



What Makes a Good Father?

Each of the following scenes features a father. Read each scene carefully and then rank from the father who is the best (#1) to the father who is the worst (#5). Make sure you can support your decisions. You'll be talking about them in small groups and then we'll be sharing them as a class.

1. Julie is an eighth grader. Her parents got divorced when she was six years old. For seven years she spent about the same amount of time with each of them, but three years ago, her dad moved to California, all the way across the country from her. He had a great job opportunity and he said that the lifestyle there suited him. These days Julie spends every other Christmas vacation and three weeks each summer with him. He calls every week, but it's hard to talk. He has trouble keeping track of current friends and classes. A couple of times when Julie faced a really big decision she called, and her dad was really helpful. She knows he'll help her decide what college to go to. Somehow he senses what's best for her. But she wishes he were more interested in the day-to-day details of her life.

Ranking for Julie's father _____

2. Joseph is a high school junior. He has a lot of friends, but they sometimes wonder about him. He'll never do anything that might get him in trouble with his father, a police officer. Joseph won't even go to a party where beer might be available or a concert where somebody might bring drugs. He says, "Can't. I think that kind of stuff is stupid. But more than that, you guys just don't know my dad. He'd kill me." Joseph's father has never hit him, but he's really strict. He makes Joseph do 90 minutes of schoolwork every night, whether he has homework or not.

Ranking for Joseph's father _____

3. Terry is a high school sophomore. Her dad is a biker. He makes a good living repairing motorcycles, and he's very generous with Terry. Plus, he's promised to put her through whatever college she chooses. Terry loves the time they spend together at home. Her dad is a whiz at math and he's great at helping her with her homework. He also teaches her how to fix his bikes. Terry could probably get a job as a mechanic, but she doesn't want to. She feels it's kind of a weird scene.

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In fact, she wishes that her dad weren't so into it. He has the earrings and tattoos like many of the other riders. It embarrasses Terry a bit, especially when he shows up to school in his leathers. She tried talking to him about it once, but he just laughed and said, "Don't tell me that you're ashamed of your old man."

Ranking for Terry's father _____

4. Rorie is a seventh grader. But lots of people don't realize she's so young because she's such a great golfer. She's already won the women's championship at her golf club. Rorie loves to compete. She just wishes that she had more time to spend with her friends. But her dad is always pushing her to practice, practice, practice. He's always wanted the best for her. In fact, he worked two jobs and took a second mortgage out on their house so they could afford the club's \$150,000 initiation fee. He said that it was a worthwhile investment, both because it would help Rorie's golf game and because her dad says, "At clubs like ours you only meet the best kind of people. You know what I mean. It's not for everyone." When Rorie plays, her dad always caddies for her. He's really a big help. She doesn't much mind when she hears other players call her "Daddy's little girl."

Ranking for Rorie's father _____

5. Thomas is a ninth grader. His first year at the high school has been a bit rough, much more work than middle school was. As a result, his grades aren't what they should be. Thank goodness his dad understands. In fact, his dad blames Thomas's poor grades on the teachers. His dad barely graduated from high school because of a learning disability. He's glad Thomas finds school easier than he ever did, but he worries that it takes up too much of his time. He always tells Thomas that there's more to being a kid than doing well in school. Friends and activities are at least as important. If Thomas's dad thinks he has too much work, he calls Thomas's teachers and complains. Neither Thomas nor his dad want homework to interfere with the time they have together. They like to play catch or go to a movie on the weekends. Thomas enjoys his dad's company so much that he even includes his dad when he does something with his friends, like going to a concert.

Ranking for Thomas's father _____