

MULTIPLE BIRTH CHILDREN STARTING SCHOOL
A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

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This questionnaire is for completion by parents and educational professionals prior to multiple birth children starting school. The questionnaire is designed for twins, but may be adapted for triplets or more. It is intended that the questionnaire should be completed in a meeting between the parents and the teacher, as discussion resulting from the questionnaire is as important as the responses to the questions. By the end of the process it is hoped that parents and professionals will have a shared understanding of the children both as individuals and as multiples so that decisions such as separation can be made on the basis of assessment.

Instructions

Please tick ✓ the relevant boxes or where applicable write your answers. There is space in the column on the right of each page for further information or comments.

Date: ____/____/____

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.

		Twin A first born	Twin B second born
a	Child's first name		
b	Child's date of birth		
c	Child's sex		
d	Language spoken in the home other than English		

2.

a	Number of brothers older than the twins	
b	Number of sisters older than the twins	
c	Number of brothers younger than the twins	
d	Number of sisters younger than the twins	

TWIN TYPE

3. Indicate the zygosity of the twins (whether identical or not):

a	Identical - one egg - Monozygotic	
b	Fraternal - two eggs - Dizygotic	
c	Unsure of zygosity	

Identical twins are formed when one egg splits. Non identical twins are formed when individual eggs are fertilised.

4. How sure are you of the zygosity of your twins?

a	Completely (different sex)	
b	Completely (blood typed)	
c	Completely (diagnosed by placenta)	
d	Completely (look so alike / different)	
e	Reasonably	
f	Not at all sure	

Many people are unsure of twin-type. Sometimes identical twins have two placentas. Sometimes the placentas of non-identical twins fuse so that there appears to be one placenta.

5. If your twins are identical, did they experience the transfusion syndrome at birth with one being much smaller and paler than the other? Yes No

BIRTH HISTORY

6. What was the length of your pregnancy? _____ weeks (*37 weeks is normal for twins*)

7. Birth weight: twin A _____ lbs or gms
twin B _____ lbs or gms

Multiple birth children are frequently smaller than singletons.

8. Number of days in special care (if applicable): Twin A: _____ days
Twin B: _____ days

9. Number of days in intensive care (if applicable): Twin A: _____ days
Twin B: _____ days

10. Since birth how many times has either twin stayed in hospital?

Twin A: _____ times

Twin B: _____ times

10a. Why did they receive treatment?

Twin A: _____

Twin B: _____

CURRENT PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

11.

		Twin A	Twin B
a	eyesight problems	Yes / No	Yes / No
b	hearing problems	Yes / No	Yes / No
c	speech disorder	Yes / No	Yes / No
d	epilepsy	Yes / No	Yes / No
e	asthma	Yes / No	Yes / No
f	allergies	Yes / No	Yes / No
g	child's handedness	Left / Right	Left / Right
h	Other (please specify)		
	Twin A		
	Twin B		

12. In your opinion does either twin need additional support in :

		Twin A	Twin B
a	speech and oral language		
b	gross motor skills - running, jumping, balancing, throwing, etc.		
c	fine motor skills - e.g. using pencil / brush		

IDENTITY

13. Are your twins very similar in: *[tick those applicable]*

a	physical appearance	
b	social skills	
c	emotional behaviour	
d	affection	
e	spoken language skills	
f	maturity	

14. Do you make any deliberate efforts to make the twins easy to tell apart?

- a) yes b) no c) not necessary - easily distinguished

If yes, how?

a	dress differently - colours / styles	
b	different haircuts / hairstyles	
c	name distinguishing badges	
d	point out subtle physical differences	
e	point out subtle behavioural differences	
Other (specify)		

15. How often do family members confuse the twins' identity?

- a) most of the time b) frequently c) sometimes d) never

16. Do the twins ever use their 'twinship', especially if they are very alike in looks, to confuse you or other friends and relatives?

- a) a little b) frequently c) never d) not possible

COMPARISON

17. Do you make comparisons between the twins?

- a) often b) occasionally c) very seldom d) never

18. Do other children make comparisons between the twins?

- a) often b) sometimes c) usually not

19. Do the twins compare themselves? *[tick those applicable]*

a	in physical appearance	
b	in popularity	
c	in terms of adult approval	
d	achievement	
Other (specify)		

FAIRNESS

20. Do the twins demand to do the same things at home?

- a) yes, often b) only sometimes c) hardly ever

COMPETITION

21. How competitive are the twins?

a	they compete constantly with each other	
b	they co-operate and have pride in each other	
c	they have a healthy competitiveness	
d	they compete for you and other adults' approval	
e	the twins are jealous and never praise each other	

22. If one twin is obviously more talented in a particular area do you find the other will opt out completely?

- a) usually b) sometimes c) seldom d) not applicable

DOMINANCE

23. Who is usually dominant or leader in the twins?

- a) Twin A b) Twin B c) dominance alternates d) not applicable

If dominance is evident, what form does it take?

a	one mothers and / or bosses, the other follows	
b	one speaks for the other	
c	one invents and leads / bosses	
Other (specify)		

24. Do you believe the twins show a tendency to go to opposite extremes in behaviour, personality, interests (e.g. quiet/noisy, indoor/outdoor, outgoing/shy, placid/aggressive)?

- a) usually b) sometimes c) seldom d) never

FRIENDSHIPS AND DEVELOPING SOCIAL SKILLS

25. Concerning the twins friendships do they?

a	mostly share the same friends	
b	have some separate and some common friends	
c	mostly each have their own friends	
d	stick together mainly, few friends	

BEHAVIOUR

Tick against the item if this behaviour is typical.

26. Attention , Concentration and Organisation

		Twin A	Twin B
a	Is easily distracted by external stimuli e.g. noise / conversation		
b	Cannot follow through on instructions without close supervision. e.g. jobs around house		
c	Has difficulty keeping attention on tasks or play activities		
d	Often does not seem to listen to what is said to him/her		
e	Often loses things necessary for tasks e.g. toys, pencils		
f	Often breaks things necessary for tasks or activities e.g. toys or tools		
g	Has difficulty organising tasks or activities		
h	Often shifts from one uncompleted activity to another		
i	Often fails to give close attention to detail		
j	Often acts before thinking		
k	Often leaves seat in situation in which remaining seated is expected		
l	Has difficulty awaiting turn in games/group situations		
m	Often blurts out answers to questions before they are completed		
n	Has difficulty playing quietly		
o	Runs about or climbs in situations where it is inappropriate		
p	Often engages in physically dangerous activities without considering consequences e.g. running onto street without looking		

q	Often fidgets with hands or squirms in seat		
r	Often interrupts or intrudes on others		
s	Often talks excessively		

27. Conduct

		Twin A	Twin B
a	Often argues with you / other adults		
b	Often loses his / her temper or throws tantrums when he / she does not get his / her own way		
c	Often refuses to do things that you / other adults have asked him / her to do		
d	Often does things on purpose to annoy people or to get back at them		
e	Often gets into fights with other children		
f	Often lies or makes up stories to get out of trouble		
g	Has this stolen money - from home		
	- from outside the home		
h	Often torments small animals		
I	Lights fires / tries to use matches		
j	Has been withdrawn from playgroup / nursery		

Emotional Development

28.

		Twin A	Twin B
a	Has the child often felt sick when he / she was away from his / her parents or family or anticipating being away from home		
b	Has the child regularly refused to go to playgroup or nursery?		
c	Does the child often need a parent or other close person nearby to fall asleep		
d	Is the child worried a lot about something bad happening to his / her parents or him / herself		
e	Does this child worry a lot about death or dying		
f	Does this child follow you around from room to room		

g	Does the child feel very nervous or uncomfortable around people he / she does not know well		
h	Does he / she find ways to keep from being around people he / she does not know well		

SEPARATION AND THE CLOSENESS OF THE TWIN BOND

29. Have you found if one twin is ill or upset the other is affected also?

- a) usually b) sometimes c) seldom d) never

30. If one twin is reprimanded do you find the other reacts or is affected also?

- a) usually b) sometimes c) seldom d) never

31. Do the twins combine forces to be:

		often	sometimes	seldom	never
a	helpful				
b	creative				
c	disruptive				

32. Prior to nursery / playgroup, how much time did the twins spend apart?

a	often	
b	half the time	
c	sometimes	
d	rarely	
e	never	

33. The separation was in the form of:

a	separate rooms	
b	separate child care	
c	visiting friends / relatives separately	
d	separate outings	
e	hospitalisation of one only	
f	none (by choice)	
g	none (no opportunity)	

34. If the twins have been separated for more than one day what was their reaction?

		Twin A	Twin B
a	very disturbed		
b	a little unhappy		
c	unaffected		
d	fairly happy		
e	very happy		
f	not applicable		

35. Were your twins together in nursery?

a) all the time b) some of the time c) not at all d) did not attend

36. Does one twin check what the other one is getting or doing?

Twin A: a) often b) occasionally c) seldom d) never

Twin B: a) often b) occasionally c) seldom d) never

37. At present what do you think each twin would prefer?

		Twin A	Twin B
a	to be in the same class		
b	to be in separate classes		
c	to be in separate schools		
d	the twins don't mind		
e	haven't asked them		

Having completed the questionnaire, reflect upon the information with regard to the children as individuals and as multiples.

Are the children premature and possibly in the wrong year group?

Are they likely to need further assessment to determine if they have special needs?

Will separation support the children's individual development or would they benefit from being together?

If the children are separated will they need to check what the other is doing?

When will the needs of the children be reviewed?

Can arrangements be changed in the future?