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Summary  
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### Summary of "Sex, Sighs, and Conversation"

In her article "Sex, Sighs, and Conversation: Why Men and Women Can't Communicate," Deborah Tannen focuses on gender differences in the use of language and on the frustration these differences cause when women and men converse. She starts with an anecdote about a woman and a man who are lost. The woman wants to ask for directions and the man doesn't. Tannen then outlines the major differences in the ways females and males use language. Beginning in early childhood, girls learn to use language to share feelings with their female friends and to create a sense of closeness. Boys, on the other hand, learn to use language to establish their independence and compete with their male friends. Tannen goes on to give a number of examples of the ways in which these different expectations about the functions of language continue into adulthood and cause problems. Her examples involve conversations such as the one in the opening anecdote and the ways in which women use language to create intimacy and harmony and men to enhance their status and challenge others. Tannen concludes her article by stressing the need for female and male partners to recognize that they often converse in different ways. If women and men become aware of these "cross-cultural" differences, they will stop assuming that their own ways of speaking are correct and that those of their partners are wrong, and they will make the small changes necessary to improve communication.