

THE TWO OF US READER

Read the article about twins. Then match the questions below with the sections A-E. The sections may be chosen more than once.

Which twins

- say that they regretted being twins in one period of their lives? (16) _____
- have told each other certain things which nobody else knows? (17) _____
- say they knew their relationship would have to change one day? (18) _____
- sometimes wished for individual attention? (19) _____ (20) _____
- think their relationship is less strong than some other twins? (21) _____
- have never felt the need to compete with each other? (22) _____ (23) _____
- made a decision to separate? (24) _____
- dislike their achievements being compared? (25) _____
- think the relationship between a set of twins can only be appreciated by other twins? (26) _____
- stayed together despite a change in circumstances? (27) _____
- say people realise they cannot be as close to twins as twins are to each other? (28) _____
- enjoy the attention they attract because of being twins? (29) _____
- found certain consequences of being apart surprising? (30) _____



Five sets of twins talk about what it's like to be one of a pair.

A Harry and Kate Wilkinson, 12.

Harry and Kate have just been put into different classes at school. "It did seem strange at first, but we're at the age when we need more independence from one another," they say. They still tend to share the same friends, though. Kate says. "Having a boy twin means I understand boys of our age better than other girls I know and it's the same for Harry." But both Kate and Harry say they are more in tune with one another than with their younger brothers. Probably the only downside of being twins for them is that people do measure them against each other. "Harry does better at school than me," says Kate. "I wish people didn't go on about it because I don't mind Harry being brainy: I'm happy being me. We've never let it come between us and it has never made us wish we weren't twins."

B James and Richard Ashley-Smith, 21

Identical twins James and Richard had rarely been apart until recently. "When it came to university," says James. "we made up our minds to find our own identities, and that's why we are in different cities." So making friends who only knew them as individuals was a revelation. "It was an extraordinary feeling and a positive one for both of us," says Richard. "However, other friends know that their relationship with one of us won't ever match what we have together so they don't try to compete on that level. And I've heard that from other people too." One thing they were both aware of was the effect that serious girlfriends would have. James says "Richard has a girlfriend now. It's not exactly that I feel left out, but it's definitely different."

C Sally and Jennifer Gregory, 45

Sally and Jennifer found it tough having to share the spotlight, especially at birthdays and graduations and special days like that. "There have been times when we wouldn't have traded being twins for anything. Then there were the teenage years when we would have given anything to be a singleton. But, all in all, we love being twins. The bond between many twins is much more powerful than what we have. And many look a lot more alike than we do. But all twins share something that can't be truly understood by outsiders. They have valued having something that distinguishes them from others. "People take notice of twins and are fascinated by them, especially those who are identical, although we aren't and we've always made a point of not dressing the same."

D Veda Goodison and Edna Artrey, 50

Veda and Edna came to England from Jamaica at the age of 15. They were always aware of the bond between them. "My mother had 11 children and we've always got along fine," says Edna. "But Veda is my special sister." The women have remained close and have met up on a regular basis as well as at the many family celebrations. "There are experiences and anxieties we've share that have never gone beyond the two of us. There's never been any rivalry between us: we genuinely want what's best for one another." they say.

E Violet Lucas and Rose Marlow, 100 next week.

At first you wouldn't realize Violet and Rose are identical; but look a little closer, beyond the fact that Rose is slightly stooped these days, and that Violet's hair is whiter, and you will see the similarities. As children, they were always dressed identically. Rose married first, at the age of 21, but even that didn't divide them; Violet moved in with Rose and her husband, Bob, which seemed perfectly natural to them. These days, getting together tends to be restricted to celebrations - such as this coming weekend for their 100th birthday. They don't mind sharing that. "There was a time," says Violet, "when we didn't want to share birthdays. I used to ask to move mine to a different day so I had it all to myself!"

