

LEVELED Book • L

Two Make Twins



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Two Make Twins



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Focus Question

What are twins, and how are they special?

Words to Know

bond	identical twins
characteristics	personalities
fraternal twins	twin

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Correlation

LEVEL L	
Fountas & Pinnell	K
Reading Recovery	18
DRA	20



Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Double Trouble	5
Identical Twins	6
Fraternal Twins	9
The Twins Bond	12
Awesome Twosomes	14
Glossary	16



Introduction

Some of you may have a bossy big brother. Others may have a sweet little sister. What if you have a brother or sister who is the exact same age as you? What if the two of you look identical? This can happen when your brother or sister is your twin.

Double Trouble

Twins grow in their mother's body at the same time. Twins can be two brothers or two sisters. They can also be a brother and a sister. One twin is born first. That twin is slightly older than the other.

Twins can look very similar or very different from each other.



Today, it is much more common for a mother to have twins than it was years ago. Sometimes, twins are also more common in certain families.



Identical twins are more likely to have similar taste in many things, such as food and clothes.

Identical Twins

Identical twins often look almost exactly alike. They are always either two girls or two boys.

It can be difficult to tell identical twins apart. They often have the same height, weight, hair color, and eye color. Some twins look so similar that they can play tricks on others. They can switch places with each other. No one can tell them apart.

Identical twins can be mirror image twins. When they face each other, they look very similar, but some of their **characteristics** are reversed.

They might have freckles on different sides of their bodies or part their hair on different sides. One twin might be left-handed, while the other is right-handed.



About one in every four sets of identical twins are mirror twins.



Identical twins may spend a lot of time together if they like to do the same things.

Identical twins can be alike in other ways, too. They might like the same things, such as music, sports, or foods. They may have similar **personalities**, too. It is also possible for identical twins to not be very alike at all.

Fingerprints

Fingerprints are patterns on the tips of your fingers. Identical twins can look very alike, but their fingerprints are always different.





Fraternal twins are more common than identical twins. Boy-girl twins are the most common kind of twin pair.

Fraternal Twins

Fraternal twins can look very different from each other. They can be a pair of two boys or two girls. Unlike identical twins, they can also be a girl and a boy.

Fraternal twins may share some characteristics. They can share the same number of characteristics as any brothers or sisters.



Fraternal twins are like regular brothers or sisters who happen to have been born at the same time.



As fraternal twins grow up, they often find that they enjoy different things.

For example, sisters born a few years apart might both have light hair and blue eyes. However, another pair of sisters might have different hair and eye colors. It is the same with fraternal twins. They can look very similar, a little alike, or very different. They usually have more differences in their personalities than identical twins.



Twins have a bond as babies because they do everything together.

The Twins Bond

Identical and fraternal twins often have a special **bond**. The bond may form because they are carried in the mother's body at the same time. They move around and reach out for each other.



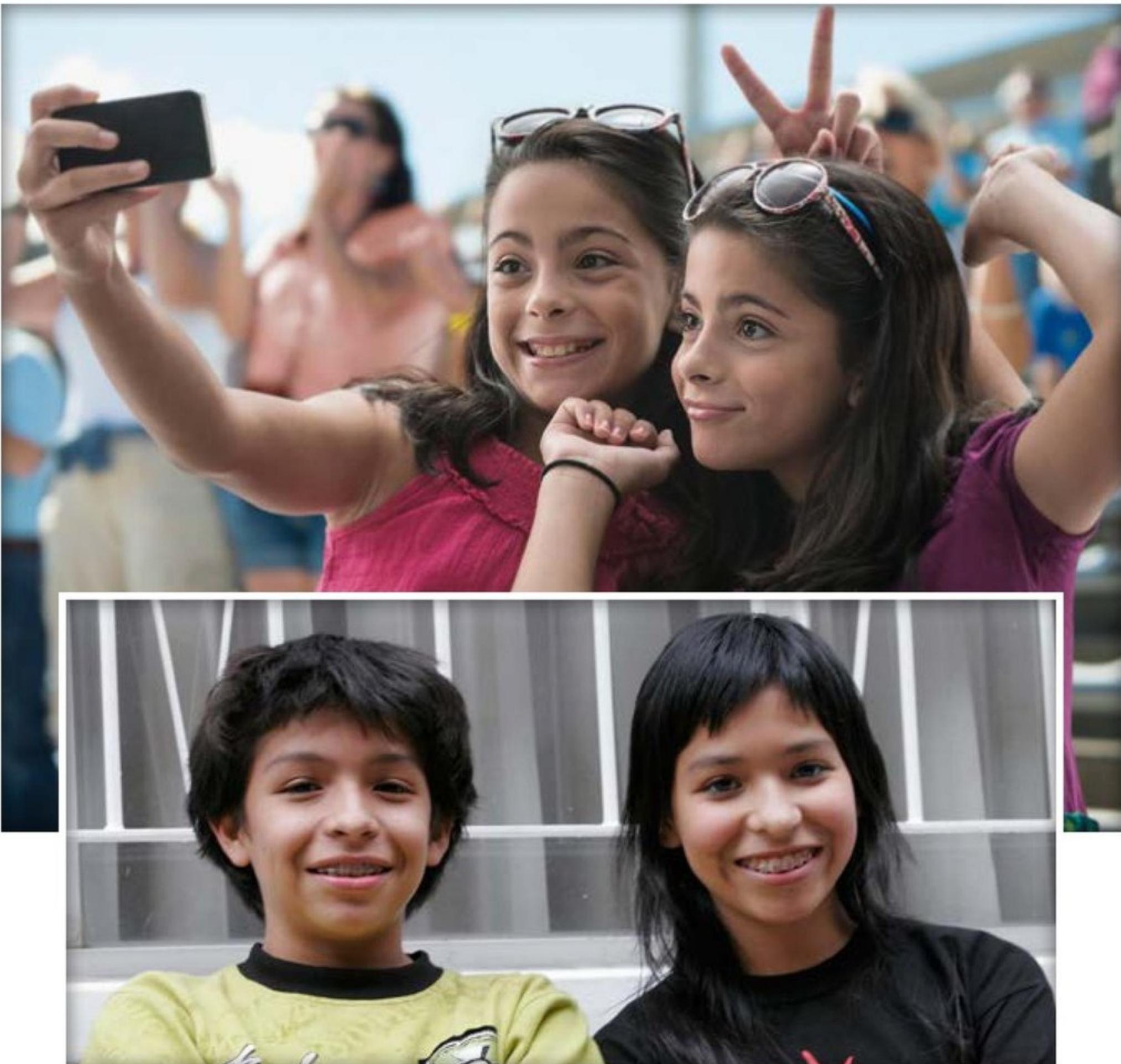
About 40 percent of young twins use a made-up language to talk to each other.

Twins also bond with each other after they are born. They are often comforted when they are near each other. Some twins invent their own language as babies. This language usually goes away when they learn a real language.

Twins Day

Each summer, many twins travel to Twinsburg, Ohio. Most of them dress identically and spend the day celebrating Twins Day. Twins Day is the biggest yearly gathering of twins in the world!





Identical twins look very alike (top), while fraternal twins usually look different (bottom).

Awesome Twosomes

Only some twins look almost exactly alike. Some twins have similar personalities, likes, and dislikes. Other twins, like many fraternal twins, can look and act quite differently from each other.

Twins are not simply copies of each other. Each twin, whether identical or fraternal, is one of a kind.

Fraternal



Identical



Glossary

bond (<i>n.</i>)	a strong feeling of connection or friendship (p. 12)
characteristics (<i>n.</i>)	features that help to identify a thing or group of things (p. 7)
fraternal twins (<i>n.</i>)	twins who do not look exactly alike (p. 9)
identical twins (<i>n.</i>)	twins who look exactly alike (p. 6)
personalities (<i>n.</i>)	sets of qualities or ways of behaving that make people different from one another (p. 8)
twin (<i>n.</i>)	one of two babies born in one birth (p. 4)

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Connections

Writing

Make a Venn diagram comparing the two types of twins: *fraternal* and *identical*. Write a paragraph explaining the difference between the twin types.

Science

Compare your fingerprints to those of your classmates. How are they the same and different? Discuss with a partner the benefits of everyone having different fingerprints.

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