LISTEN AND FILL THE MISSING WORDS:

Part One

A: Would you like some more dessert?

B: No, thanks, Linda. Everything was delicious, but I couldn't eat another bite! Thanks so much.

A: So, Jeanne, how are your kids doing?

B: Well, that depends on which one…

A: Well, how about the oldest? That's Brian, right? How old is he now?

B: He's fifteen. Brian's fine. Brian's always fine. He's doing great at school. I'm sure he'll get into a great university in a couple of years. He's a great kid—works hard; he plays by the rules and he's ……1 at almost everything he does. The only thing that sometimes worries me about Brian is that he can be a little too ……..2.

A: Self-critical? How so?

B: Well, Brian can be pretty hard on himself: no matter how well he does at something, he's not satisfied. He always feels he could do better.

A: That's so interesting. Our first, Eric, is like that, too.

B: Really?

A: You know, I once read this article in one of those popular psychology magazines. It said that first children are often self-critical because parents ……3 them to succeed more than they do with their other children. I don't mean to suggest you did that, and I don't think we did that with Eric, but it's interesting because it's so common. I just wonder why.

B: Well, I do think there's some truth to that in our case. Harvey and I were ……4 in everything Brian did: music lessons, karate lessons, Chinese class on Saturday. We drove him to all his classes. We picked him up after they were over. We always asked him a lot of questions about how he was doing. He probably thought our message to

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him was that he had to be good at everything. But we were just interested. We didn't actually push him to be good at everything, but he may have thought we expected a lot of him. Kids internalize those messages.

A: I imagine that's pretty typical. It's no one's fault.

B: And one more thing—if you buy into that—you know—"……..5."

A: Yeah?

B: Brian's sister Annie wasn't born 'til Brian was eight. He really had more ……6 with us and other adults than he did with someone closer to his age. I'm sure all that contact with us probably had a ……7. And, interestingly, Brian has always been comfortable with adults.

A: From what you're saying, it sounds like Brian is the classic first child. They say that first children often feel ……8 with people older than themselves. They seem to have a ……..9 and grow up fast.

Part Two

A: So what about Annie?

B: Annie's a whole 'nother story.

A: How so?

B: Well you know what they say about ……10—it's hard for them to feel special. They have no special status—they're not the first and not the "baby"—they're just "in between." Most middle children at least have a little time to be "the baby" and ……11. But in Annie's case, she never did. Her sister Lucy was born when Annie was really still a baby.

A: I didn't realize that. How old was Annie when her sister was born?

B: Thirteen months—just over a year. Annie wasn't even walking or talking yet.

A: Hmm. How did Lucy's arrival affect her?

B: Well, Annie's not an unhappy kid. But she ……12 with the things people say

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middle children usually have a hard time with. Maybe a little more than the typical middle child.

A: What kinds of things?

B: Well, Annie's sort of jealous of both her siblings. She's .....13 of Brian because we're always saying how great he is. And she's jealous of Lucy because she thinks Lucy gets more attention. Remember, Annie never had a chance to be the "baby." We think that's why she's a little bit of a rebel.

A: Annie's a rebel? She's only 7. How can she be such a rebel?

B: Well, ...14, but . . . We know that if we're going out, there's going to be an argument with Annie about clothes. I ask her to wear shoes, and she wants to wear sandals. We get dressed up to go to a nice restaurant and she wants to wear jeans. Sometimes, we just give in and let her wear what she wants. We hate to keep fighting with her all the time. This would never happen with Brian.

A: You know, it sounds like she may be trying to get the attention she thinks the other two are getting.

B: You may be right. But, on the other hand, we don't really worry about her. She's very popular. No one has more friends than Annie. People just love her. She's always been very popular.

A: You know that's what they say about middle children. They're usually very popular

Part Three

A: And what about the "baby"? I guess if Annie's seven, Lucy must be 6?

B: Right.

A: Well, you said that Brian and Annie are typical first and middle children. What about Lucy? Is she a typical youngest child?

B: I guess she is. She's .....15. Maybe that's because we didn't have as

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much time for her as the others. Annie was only 13 months old when Lucy was born, so we were still pretty busy taking care of Annie. We kind of just let Lucy develop on her own. But that definitely had an ……..16 on her personality. Like any kid, she wanted our ……..17.

A: What did she do to get it?

B: Well, she learned how to make us laugh. There's nothing Lucy likes more than clowning around and making people laugh. She's the family clown. Everyone loves her.

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