



INTERPRETING VISUALS Many people have argued that Mozart was a musical genius. With his father's reinforcement, Mozart was composing music at the age of five. *How might parental reinforcement cause problems for developing children such as Mozart?*

They may also spend extra time reading to the child. These actions tend to encourage the development of the child's innate talent. Positive or negative parental reinforcement may also affect the development of such personality traits as shyness, sociability, and aggression.

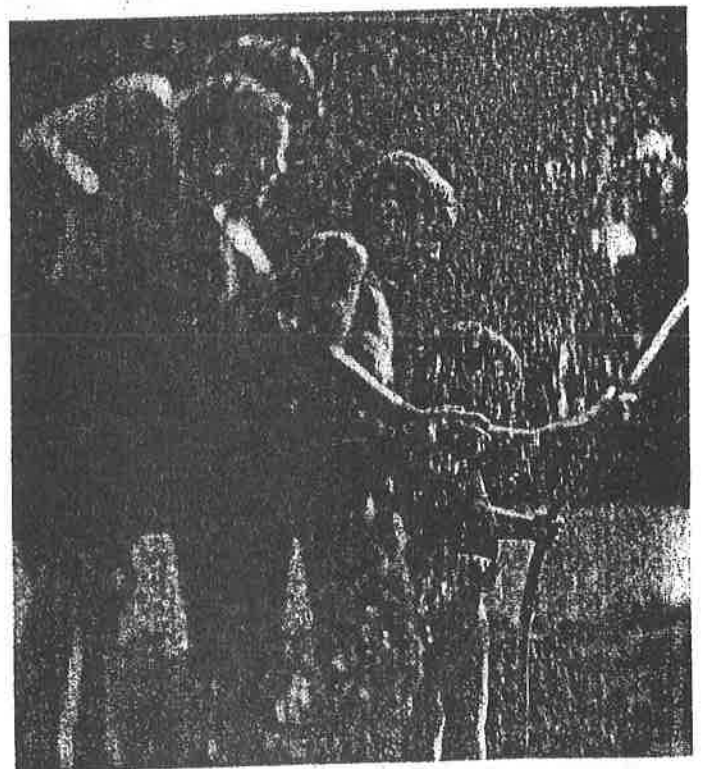
Humans also inherit certain basic needs and capacities. For example, like all animals, human beings have biological drives. The hunger drive makes you want to eat. However, drives do not determine your specific behavior. The hunger drive does not tell you when to eat, what to eat, or how to eat. You learn such things through interaction with other human beings. Heredity provides you with certain biological needs, but culture determines how you meet those needs.

Heredity also plays an important role in shaping human personalities by setting limits on individuals. If you have little aptitude for music, you will probably not become a great musician. If your biological inheritance endowed you with a five-foot-tall frame, you are not likely to become a professional basketball player. On the other hand, you may not become one even if you are seven feet tall. Inherited characteristics place

limits on what is possible, but they do not determine what a person will do. No one factor alone determines what kind of personality someone will have.

Birth Order Our personalities are also influenced by whether we have brothers, sisters, both, or neither. Children with siblings have a different view of the world than do children who have no brothers or sisters. The order in which we are born into our families also influences our personalities. People born first or last in a family have a different perspective than people born in the middle. For example, research has indicated that firstborn children are more likely to be achievement-oriented and responsible than are later-born children. Later-born children, on the other hand, tend to be better in social relationships and to be more affectionate and friendly. Other studies suggest that first-borns are conservative in their thinking and are defenders of the status quo. Later-borns, in contrast, are often risk-takers and social and intellectual rebels.

Parental Characteristics Personality development in children is also influenced by the characteristics of their parents. For example, the age of parents can have a bearing on their children's development. Parents who are in their early twenties when their children are born are likely to relate differently to their offspring than parents



Personality and social development are often influenced by the order in which you are born into a family.

who are in their mid- to late thirties. Other differences between sets of parents are also likely to affect their child's personality development. Some parental characteristics that can influence a child's personality are level of education, religious orientation, economic status, cultural heritage, and occupational background.

The Cultural Environment Culture has a strong influence on personality development. Generally, the cultural environment determines the basic types of personalities that will be found in a society. Each culture gives rise to a series of personality traits—model

personalities—that are typical of members of that society. For example, in the United States competitiveness, assertiveness, and individualism are common personality traits.

The Ik [eek] of northern Uganda provide a powerful example of the effects of cultural environment on personality development. Prior to World War II, the Ik were hunters and gatherers who lived in a mountainous region of northern Uganda. Ik villagers were like one large family. Children viewed every adult in the village as a parent and all other children as brothers and sisters. However, after World War II the Ugandan government turned



INTERPRETING VISUALS A person's cultural environment can greatly influence his or her personality and social behavior. *How do you think these kids learn about the value of work in their community?*