

Part 1

P = Presenter M = Miquela

P: Welcome to our weekly spotlight programme. Today the spotlight is on unusual hobbies and cultural heritage. Our first guest is Miquela from Barcelona. Hi, Miquela! Can you tell us about your hobby?

M: Hi, Kevin. I'm a casteller. A castell in Catalan is a human tower! So castellers are people who construct human towers – it's a, um, a popular tradition at festivals all over Catalonia. My father's a casteller and **all through my _____ I wanted to be one too.** I was about... 16 when I started training with my local group. We had our photo taken last week and appeared in the local newspaper.

P: So how high are these towers, Miquela?

M: They usually have four or five layers of people – but some have eight or nine! Surprisingly, accidents aren't very common, but there are always ambulances nearby, just in case. **There's only been one _____ in the last 30 years.**

P: Well, it sounds amazing. And difficult!

M: Yes, it takes years of training and practice. You need to be really strong, with great balance and loads of courage! **You can't show any _____!**

P: And how old is the tradition?

M: Er, it originated towards the end of the 18th century in Valls, near the city of Tarragona.

P: So how are the towers constructed exactly?

M: They're built in two stages. The bottom layer is built first. It's called the pinya and it's made up of men because they need to be really strong, you know, to support the rest of the tower.

P: Of course!

M: Once the castellers in the pinya think the base is strong enough, they give a signal. A band starts playing traditional music and the crowd goes completely silent – **you can really feel the _____ and _____.** The upper layers of the tower are built as quickly as possible so the, uhh, the strain on the bottom layer isn't too much.