

READING COMPREHENSION: TASK 2

Read this text carefully and answer the questions according to the text.

HOW SIBLINGS* CAN AFFECT YOUR HEALTH



We have long known of the powerful influence our parents have on who we are, blaming them for our large ears or thanking them for our aptitude for sport. What's often forgotten is that siblings also reveal a large amount of information about our future health and happiness. The number of brothers and sisters you have — and whether they're older or younger — can influence everything from your height to your risk of allergy and how fat you will be in later life.

SIBLINGS AND FERTILITY

Men with lots of brothers may carry a gene that predisposes them to be more fertile, according to a study published last year by the University of Sheffield (England). Dr Allan Pacey, senior lecturer in andrology at the university, found men with lots of brothers were more likely to** have sons.

SHORT? YOU'RE PROBABLY THE BABY OF THE FAMILY

Always looked up to your big brother or sister? Research has found that last-born children tend to be shorter than their siblings. A study of 14,000 families by University College London (UCL) in 2007 showed that only-children were the tallest, and that the more older brothers and sisters you have, the shorter you are likely to be. Why? Dr David Lawson, who led the study, says children with lots of siblings may have less food, money and time with their parents. He says this could mean big brothers and sisters have better health overall.

HAVING SIBLINGS CUTS RISK OF ALLERGIES

A number of studies have shown that older children are more likely to suffer from eczema and allergies. Experts believe this is because of the 'hygiene hypothesis' — that growing up in a very clean environment makes you hypersensitive to inoffensive allergens.

AND STOPS YOU GETTING FAT

Having brothers and sisters seems to protect you from weight gain. Last year a study of 12,700 children from European countries found that only-children were 50 per cent more likely to be overweight or obese. The reason? They were more likely to have TVs in their room and to get less exercise than those with brothers and sisters. However, it's not just only-children who are more at risk. Last-born children are more likely to be obese than those born first.

Article adapted from
<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2402398/From-risk-cancer-infertility-putting-weight-siblings-affect-health.html>

Image Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/standupp/5719658060>

GLOSSARY:

* **siblings**: brothers and sisters. En català vol dir 'germans'.

** **to be likely to**: to have a great chance of, to be probable. En català vol dir 'ser probable'.

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29 In the sentence 'blaming them for our large ears', what does the underlined word mean?

- a. Thanking.
- b. Accusing.
- c. Asking.

30 What may influence our future health and happiness?

- a. Our children.
- b. The number of friends.
- c. The number of siblings.

31 Men with _____ may be more fertile.

- a. no brothers
- b. a lot of brothers
- c. a lot of sisters

32 Research has found that _____ children were the tallest.

- a. first-born
- b. middle
- c. only

33 Older children may develop _____ their younger brothers and sisters.

- a. fewer allergies than
- b. the same allergies as
- c. more allergies than

34 Only-children have a greater risk of suffering obesity because of...

- a. the absence of physical activity.
- b. socioeconomic factors.
- c. an unhealthy diet.

35 The text presents different research studies conducted by _____ universities.

- a. European
- b. American
- c. American and European

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36 The last paragraph “AND STOPS YOU GETTING FAT” tells the reader that having siblings...

- a. protects you from weight gain.
- b. cuts the risk of allergies.
- c. affects your height.

37 Put the sentences in the correct order as they appear in the text.

A. If you are short, you are probably the baby of the family.	B. Only-children are at risk of becoming obese in childhood.	C. Our parents have an influence on our physical traits and our behaviour.	D. Having siblings affects men's fertility.
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- a. D → C → B → A
- b. C → D → A → B
- c. A → D → C → B

38 The text is about...

- a. siblings and health.
- b. children and parents.
- c. obesity and children.

39 The text is an _____ text.

- a. opinion
- b. informative
- c. instructive

40 The text you have read is from...

- a. a book.
- b. a paper magazine.
- c. an online newspaper.