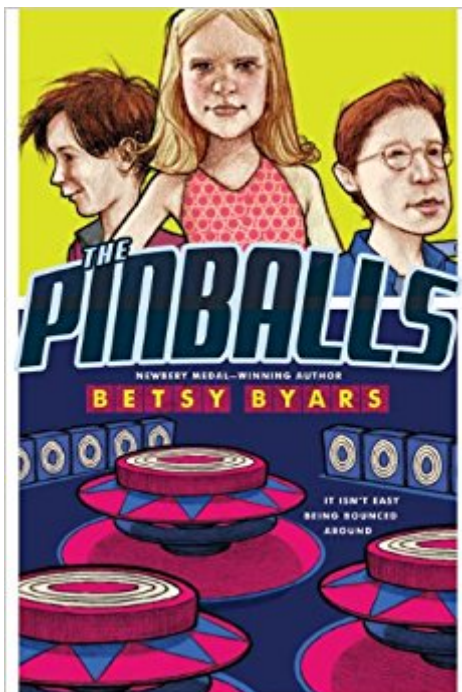


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# The Pinballs (Apple Paperbacks)



## Synopsis

From Newbery-winning author Betsy Byers comes a story full of "poignancy, perception, and humor" (The Chicago Tribune), about three foster kids who learn what it takes to make a family. You can't always decide where life will take you—especially when you're a kid. Carlie knows she's got no say in what happens to her. Stuck in a foster home with two other kids, Harvey and Thomas J, she's just a pinball being bounced from bumper to bumper. As soon as you get settled, somebody puts another coin in the machine and off you go again. But against her will and her better judgment, Carlie and the boys become friends. And all three of them start to see that they can take control of their own lives.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 600L (What's this?)

Series: Apple Paperbacks

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins; Reissue edition (August 10, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0064401987

ISBN-13: 978-0064401982

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 5.2 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 122 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #96,957 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #54 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Adoption](#) #149 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Orphans & Foster Homes](#) #1877 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

"One summer two boys and a girl went to a foster home to live together"--the Newbery Medal-winning author chronicles their trials and tribulations in witty and poignant fashion. Ages 10-up. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"A former winner of the Newbery Award scores again with a story that has poignancy, perception,

and humor." -- -- The Chicago Tribune "A hopeful, loving, and very witty book. No wonder 58,000 school children in Georgia voted it their favorite." -- -- Jim Trelease, *The Read-Aloud Handbook* "The 1971 Newbery Medalist for *The Summer of the Swans* does a superb job of creating vivid characters who change convincingly in reaction to each other." -- C. "Three unwanted kids' Pinballs, as wisecracking Carly dubs them, collide in a warm and caring foster home and learn to pin their hopes on each other." -- SLJ.

I read this book when I was in 6th grade. The whole class actually read it - I remember it being a huge sensation. I suggested this for my son now that he is in 6th grade. He read it over the summer and also loved it. It is realistic fiction, ideal for kids like my son who don't find much to like in the current trend of fantasy/dystopian young adult. It is probably more of a younger reading level so it was good for slower readers too mature for books at their reading level, too. I would not be put off by the subject matter. It is a reality many kids live through and it is good for kids to understand what happens in other lives. When I grew up we had a large foster home down the street. The reality of what I heard from those kids (who became my friends) was far more brutal than anything described in this book.

*Pinballs* is about three children (~pre/early teen) who find themselves placed in the same foster home, each coming from their own less-than-perfect situations. The book is an easy read; regardless of the Lexile level I would recommend it for 4th-5th graders. The only proviso is that many of the references (e.g., to television shows) are very dated and can lose a modern student reader quite quickly--the time frame includes references to the Sonny and Cher Show, etc.. I tried this as a read-aloud to my 5th grade class and was disappointed; it remains a nice small group book if you are facilitating it in the guise of a literature circle, book club, etc.

The story of Carley, Harvey, and Thomas J still resonates with children. I read the book aloud to my eight-year-old boy and nine-year-old girl. At one point when I tried to stop reading they shouted at me to continue, so wrapped up in the story that they could not bear to stop. I loved *The Pinballs* when I was a kid and I am happy to be able to share it with my own children.

I read this story back when I was a kid in school, and enjoyed it then. Even as an adult I found this book to be just as enjoyable as it was 20 years ago. I highly recommend this book for all ages---young to adult!

This is a really good book helping children and teens see how adversity can be turned around into a positive. Life is not easy for many children and this book brings three children together who come from very different troubled home situations and turns their lives around as they begin to form a "family" with some wonderful caring foster parents. A good read.

This is a nice story... a bit depressing, yes, with all that bad fathers, and a bit bad mothers, but it is amazing the way the writer puts such a deep deep deep message into words, into this wonderful and amazing story. I hope there is a sequel to the book. Read on.

I bought it for my daughter but I read it first to see if it's suitable for a 6-year old (it's too early). I couldn't put it down until I finished it; although I was crying the whole time, I think it's a wonderful book! I think kids 8+ should be able to understand it and enjoy it.

Characters were likable. Some chapters stalled at times. I use this every year to teach social issues to my sixth graders.

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