

Smack Dab in the Middle

by Anita Riggio

Putnam, 2002

ISBN 0-399-23700-3

Spunky middle child, Rosie Roselli handles the trials and the triumphs of being Smack Dab in the Middle.

Classroom Activities Kindergarten–Grade 2

Find .pdf of chart on page 7

Chart It!

1. Fold a paper into eight sections.
2. In the first section, write: RAINBOW WEEK.
3. Write one day of the week in each remaining section.
4. At the end of each day, draw a self portrait in that day's section. Color yourself the way you feel: yellow (happy), red (angry), blue (sad)—or a combination of all three colors!
5. "Show and Tell" about your RAINBOW WEEK.

Rainbow Week	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Write It!

1. Copy and complete the following sentence three times:

I like being the (oldest, middle, youngest, only or twin)

because _____.

2. Copy and complete the following sentence three times:

I don't like being the (oldest, middle, youngest, only or twin)

because _____.

Illustrate It!

Use cut paper or crayons or paint to create an illustration for each sentence.

Suggestions for Classroom Activities for Grades 3 & 4

□ Graph It!

1. Fold a paper into quarters. Using both sides of your paper, write one of these words at the top of each quadrant:

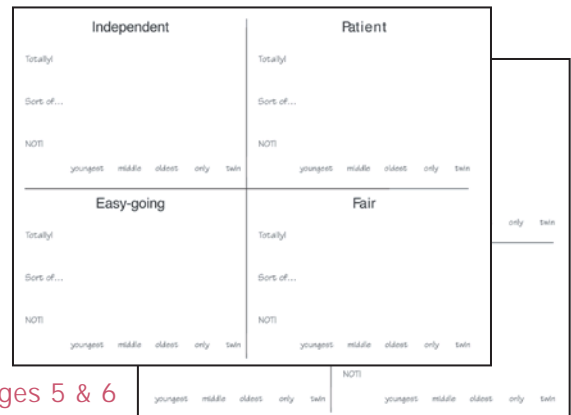
INDEPENDENT PATIENT EASY-GOING FAIR
 ORGANIZED SECRETIVE RESPONSIBLE CREATIVE

2. Write these words down the left side of each quadrant:

Totally!

Sort of...

NOT!



Find graphs on pages 5 & 6

3. Along the bottom of each quadrant, write your initials and the initials of two or three people (siblings, cousins or friends) whose places in their families are different from yours.

4. Under each set of initials, write: **OLDEST** or **MIDDLE** or **YOUNGEST** or **ONLY** or **TWIN**.

5. Now rate each person on the attribute in each quadrant—**BE HONEST!**

6. Get together with two or three other classmates. Compare and contrast your ratings of oldests, middlers, youngests, onlys and twins.

7. Together, make a graph that shows the averages of your group's findings.

❑ Write It!

1. Choose a character from a favorite novel. Is this character an only, the oldest, middle, youngest child or a twin?
2. List this character's personality traits as you think they relate to birth order.
3. Support your opinions by citing specific actions this character takes.

❑ Write More!

1. Make a list of the names of people who have encouraged you.
2. Pick the name of one person.
3. Close your eyes for a few minutes and relax. Remember a specific situation when this person encouraged you. Watch the scene in your mind as if it were a movie: Where are you? What is happening? What is the conversation? How does your scene end?

4. When you open your eyes, let the scene drain from your head, down your neck, shoulder and arm, through your hand, out your fingertips and onto your paper—**SPLAT!** Remember every detail you can! Don't worry about spelling or grammar! Don't reread! Don't erase! Keep your hand moving!

WRITE FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES WITHOUT STOPPING!

5. Include ingredients from my **Recipe for Writing** when you rewrite your **SPLAT!** Correct spelling and punctuation. Add more details if you'd like. You've written in living color—Good for you!

❑ Illustrate It!

Use cut paper or crayons or paint or any other art supplies to create a picture or a series of pictures that illustrates the memory you've written about.

❑ Learn More about how birth order effects personality.

Check out these web sites:

http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/family/email_friend.html

<http://www.drspock.com/article/0,1510,5547,00.html>

Reviews

"Rosie Roselli is 'smack dab in the middle' of Riggio's uplifting tale... Riggio's spreads play up the mounting tension with bold black outlines of the characters filled in with a 1950's palette (each character in a shade of chartreuse or mod pink)—except for Rosie, who always appears as a white cutout with rosy cheeks and knees...the unusual style of the artwork conveys the family's warmth even through their unwitting negligence. This tale may well comfort youngsters who identify with Rosie's plight."

—Publishers' Weekly

"...Rosie is a delightfully spirited character..."

—School Library Journal

"...Roll on, Rosie! The energy of this little twirling character will never be lost, even in a crowd."

—Book Page

"...When Rosie draws a picture of her tiny self in the midst of her enormous family, her teacher, Sister Celestia asks her to have everyone in the picture sign it on the back. One by one, they see how small she feels and, together, they express their love with an enormous hug. Digitally combining picture elements made with India ink, gouache, cut paper, and stamps, the artwork creates a 1950's setting with a retro look, though the layout is fresh and the vitality of the line work is timeless. The story builds to an inevitable conclusion through short scenes that contrast Rosie at school with Rosie at home. A sympathetic tale that is expressively illustrated and nicely cadenced for reading aloud."

—Booklist

Schedule

For general information about Anita Riggio's school visits,
email: info.visit@anitariggio.com

To schedule a visit, contact:

Coveside Studio
503 Main Street
Old Wethersfield, CT 06109

Phone: (860) 721-8444

email: jack@anitariggio.com

Independent

Patient

Totally!

Totally!

Sort of...

Sort of...

NOT!

NOT!

youngest middle oldest only twin

youngest middle oldest only twin

Easy-going

Fair

Totally!

Totally!

Sort of...

Sort of...

NOT!

NOT!

youngest middle oldest only twin

youngest middle oldest only twin

Organized

Totally!

Sort of...

NOT!

youngest middle oldest only twin

Secretive

Totally!

Sort of...

NOT!

youngest middle oldest only twin

Responsible

Totally!

Sort of...

NOT!

youngest middle oldest only twin

Creative

Totally!

Sort of...

NOT!

youngest middle oldest only twin

Rainbow Week

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday