

NAME:

COURSE:

First-born, middle or last-born?

“Where do you come in your family?” According to Frank Sulloway, a US sociologist, the order in which we came into this world -first-born, middle or last-born- can not only help shape our personality, it could affect the success of our relationships, too. Sulloway has interviewed more than 6000 people over the past 26 years in an attempt to prove this theory: “Children compete for a place in the family”, he says, “and if one role has already been taken, later-born children have to choose from what's left”. Because first-borns begin life with exclusive paternal attention, they are often more open to accepting their parents' values, while later-born children, forced to compete for a place in the family, may grow into rebellious adults.

So if birth order has such a significant impact on our behaviour, does it affect our interactions with other people? Can we, for example, judge the suitability of our partners by their birth order? Absolutely, says Sulloway, “Birth order is an excellent way of telling whether a relationship will survive. For example, a marriage between a typical first-born husband who's dominating and assertive, and a later-born wife who likes being looked after, is very likely to work out”.

QUESTIONS

1. Answer the following questions using your own words (2 points)

a. What do children have to do when a place in the family has been taken?

b. Why does Sulloway believe that a marriage between a typical first-born husband and a later born wife will probably be successful?

2. Are the following statements true or false? (1 point)

a. Later-born children usually agree with their family values:

b. Birth order is a good way of knowing whether a relationship will be successful or not:

3. Find a word or expression in the text which, in context, is similar in meaning to: (1 point)

a. Favourable result or achievement:

b. Companions:

4. Choose a, b, or c, in each question below. Only one choice is correct (2 points)

1. The order in which we are born affects

a. both our personality and our relationships.

b. only our personality.

c. neither our prsonality nor our relationships.

