

T Test Your Friendship IQ

BY JOAN ANDERSON

Aristotle said the ideal friendship is one soul in two bodies. Jesus said the greatest love of all is laying down one's life for a friend.

What about your friends? Do you choose friends who mirror your personality and values? Why do you form friendships?

As you take the following quiz, think about your relationships.

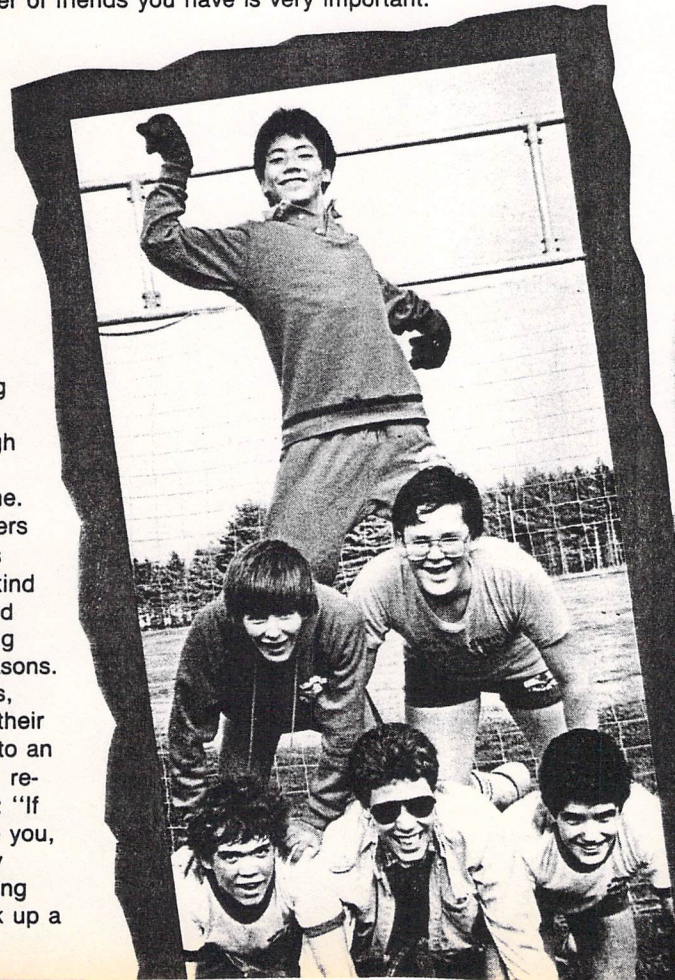
True or False?

- _____ 1. Kids tend to choose friends who are similar to themselves, and friends become more similar as time goes on.
- _____ 2. Guys and girls enjoy friendships in different ways and for different reasons.
- _____ 3. Friendships have nothing to do with your decisions about drug use.
- _____ 4. Girls tend to pair off more than guys do.
- _____ 5. Competition doesn't enter into a real friendship.
- _____ 6. The number of friends you have is very important.

If most of your quiz answers were correct, you're probably forming healthy and satisfying friendships, even though relationships may be bumpy from time to time.

If most of your answers were wrong, maybe it's time to evaluate what kind of a friend *you* are—and whether you're choosing friends for the right reasons.

Proverbs 17:17a says, "Friends always show their love." But if you get into an argument with a friend, remember Proverbs 17:9: "If you want people to like you, forgive them when they wrong you. Remembering wrong things can break up a friendship."



Answers:

1. True. Studies show that young people gravitate toward those who are similar in age, gender, cultural background and neighborhood interests. By adolescence, friends have even more in common, including attitudes about academics, occupational goals, social activities and moral values.

2. True. According to California psychologist Lillian Rubin, "Guys are more likely to *do* things together—sports, watching television or working in the same environment—while girls primarily talk."

3. False. A recent Massachusetts General Hospital study shows that friendship patterns begun early in life can strongly influence later decisions to try drugs. Kids who like school and feel valued by both teachers and peers are less likely to use drugs.

4. True. Purdue psychology professor Thomas Berndt says this is because girls are more chaperoned and protected than guys when younger, and more encouraged to play near home. "Since two seems to be a manageable number at home," he says, "girls tend to pair off early in childhood, and the habit sticks." Girls are also more cliquish than guys, at every age. And when asked to name a best friend, most adolescent girls can come up with a name immediately; most guys can't.

5. False. Kids want to perform as well as their peers, and often compete on the same sports team or in the same academic group. By adolescence, competition softens; teenagers will arrange a "tie" to soothe a friend's ego, or take opportunities to acknowledge each other's talents. But it's rare for a true underachiever to associate closely with an extremely competitive classmate.

6. False. In friendship, quality is much more important than quantity. It doesn't matter how many friends you have, provided there's at least one special person in your life—someone who'll support you when you need it