

The Trio of Siblings

FARIA KHAN

A family of five has parents who are blessed with an infamous trio. This is not something easily recognised, but a family with three children is prone to more dilemmas than one with more, or a simple pair of two. These three siblings tend to have distinct personalities that are quite striking when compared to children in other families. Parents might find themselves in situations where they often have to take sides, but in this case, heaven forbid, if they do, the house will come burning down.

THE ELDEST - THE BELOVED FIRST BORN

Pretty much everything favours the eldest. You see, the Force is always with them. Being the first born, parents unknowingly admit to have a special soft corner for them. They are the only ones who get the sole attention of parents before other children arrive and for this they are proven to be overachievers. Being the oldest, it is natural for them to be the one controlling, however, this has a down side - they are forced to be the responsible one. Sadly, the eldest make the most compromises. But no matter what, everything they do is right and everything not done by them is wrong, there's no point in proving it.

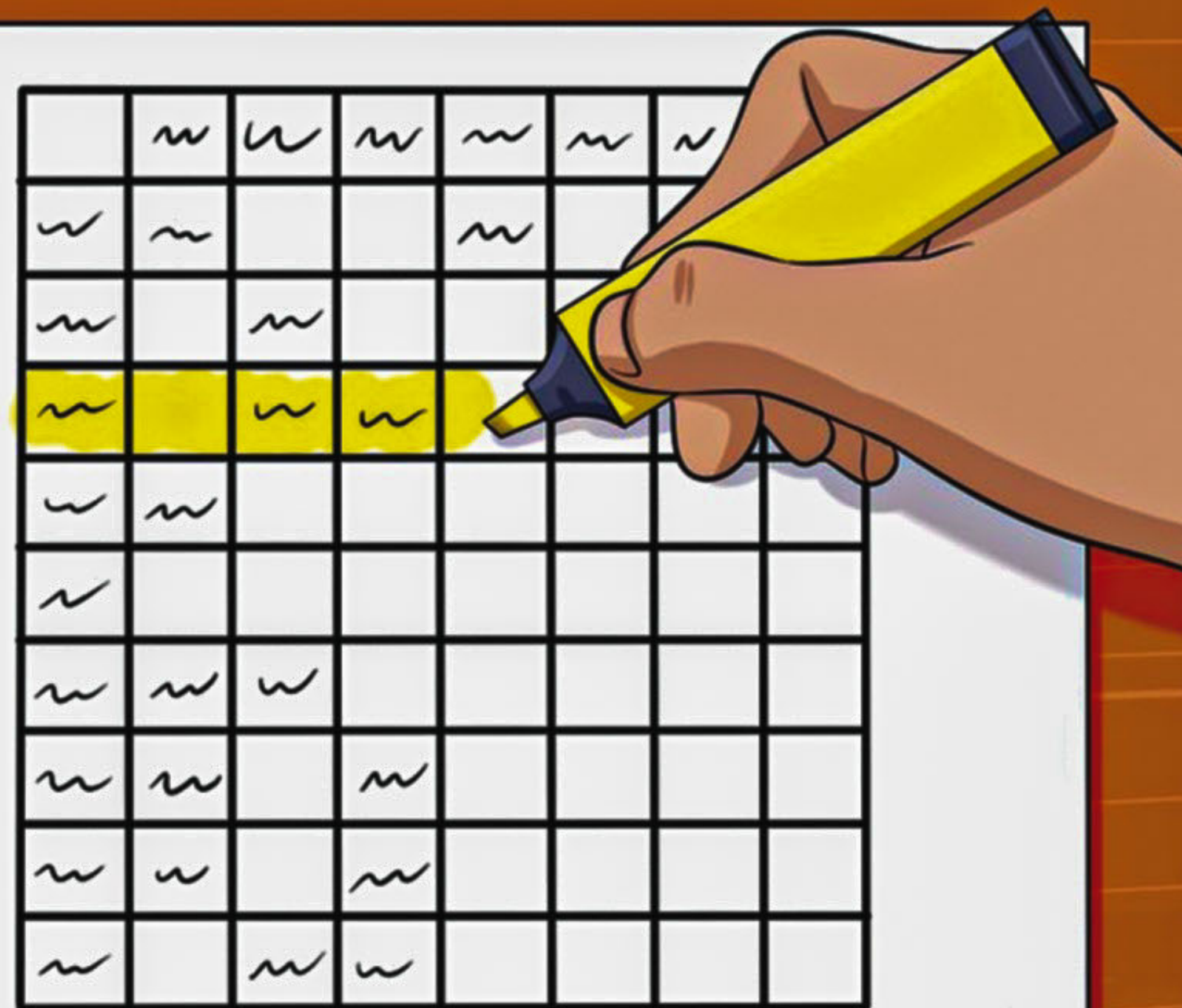
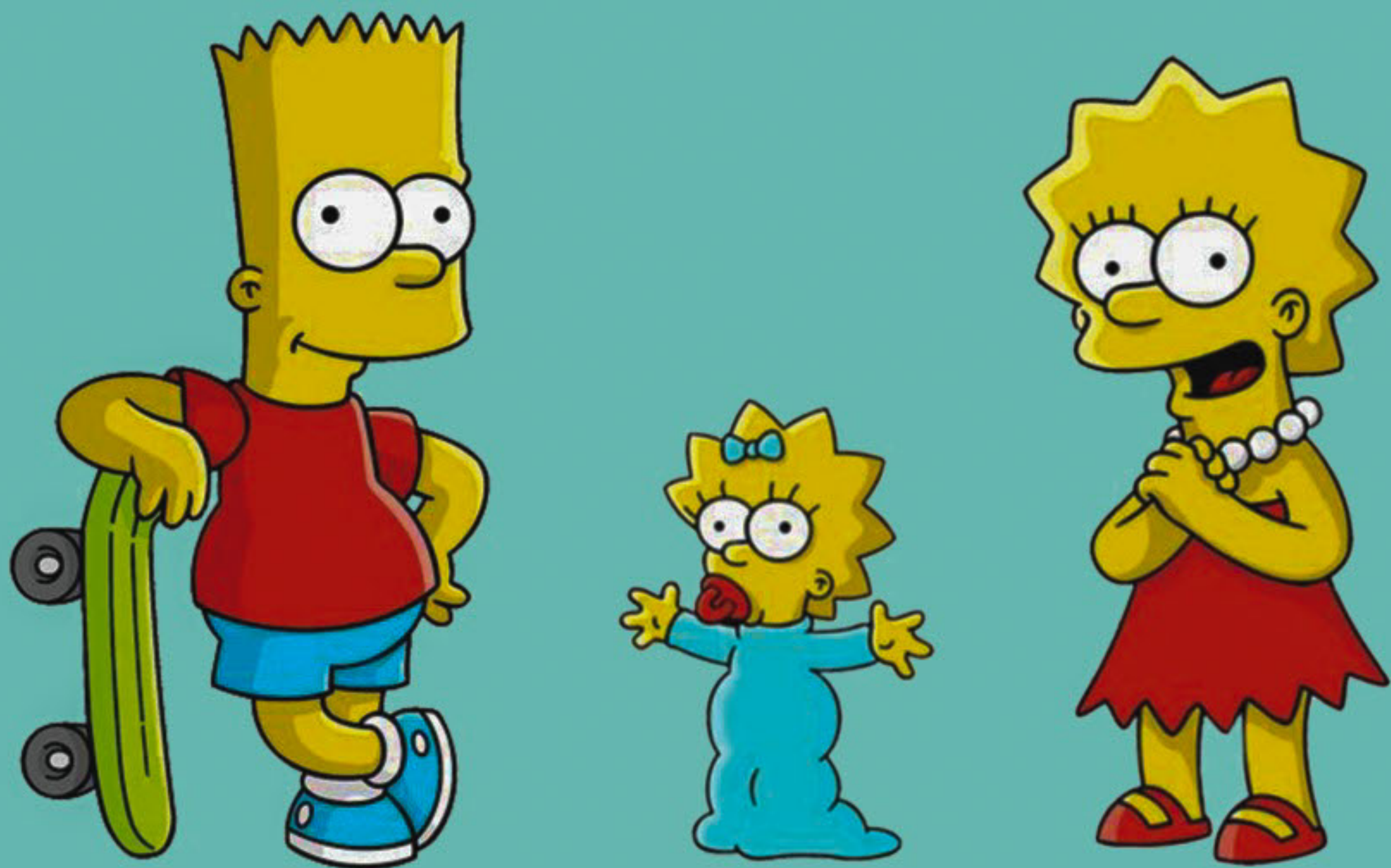
THE YOUNGEST - THE PERMANENT BABY BRAT

Truth be told, this one is the luckiest (and the funniest). Being born the last, parents simply can't say no to anything the little one says, at least until the ruler intervenes. It's seen that the last one argues more than the others, which add up to their stubborn nature. They have to work harder to prove a point because their opinions are more or less superfluous while the "elders talk". The youngest means the most fragile, at least that's what the rest of the family thinks. So they can't really be sad about getting to know important news at last, or not knowing at all. Then there's the trait of being more adventurous. Getting everything they wanted done their way at home, they seem to take over the world with an equal determination. At the end of the day, no matter how old you are, you'll still be the tiny five year-old baby to them. Basically, you get to enjoy perks of being young no matter how old you are.

THE MIDDLE ONE - THE WITTY FORGOTTEN SOUL

Sandwiched between the oldest and the youngest, is the forgotten middle child. Almost everything this one does is unnoticed by the parents because they are busy taking care of the newly arrived and the much-loved eldest. Being the clever ones they often take advantage of being unnoticed. However, something great achieved by him/her is not celebrated as the achievement of the third child, both of which do not reach the exaggerated celebration for the beloved first child. It's just never enough. Unfortunately, they seem to lack the affection they should be getting. This is why they rely more on friends than family, and often blatantly take on the tag of the "popular" one. The added bonus is the amazing negotiation and savvy manipulation skills.

Yet, these three siblings have a special bond. So all the trios out there make sure you are constantly fighting and laughing to keep the family spirit alive.



How to Fast During Exams

NOOHA SABANTA MAULA

There might not be any shortcuts to Ramadan but there aren't any for exams either. Whether you're a stress eater or just someone who suffers from the *roja* brain, exam season is never fun when it coincides with Ramadan. Not only is there the obvious food deprivation for long hours at a stretch, there's the sleep deprivation and the usual Ramadan rituals.

When you've to earn your blessings AND your grades, here's how you do it.

SCHEDULE EVERYTHING

Plot your study routine around your Ramadan routine. Study when you're less likely to be distracted by hunger pangs while fasting and fit in more after *iftaar*. There's usually a decent stretch of time between after *iftaar* (and *taraweeh*) till *sehri*, so schedule your sleep to get both resting and studying done. Alternatively, you can nap and study at a stretch from *sehri*/*Fajr* onwards. Being sleep deprived for a long period of time won't help, neither will clumsily cramming in hurried revision sessions. Find out what works and go with it.

STUDY AHEAD OF TIME

I learnt this lesson the hard way having attempted to cram all my revision the night before an exam with a huge syllabus. The result? I was too exhausted and too hungry to think straight, combined the names of two historic figures into one brand new non-existent name and pretty much flunked the question carrying most of the weight of the paper. It might seem like a lot of hard work but cramming in a bit of revision time before Ramadan starts can ease quite a bit of pressure. Work on things that might be time consuming or difficult to cope with. Or end up turning Yahya Khan and Ayub Khan into Yakub Khan.

EAT SMARTER

There are plenty of foods that can boost your energy and get you through the day better. Research your food, see what works for you best and eat what will help you cope with exams better. I know that after not having eaten all day the last thing we want to do for *iftaar* and *sehri* is sacrifice the good stuff. But grades. Some of the stuff that work for a lot of people are dates, oats, milk and other things that mothers try to get us to eat but we don't.

If nothing works, there's always *haleem* to drown your sorrows in.