same genes as their parents, children are more likely to be affected by the diseases that show up in their parents' genes. For example, parents who have trouble with high cholesterol levels in their blood are more likely to give birth to kids who have similar health problems.

Cholesterol is a fatty substance that is produced by the liver. It's also found in foods high in fats like fatty meats, egg yolks and whole dairy products. Unhealthy habits can lead to high cholesterol levels. However, as with genetic conditions like diabetes, people may inherit genes that are not normal and can cause the body to produce excess cholesterol.



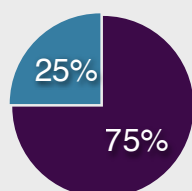


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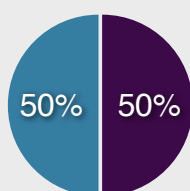
EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

	<i>Some may have this view:</i>	<i>But others may think:</i>
Adoptive Parents & Birth parents	Adoptive parents and birth parents may have very strong feelings about whether or not they have a closed or open adoption. They want to have the option to make the decision about closed or open adoptions based on how they feel about the whole situation. Some adoptive parents feel very emotional because they have not been able to give birth to their own children. Some birth parents feel very emotional because they don't really want to give up their children for many different reasons. Having the choice between open and closed adoption can be very good for these people.	Although adoptive and birth parents may at first feel that going through the adoption process is the right decision, sometimes changes occur that they aren't expecting and they might wish they had made a different decision. Parents can't predict what these changes might be so they try to make the best decision they can based on what they know and how they feel about the situation. Certainly an open adoption leaves more opportunity for these variations to be resolved, but it also leaves more possibilities for complications or problems.
Adopted Children	When children are young, they will probably be happy in both closed and open adoption situations. They won't know the difference. If the adoptive parents treat them well, they will feel safe and happy regardless of whether or not their guardians are their true birth parents. If the adoption is a closed one, they will feel comfortable with that. If the adoption is an open one and they know a lot about or even see their birthparents, they will adapt to that situation and be fine.	Problems arise when children want to know more than the adoptive parents will tell them or when the adoption arrangements make it difficult for children to get information. All children have the right to look into their birth when they reach legal age, but if the information is sealed, they have to petition—or formally ask—the court to have the sealed information opened.

- ✓ An average of 55,000 children are adopted in America every year.
- ✓ Over 90% of adopted children 5 and older have positive feelings about their adoption.
- ✓ Today most adoption professionals agree that at least a semi-open adoption—the post-placement exchange of pictures and letters through agency mediations—is good for all because it creates healthy relationships.
- ✓ Researchers estimate that 26 million people have diabetes and another 79 million have prediabetic conditions.
- ✓ Nearly 3 out of every 4 adopted children ages 0-5 are read to or sang to every day compared with only half of non-adopted children.



adopted children
ages 0-5



non-adopted
children ages 0-5

- read or sang to every day
- not read or sang to every day

Additional Information for Teachers

“Open Adoption: A New Kind of Family?”
<http://www.momversation.com/video/open-adoption-new-kind-family>

Adoption statistics
www.americanadoptions.com/pregnant/adoptions_stats

Adoption from foster homes
www.childwelfare.gov/foster-hild-adoption.com

Information about hereditary cancers
www.cancer.org



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ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Features of Academic Text: *Abstract entities as agents*

While *Word Generation* articles tend to be less academic than most text books, features of typical academic texts can be found throughout the program.

Twelve-year-old Phelan is **adopted**. He loves his adoptive parents, but he has questions they cannot answer. Will he be tall or short when he grows up? Do **diseases** like diabetes, high cholesterol, or cancer run in his biological family? He wishes he could ask his birth mother, but he is not allowed to know who she is.

Phelan's situation is called a closed adoption. This means that the child and the adoptive parents have no contact with the birth family. **Birth records** are kept secret for the **duration** of the child's life.

People prefer closed adoptions for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, **birth parents** believe it will be too painful to see the child they gave up. In some cases, a birth mother may not tell friends or family that she has had a baby. A **closed adoption** **ensures** that the child cannot appear someday and reveal her secret.

Sometimes adoptive parents are the ones who want adoptions to be closed. They might fear **tension** between the two families. They worry that the birth parents will disagree with the adoptive parents' parenting decisions. They also worry that the birth parents may be involved with drugs or alcohol, or may disappoint the child.

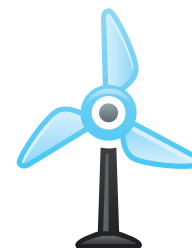
Other people, however, believe that adoptions should be open. In open adoptions, the child can have contact with the birth parents. In many cases, the child and the birth parents exchange letters and

photographs. Some adoptive parents choose open adoptions because they want to be straightforward with their child about the adoption. They want to be able to answer all the child's questions. Some birth parents **consent** to open adoptions because they still want to be involved in the child's life.

Should all adopted children, like Phelan, have the right to know their birth parents? Or should some parents be allowed to keep adoption information private?

Texts are more accessible to students when the subject is an animate object like a person, place or thing. Look at the circled subjects. These are all examples of animate subjects – things that students can easily imagine in their minds while reading.

In academic texts, the subjects are often abstract ideas, frequently a new idea that is introduced early in the text. "A closed adoption" is an example of an abstract agent.



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GENERATING WORDS

Word Endings: -tion, -sion

The words *adoption*, *tension* and *duration* all end with a similar sound of “shun.” Words ending with -tion and -sion are usually nouns. These endings are frequently added to verbs or adjectives in order to name an action. Below is an example.

When you look up the verb ‘to adopt,’ you will most likely see the following definition.

to adopt – to take into one’s family as one’s own

My parents adopted my little sister six months ago.

When you look up the noun ‘adoption,’ you will most likely see the following definition.

adoption – the process of adopting someone

My parents were on an adoption list for more than two years before they finally received my baby sister.

Nearly everyday, we will come across words with a -tion, -sion ending in our textbooks. Here are some examples. See if you can add a few more to each subject.

Language Arts	Math	Social Studies	Physical Ed.	Science
fiction	subtraction	revolution	motion	pollution
discussion	expression	constitution	_____	eruption
_____	solution	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Word Ending: -cian

Words that end in -cian also sound like ‘shun’ when spoken aloud. The ending -cian usually refers to a person and the kind of job he or she has. Can you think of other words that end in -cian?

Examples:



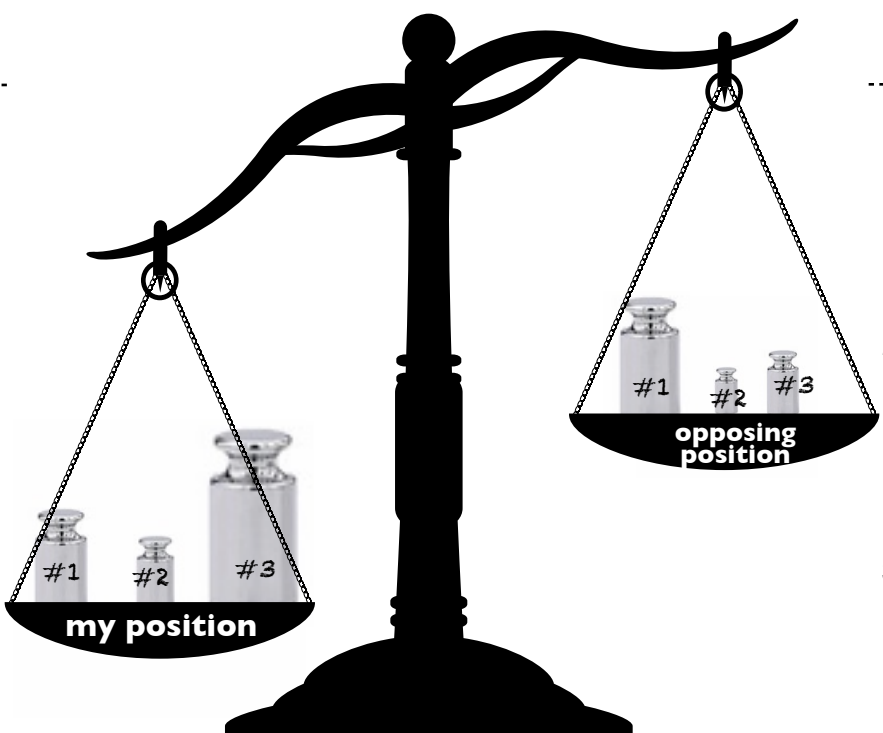


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DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS

Persuasion Balance

People on both sides of a controversial issue can always find good reasons and evidence to support their opinions. If that weren't the case, the issue wouldn't be considered controversial! But some reasons and evidence will *weigh* more. In class discussions, we want to be sure to explore both sides. Then we choose to defend the side of the issue that seems to have reasons and evidence that carry more *weight*, or significance. This weight will be different for every person because we value different things.

Reasons and Evidence for My Position		Reasons and Evidence for the Opposing Position
1. _____ _____ _____		1. _____ _____ _____
2. _____ _____ _____		2. _____ _____ _____
3. _____ _____ _____		3. _____ _____ _____



Academic Conversation:

Explain your persuasion balance to your partner. Why did you think some reasons and evidence had more weight than others? Why did one side weigh more than the other for you. When your partner has a turn, ask your partner to elaborate if you need him or her to be more clear.

Words and Phrases You Might Say

"I believe that ____."

"This evidence weighs more for me because ____."

"I think this is less important due to ____."

"While ____ is a good reason, I think that ____ is more convincing because ____."

"Overall, I think the argument that ____ carries more weight because ____."

"Some people would argue that ____ but I think ____."