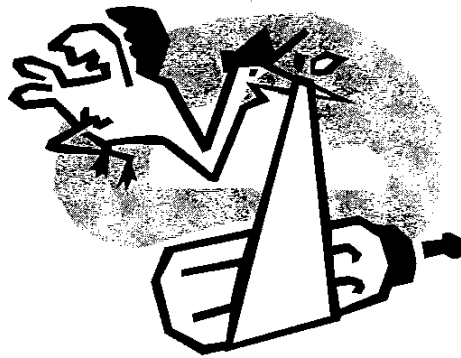

Birth Order:

Does It Really Matter?



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BIRTH ORDER: DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

ACTIVITY ONE:

Directions:

Read through the entire list BEFORE responding.

Think about your entire life from your youth through the present

Circle the 9 characteristics of your personality that best describe you

Be Honest

Goal Setter
Flexible
Risk Taker/Adventurous
High Achiever/Good Grades
Diplomatic
Outgoing
Perfectionist
Peacemaker/Team Player
Idea Person/Creative
Responsible
Generous
Humorous
Organized
Social
Challenge Authority/Rebellious
Rule Keepers
Competitive
Pleasant and Easy Going
Determined
Many Friends
Value Fun over Achievement
Detail Orientated
Giving
Good Coping Skills
Conservative/Traditionalist
Manipulative
Dramatic

3. **MIDDLE CHILD:** Usually born too late to get the privileges and special treatment a first born gets and too soon to enjoy the relaxed discipline often reserved for the baby of the family. Most difficult birth order to define and make meaningful generalizations about. There are many types of middle children (second, third, fourth etc)

Characteristics:

Mediators
Fewest pictures in the family photo album
Avoids conflict
Independent
Extreme loyalty to peer group
Many friends (Run with the pack as teenagers)
May be opposite of child born just prior
Can be pleaser or antagonizer, victim or martyr, manipulator or controller as they "bounce off" older siblings, their path is unpredictable
All middle children are not created equal and lists describing the "typical" characteristics of middle children are usually contradictory
Feels the "squeeze" from above and below
Social
Secretive
Feel embarrassment but don't admit it

Note: Research has shown that middle children as a group are least likely to seek the services of the helping professions such as psychologists, counselors or ministers. are the most monogamous having a strong desire to make their marriage and family work, and less fearful and anxious than other birth orders.

4. **LAST BORN/BABY:** May be last, but certainly not least and often are determined to get attention. Many have a burning desire to "make an important contribution" since they are often excused for behavior or have things done for them because they are the "baby. Often get more material resources than older siblings and "watered down" discipline.

Characteristics:

Charming
Show Off
Manipulator
People Person
Precocious
Engaging
Clown whom wants to be taken seriously
Teaser
Humorous

Note: Good salespeople are frequently Last Born. Streak of ambivalence may be due to the fact that babies are cuddled and spoiled one minute while they are made fun of the next, which often results in an independent cockiness to cover self-doubt and confusion.

Source: *The Birth Order Book* by Dr. Kevin Leman

BIRTH ORDER CHARACTERISTICS

1. **FIRST BORN:** Often gets a lot of attention and are susceptible to high expectations by parents as well as being their "guinea pig".

Characteristics:

May be either the Compliant/ Pleaser type or the Strong Willed and Aggressive type

Concentration

Perfectionist

Reliable

Tolerance

Patience

Organized/list maker

Conscientious

Critical

Scholarly

Note:

52% of US presidents were first borns (only 4 have been babies)

Over represented in *Who's Who in America*, Rhodes scholars and university professors

2. **ONLY:** Frequently a jewel of the family. May have older parents and are often treated as "little adults". Most don't have an only child themselves. May be an interesting blend of first and youngest child characteristics.

Characteristics:

Add "super" to all of the First Born traits

Self critical

Gets along far better with those much younger or older than self

Often outwardly confident with inner feelings of inferiority

Self-centered

Achievement orientated

Note:

Albert Einstein and Franklin D. Roosevelt were only children

Twenty One of Twenty Three astronauts were First Born or Only children.

Tips for First Borns Making Your Birth Order work for You

As a **first born** you are quite likely a conscientious, perfectionistic, reliable person. This is a great asset, because people look up to you, trust you, and feel they can count on you. But at the same time you should be aware that your strengths can become weaknesses. Here are some tips:

1. Take smaller bites of life. First borns are known for getting themselves involved in too many things - too many activities, organizations, projects, etc. They wind up with little time for themselves.
2. Work on saying no. Many first borns are pleasers-they like the approval of others and almost always accept invitations, requests, etc. One of the beset ways to know how to say no is to know your limits. You can't do everything.
3. Remember that as a first born your parents probably had higher expectations for you than anybody else in the family. And the natural result is that you have high expectations for yourself. You expect to be first, best-perfect. Perfectionism is a great way to commit slow suicide. Lower your sights a little. Do a little less and enjoy life more.
4. First borns are known for asking a lot of questions, wanting all the details. Don't apologize for this trait, which is a sign of a leader who can size up the situation, be able to outline what has to be done, and then apply a logical, step-by-step process to solve the problem.
5. As a first born you are likely to be a cautious, careful person. Don't let people pressure you into jumping into things when you would prefer to take the time you need to make your decision.
6. If you are the serious type, try to develop a sense of humor. Learn to laugh at your mistakes. At least be more accepting of the fact that you are bound to fail now and then. Mistakes are a great way to learn and improve.
7. Never apologize for being conscientious and over organized. As a first born you need structure; you need your "to do" lists. The trick is not to be driven by all this. Enjoy being organized and well planned, and then share your skills with others. An awful lot of people around you could use some help!

Source: "The Birth Order" Book by Dr. Kevin Leman

Tips for Only Children Making Your Birth Order Work for You

Because **Only Children** are "first borns in triplicate," all of the tips on pages 76 and 77 are applicable here. Superconscientious and reliable only children should pay close attention, however, to several points:

1. Be ruthless with yourself in regard to making too many commitments and expecting too much of yourself. It is all too easy to reach the point where every day is a rat race, with no end in sight.
2. Is time and space for yourself really build into your schedule? Most only children are the type who need some time for themselves. Make sure it happens.
3. As a rule, only children get along better with people much older or much younger than themselves. You can't control the ages of everyone you work with or deal with, but in some cases you can try to arrange experiences with people who are older or younger. Do it, because these are personalities you are more likely to click with. These are the people who will give you more strokes and argue with you less.
4. Only children are often labeled selfish and self-centered because they never had to learn to share with brothers and sisters. Take some honest inventory of your own life. How self-centered do you act around your spouse, friends, or fellow workers? What specific things can you do to put others first, help others more, and be less critical of others?

Source: The "Birth Order" Book by: Dr. Kevin Leman

Tips for Middle Borns Making Your Birth Order work for You

In books on birth order, the **middle child** sometimes comes off as someone to be pitied. Hand-me-downs, fewer photos in the family album, and feeling like an outsider or fifth wheel are all the stereotyped fates of the middle child. But while first borns and last borns get more attention, I believe middle children get better training for life. Instead of feeling deprived, the middle child should make the most of the tools he or she has gained while growing up.

1. You probably have certain people-oriented social skills because of all the negotiating and mediating you had to do while growing up. Use these skills to see both sides and deal with life as it really is.
2. You may be saying, "I'm really not much of a negotiator-really I'm more of a free spirit - I like to do my thing." Keep in mind that if anybody is unpredictable, it's a middle child. If you are the free-spirit type, fight to keep your unique qualities. Keep in mind that businesses and companies are often looking for someone with new ideas and the independence to try them.
3. Middle children may sometimes grow up telling themselves that their family never listened to them so no one else will listen to them, either. Instead of apologizing for your opinions, or failing to offer them at all, share your ideas with others. You'll be amazed at how many people are looking for someone who doesn't want to do *all the taking!*
4. If the "socially skilled, lots of friends" label fits you, rejoice and enjoy it. But don't spread yourself too thin. No one can maintain a limitless number of relationships and keep them meaningful.
5. Don't get sucked in to playing comparison games. You understand better than anyone that there are always people who are above or below in terms of ability, interest, appearance, athletic skill, etc. Comparisons are futile and usually pointless. Just be comfortable with being you.
6. Don't get the mistaken idea that first borns are the only people who can rise to positions of leadership. Middle children often make excellent managers and leaders because they understand compromise, negotiation, and giving something for something else (the are of quid pro quo). If you are in a position right now where you can try for a manager's slot, don't hesitate because you think you don't have enough charisma, dynamic, etc. Use your natural middle-child skills to go for it!

Source: The "Birth Order" Book by Kevin Leman

Tips for Last Borns Making Your Birth Order Work for You

If you are a **baby of the family**, some of the following suggestions can help you cope with life today as an employee, spouse, parent, and friend.

1. Accept responsibility for yourself. Maybe for the first time you should stop passing the buck. You're not a little kid anymore, so why continue acting like it? As those girls back in seventh grade used to say, "Grow up!"
2. Many last borns are "messies." Learn to pick up after yourself. Your spouse will rise up to call you blessed and your mother may say, "I never thought I'd see the day...."
3. Take stock of where you are right now in your present job. Are you working with people? You are quite likely a people person, and that's where you will find the most opportunity and satisfaction. Perhaps you should consider changing your line of work, even if it means a temporary cut in pay. Sales work is a strong possibility, but so is any job that requires interaction with people. You might also consider a managerial slot, *as long as you feel you can keep things organized and on schedule.*
4. While last borns are usually people persons, ironically they struggle with self-centeredness. Offer to help others, then follow through and quietly do it without fanfare. Helping others - sharing your money, time, and energy - is a great cure for self-centeredness.
5. Beware of being too independent. Work on admitting your faults. Don't blame others for your situation when you know you're the one who really caused it.
6. Always be aware of your gift to be funny, charming, and persuasive. Use it correctly and you will be an asset in any situation. Beware, however, of being a carrot seeker, always working for that pat on the head, and always asking, "What's in it for me?"
7. If you love the limelight, be advised that other people like a little of it now and then, too. When talking with others, always concentrate on asking them about their plans, their feelings, and what they think.
8. Before marriage, try dating first borns. You may find them the most compatible. After marriage, to any birth order, remember that your wife is not your mommy, your husband is not your daddy.

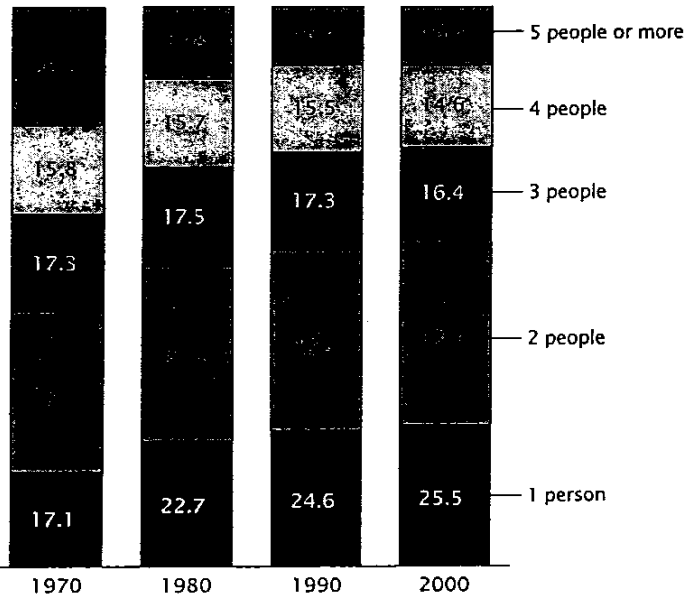
Source: The "Birth Order" Book by Kevin Leman

U.S. Census Population Characteristics

- Nonfamily households were more common and family households less common in 2000 than in 1970.
- Households and families have become smaller over time.
- Households with own children made up only a third of all households in 2000.
- Changes in fertility, marriage, divorce, and mortality have all contributed to declines in the size of American households.
- Increases in divorce also reduced the size of households; divorce generally separates one household into two small ones, although the divorce rate's rapid rise through the 1970s and 1980s leveled off during the 1990s.
- Delays in marriage and improvements in the life expectancy and health of the elderly may have mixed effects on the average household size.
- The family is a vital institution in American society. Families are often the first and frequently the last source of support for individuals.
- Married couples made up a smaller portion of family households in 2000 than in 1970.
- The percentage of family groups with children that have four or more children decreased from 17 percent in 1970 to 8 percent in 1980 and to about 6 percent in 1990 and 2000.
- Single-mother families increased from 3 million in 1970 to 10 million in 2000, while the number of single-father families grew from 393,000 to 2 million.
- The median age at first marriage is rising for both men and women.

Under: Idtrng: Census characteristics

Figure 2.
Households by Size: Selected Years, 1970 to 2000
 (Percent distribution)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March Supplements: 1970 to 2000.

Resources

- i. Books by Clifford Isaacson
 - a. How to Love Your Children: Birth Order for Parents (1992)
 - b. The Birth Order Challenge: Expanding your horizons (1991)

- II. Books/Tapes by Dr. Kevin Leman
 - a. The New Birth Order Book: Why You Are the Way You Are
 - b. Growing Up First Born: The Pressure and Privilege of Being Number One
 - c. Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours
 - d. Living In a Step-Family Without Getting Stepped On Helping Your Children Survive The Birth Order Blender

- III. Other Books/author
 - a. Birth Order. Its influence on personality. Berlin: Springer
 - b. Born to Rebel: Birth Order, Family Dynamics and Creative Lives. Frank J. Sulloway.
 - c. Birth Order & You by Ronald Richardson & Lois A. Richardson
 - d. Little Sisters: The Last But Not the Lease by Carolyn Lieberg

- IV. Websites
 - a. A New concept of birth order from the Upper Des Moines Counseling Center of Algona, Iowa. <<http://www.ncn.net/~cliffi/index.htm>>
 - b. Birth Order Personality Inventory (Identifying Your Psychological Birth Order) <<http://www.nen.net/~cliffi/BOTEST.htm>>

Click to Visit
Amazon Health Limited - Libido & Impotence Product
 - <http://www.virility.co.uk> -
 RunKExchange

What is your birth order?

Take the following inventory to discover your psychological birth order.

You may print the following birth order inventory to use at your convenience.

BIRTH ORDER PERSONALITY INVENTORY
 Identifying Your Psychological Birth Order

There are five personalities according to birth order. Your personality may or may not correspond to your actual place in the family. The following inventory allows you to determine your psychological birth order personality.

Instructions: Choose the answer which most nearly fits of the four options given. When finished, enter your scores on the form at the end of the inventory. Do the calculations to identify your psychological birth order.

Note: The accuracy of the test is enhanced if you answer the questions as you would have answered them in your late teens or early twenties.

1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = always

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Do you have to organize before you can do something? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Do you want to impress others? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Do you try to avoid feeling inadequate? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Did you feel life was unfair as a child? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Do you like difficult challenges? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Do you make "to do" lists? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Do you say "I don't know?" | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Do you pay attention to details? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Do you avoid doing things that scare you? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. Do you distrust people? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. Do you operate from a schedule in your mind? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. Are you careful to not offend others? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. Do you suppress feelings? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. Do you try to act like nothing bothers you? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. Do you try to prove how mature you are? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. Do you think with your feelings? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. Do you rehearse what you will say? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. Do you look for what is wrong with things? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. Is it important for you to be strong? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. Do you feel like you are not wanted? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21. Do you feel bad when others feel bad? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 22. Do you feel guilty? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 23. Do you say "I would appreciate it if you would...?" | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 24. Do you relate well to victims? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 25. Do you resent being asked for favors? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

26. Do you interrupt when others are talking?	1	2	3	4
27. Do you rehash past encounters?	1	2	3	4
28. Do you say "That's not necessary"?	1	2	3	4
29. Do you jump to conclusions	1	2	3	4
30. Do you try to avoid being trapped?	1	2	3	4
31. Do you worry about family and friends?	1	2	3	4
32. Do you think people should get what they deserve?	1	2	3	4
33. Do you like giving constructive criticism?	1	2	3	4
34. Do you compare things?	1	2	3	4
35. Do you feel left out?	1	2	3	4
36. Do you wish for time at home alone?	1	2	3	4
37. Do you try to impress other people rather than just doing your own thing?	1	2	3	4
38. Do you focus on details when there is no need to do so?	1	2	3	4
39. Are you afraid people can put you down whenever they want?	1	2	3	4
40. Do you hate being blamed?	1	2	3	4
41. Do you dislike being interrupted?	1	2	3	4
42. Are you nice to people rather than honest?	1	2	3	4
43. Do you dislike deadlines?	1	2	3	4
44. Do you say "No problem!"?	1	2	3	4
45. Do feel no one understands you?	1	2	3	4
46. Do you feel you can't do what you want?	1	2	3	4
47. Do you have trouble expressing love?	1	2	3	4
48. Are you overwhelmed by emotion?	1	2	3	4
49. Do you like to help others?	1	2	3	4
50. Do you analyze things from all sides?	1	2	3	4
51. Are you afraid of appearing spoiled?	1	2	3	4
52. Is it difficult for you to accept love?	1	2	3	4
53. Do you prefer projects to goals?	1	2	3	4
54. Do you feel hurt when your idea is rejected?	1	2	3	4
55. Do you try to avoid answering questions for fear of being trapped?	1	2	3	4
56. Do you feel weighed down?	1	2	3	4
57. Do you fear people will be hard on you?	1	2	3	4
58. Do you give praise indirectly?	1	2	3	4
59. Do you keep busy to keep from being bored?	1	2	3	4
60. Do you feel like no one listens?	1	2	3	4
61. Do you do small projects first?	1	2	3	4
62. Do you feel compelled to agree?	1	2	3	4
63. Do you feel like nothing is good enough?	1	2	3	4
64. Do you get angry when told to do things?	1	2	3	4
65. Do you try to control your anger?	1	2	3	4
66. Do you get upset when people drop in without letting you know they are coming?	1	2	3	4
67. Do you hint for what you want?	1	2	3	4
68. Does it make you angry when someone accuses you of being nasty?	1	2	3	4
69. Do you share your ideas with other people because you want to please them?	1	2	3	4
70. Do you hate laziness?	1	2	3	4
71. Does life feel like all work and no play?	1	2	3	4
72. Do you compromise?	1	2	3	4
73. Are you a peacemaker?	1	2	3	4
74. Do you hate being cornered?	1	2	3	4
75. Do you get angry when others do nothing?	1	2	3	4

Coding Instructions

Enter the number from each answer on the following form:

Column				
A	B	C	D	E
1:	2:	3:	4:	5:
6:	7:	8:	9:	10:
11:	12:	13:	14:	15:
16:	17:	18:	19:	20:
21:	22:	23:	24:	25:
26:	27:	28:	29:	30:
31:	32:	33:	34:	35:
36:	37:	38:	39:	40:
41:	42:	43:	44:	45:
46:	47:	48:	49:	50:
51:	52:	53:	54:	55:
56:	57:	58:	59:	60:
61:	62:	63:	64:	65:
66:	67:	68:	69:	70:
71:	72:	73:	74:	75:

Totals:

A: B: C: D: E:

Your highest score indicates your psychological birth order:

- A _____ = Only Child
- B _____ = First Born
- C _____ = Second Born
- D _____ = Third Born
- E _____ = Fourth Born

Your next highest two scores indicate secondary birth order characteristics.

For assistance in understanding the results, go to the [the interpretation page](#).

Links:

[The Counseling Center Home Page](#)

[The Birth Order Home Page](#)