

1 Grammar in the Real World ●

**A** Think of a family you know with more than one child. How similar or different are the children's personalities? Read the web article about birth order and personality. Do you agree with the results of the research it describes?

## Does Birth Order<sup>1</sup> Affect Personality?

Some researchers believe that birth order affects people's personalities. According to Dr. Frank Sulloway, professor of psychology, birth order differences are **as strong as** gender differences.<sup>2</sup>

First-born children, he says, are often **more responsible** and **more conservative**. They are also **more likely** to be successful, and many first-born children are presidents and CEOs. Because first-born children are usually **bigger** and **stronger** than their **younger** siblings,<sup>3</sup> they can try to dominate<sup>4</sup> them.

As a result, says Sulloway, **younger** children can be rebellious and **less likely** to obey rules. Younger children are often **more adventurous** and **more creative** **than older** children. They are also **more independent**. They may **try harder** to get attention from their parents, and parents often do not discipline **younger** children **as strictly as** their **older** siblings.

Not all researchers agree with these ideas, but most do agree that middle children can have a very difficult time. They are **more likely** to have to repeat a grade in school. Middle children often worry that they are **not loved as much as** their siblings. However, middle children are often the peacemakers in the family and are **more easygoing** as a result.

Parents are often **less strict** with the "baby," or last-born child of the family. Last-born children are **more often** spoiled. Parents are usually **more relaxed** with them, and they often seem to have an easy time. However, if you are from a large family, that may be something you already know!



<sup>1</sup>birth order: order in which children were born | <sup>2</sup>gender difference: difference between men and women | <sup>3</sup>sibling: brother or sister | <sup>4</sup>dominate: control

**B Comprehension Check** Match the child with the description.

- 1. The first-born child \_\_\_\_\_ a. can be good at resolving conflicts.
- 2. The younger child \_\_\_\_\_ b. often has an easy time.
- 3. The middle child \_\_\_\_\_ c. often wants to be a leader.
- 4. The last-born child \_\_\_\_\_ d. can often be creative and break rules.

**C Notice** Find the sentences in the article and complete them.

- 1. Because first-born children are usually \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ their younger siblings, they can try to dominate them.
- 2. Younger children are often \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ older children.

Look at the adjectives and other words you wrote. The sentences show two ways to make comparisons. How are the two ways similar? How are they different?

## 2 Comparative Adjectives and Adverbs

### ▶ Grammar Presentation

Comparative adjectives and adverbs show how two things or ideas are different.

COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVE  
*First-born children are usually **bigger than** their siblings.*

COMPARATIVE ADVERB  
*Younger children try **harder** to get their parents' attention.*

#### 2.1 Comparative Adjectives

Subject	Verb	Comparative Adjective	Than
First-born children	are	<b>stronger</b> <b>more responsible</b> <b>less easygoing</b>	<b>than</b> their siblings.

#### 2.2 Comparative Adverbs

Subject	Verb (+ Object)	Comparative Adverb	Than
First-born children	do things obey rules get spoiled	<b>better</b> and <b>more easily</b> <b>more often</b> <b>less often</b>	<b>than</b> their siblings.