

The Pinballs

by Lois Lowry



Teaching Guide

by Margaret Whisnant

The Pinballs

By Betsy Byars



A Teaching Guide

by Margaret Whisnant

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One summer, three children
come to live in a foster home.



Carlie,
angry, intelligent,
TV addict, a comedian,
fighting back.

Harvey,
abandoned, sad,
broken in body, broken in spirit,
losing hope.

Thomas J,
without identity,
without love,
alone,
searching for himself.

Three children,

The Pinballs,

bounced around by the hand of fate,
needing answers,
needing purpose,

needing **each other.**

Goals

To . . .

- Offer a teaching guide with a full spectrum of learning experiences that flow from **basic knowledge** to **higher-level thinking skills**.
- Provide **classroom-ready** materials that **motivate** and **instruct**.
- Create **novel-specific activities** that require careful reading, help develop comprehension skills, and challenge the thinking process.
- Accommodate a wide variety of student **ability** and **interest**.
- **Support teachers** by providing a practical teaching resource that saves preparation time.
- Include **cross-curricula activities** as an integral part of the novel study.
- Correlate to various U.S. and International **education standards and requirements** for language arts.

The Seven Components. . .

1. Summaries

Written in present tense, the chapter-by-chapter summaries are more detailed than those found in most teachers' guides or other sources. Important points of the plot, character motivation and development, and story clues are all included. For quick reference, the summaries are presented in bulleted format. These synopses are a valuable resource for

quickly becoming familiar with a title when time is limited
managing a reading program that involves multiple titles/reading groups
facilitating independent study
refreshing memory when using a novel from year to year.

2. Before You Read

In this component, the focus is on sparking student interest. Each teaching pack includes both an **independent activity** and a series of **whole-group/small-group discussion** or **research topics**, written as open-ended questions.

At least one **bulletin board idea** is included. In some cases, activities in the **Think, Write, Create** component also involve the creation of a bulletin board or classroom display.

3. Vocabulary

One of the many advantages of literature-based reading instruction is the opportunity to observe vocabulary in action! It is this circumstance that drives the vocabulary portion of the novel teaching packs.

Word Choices. . .

The words lifted from the novel for focused study are chosen based on one or more of the following criteria:

<i>their level of difficulty</i>	<i>their frequency of use in children's literature</i>
<i>their importance in comprehending the story</i>	<i>their value as useful composition vocabulary</i>
<i>the probability that they will be encountered across the curriculum</i>	<i>unique meanings, spellings, pronunciation, etc.</i>

Word Lists and Definitions. . .

For teacher convenience and reference, word lists with definitions are included. The selected words are arranged in story order, complete with page numbers so they can be spotted easily and studied in their "natural habitats." For clarity, the definitions are paraphrased to match the word's tense, number, part of speech, etc. rather than cross referenced as in a standard dictionary. The major resource of this information is www.dictionary.com.

Dictionary Activities. . .

Long word lists are divided into chapter sets of workable numbers and presented as **Dictionary Digs**—sometimes given a slightly different name to correspond with the theme of the novel. In this introductory stage, students use a dictionary to answer a series of multiple choice questions about word meanings, usage, unique characteristics, etc.

Using the Words. . .

Other activities, which pull terms from the lists in random order, lead students through a variety of word studies which include

sentence usage
word forms
synonyms and antonyms
anagrams
categories
word groups/connections

word types (acronyms, onomatopoeia, etc.)
scrambled sentences
analogies
whole-class/group games
etymologies

4. Assessment

The two sections in this component offer a wealth of materials designed to build a strong **foundation** for student progression to higher level thinking skills. The operative phrase is **basic comprehension**.

Short Answer Questions

Short answer questions for each chapter (or groups of chapters) are the first available assessment tools. The items encourage (and check) careful reading. Some require the reader to recognize a major event or idea while others involve finding a minor detail. The questions are in *sequence* with the pages they cover, but they are **not** designed to call attention to plot construction or other story elements.

The short answer questions can be used as

student reading guides
pop quizzes

discussion groups guides
conferencing with individual students

Objective Tests

The objective tests have multiple functions. In addition to their obvious application, they also serve as tools that can *improve **comprehension skills** by providing practice in understanding plot structure and recognizing important story elements.*

Rationale:

Focus on the Plot. . .

Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot of a novel, and consequently **comprehend** the story. They are in tune with cause and effect, behavior and consequence, sequence—the heartbeat of the narrative.

This “plot rhythm” forms the framework for the objective tests. The chain of events that tell the story have been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of sequential questions, none of which require **interpretation**. They are intended to **draw student attention to the fact that something happened**, not to what the incident means. That comes later.

In addition to their testing function, teachers may use the pages to strengthen their students’ ability to **Summarize**: With only the questions as a guide, have students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven or fewer. When they work with twenty or more questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Report the News: Ask your students to write a newspaper article based on the events identified in a set of questions and the *who, what, when, where, why* elements. Some information needed to complete this assignment may be located in previous chapters.

Twist the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, etc.—to demonstrate how changing a single (or several) events would (or would not) change the story. This process can be used to help students become proficient in distinguishing major plot movers from minor story details.

The Characters. . .

Too often, when they are asked to describe a story character’s personality, the only answer many students can muster is “nice.” This portion of the Novel Teaching Pack, coupled with related activities from **Think, Write, Create**, is a well of opportunities for those teachers who wish to eradicate “nice” from their students’ vocabularies!

Questions that identify a character’s personality and/or motivation are purposely and carefully included with the plot movers. Again, the questions do not require **interpretation**. They simply establish that someone did or said something—knowledge that is invaluable when character analysis is required.

Implied Meaning and Story Clues. . .

The objective tests include items that establish the existence of story components carrying ***implied meaning***. ***Story clues*** that tantalize the reader with hints of future events also appear as question. At this point in the novel study, as before, **interpretation** is not the goal. **Awareness** of the **facts** is the target.

Developing/Improving Listening Skills. . .

Listening skills are rightfully included on every list of state competency requirements. Rather than always requiring students to answer test questions on a printed page, why not surprise them occasionally by doing the test orally and meeting competency goals at the same time?

Discussion Guide Capability. . .

The objective tests are helpful discussion guides. Use individual items on these pages to draw student attention to sequence, cause and effect, story clues (foreshadowing), character traits, recognizing and interpreting implied meanings, etc. These “thinking out loud” sessions are an **important building block** for the next learning phase.

5. Think, Write, Create

In this component, students pack up what they already know about the novel and go exploring into its every nook and cranny. Some activities require the simplest interpretation or application, while others will challenge the most proficient thinkers. There is a high probability that young scholars, even reluctant ones, will label some of the selections as ***fun***.

Rationale:

Guidelines. . .

Most of the items in this section are based on the skills presented in the ***Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom’s Taxonomy)***. There are two reasons for this choice. First, it mirrors the Novel Teaching Pack’s primary purpose of building a variety of sophisticated thinking skills on a foundation of basic knowledge. Second, in following the taxonomy guidelines, activities that correlate with many state educational standards emerge automatically.

Organization. . .

Chapter-specific activities are grouped and presented according to their corresponding sets of **Short Answer Questions** and **Objective Test** page(s). Having led students through the basics for each chapter (or selected section), teachers may shop in this section for in-depth activities to optimize student understanding and interest. Armed with a firm grasp of each successive chapter, students are more likely to anticipate, embrace, and enjoy the next section. By repeating the process, students are also mastering concepts and intricacies connected to the **whole** novel

The **Whole Book Activities**, as their name indicates, require a grasp of the theme(s), characters, implications, etc. as they apply to the full novel. These pages are a teacher’s smorgasbord of culminating possibilities. In some cases, the choices are outgrowths of concepts that students have dealt with in a previous activity. In others, students are encouraged to look at the novel from a new angle.

Levels of Difficulty. . .

A broad spectrum of **difficulty levels** to accommodate the needs of individual students, including the gifted, is an integral part of ***Think, Write, Create***. However, **all** items from this section are intended to **challenge** and **sharpen** thinking abilities.

Activities. . .

Every teaching guide includes activities that require students to choose and use precise, appropriate, and meaningful **vocabulary**. These exercises involve choosing a group of words to describe a character’s personality or behavior. The following example is from ***Charlotte’s Web***.

Eight-year-old Fern cried and begged her father not to destroy the runt pig. She sealed the little animal’s fate by asking her father if he would have killed her if she had been born very small.

- Which **two** of the following words do you think **best** describe the way Fern’s father behaved during this episode? Explain your choice. Include the definitions of the words you selected in your answer.

<i>practical</i>	<i>sensitive</i>	<i>loving</i>	<i>cruel</i>	<i>considerate</i>
<i>realistic</i>	<i>flexible</i>	<i>callous</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>logical</i>

- Choose **two** words from the list below that you believe **best** describe Fern’s behavior. Explain why they are the appropriate words. Use the definitions of your choices as part of your explanation.

<i>impulsive</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>assertive</i>	<i>tender-hearted</i>	<i>hysterical</i>
<i>undisciplined</i>	<i>naive</i>	<i>juvenile</i>	<i>humane</i>	<i>empathetic</i>

In each case students work with a given collection of terms, all of which can be correctly applied to the character(s) in question. However, the individual words have strengths of meaning. It is the student's task to analyze both the character's behavior and the words, make choices, and then cite events from the story to support his/her selection.

Teachers may opt to narrow the choices to fewer words, choose words for individual students, divide the class into groups and offer a specific set of words to each group, or use the assignment as it is written. Whatever the technique, it is here that the word **nice** can be knocked off the shelf, shattered on the floor, and swept out the door. No longer necessary. Useless. Gone!

Other items in this section challenge students to . . .

*write for self-expression, for communication, and
for entertainment
form opinions and theories
cite "evidence" from the story to support their
explanations and opinions
connect personal experience to story situations
become familiar with and identify literary elements
analyze story characters and events
make predictions based on given facts*

*think about social issues
create drawings, diagrams, photos, maps,
models, recordings, films, etc.
imagine
categorize
engage in research and data gathering
recognize and perceive story theme(s)
understand point of view*

Cross Curricula. . .

Think, Write, Create takes full advantage of opportunities to connect both major themes and the smallest story detail to other realms of the curriculum. In **Charlotte's Web**, for example, students may apply their calculation skills to a page of "Spider Math." In the **Holes** teaching pack is a challenge to create a game that utilizes a "saved" group of Camp Green Lake's holes.

Options, options, and more options. . .

Think, Write, Create is purposely bulging at the seams to give teachers **pick-and-choose options** for

<i>individualizing assignments</i>	<i>homework</i>
<i>group work</i>	<i>short-term and long-term projects</i>
<i>whole class activities</i>	<i>differentiating assignments for two or more classes</i>
<i>capitalizing on student interest</i>	

6. Graphic Organizers

Ideas for the graphic organizers are pulled from the chapter or whole book activities and expanded into a writing assignment. Priority is given to those topics that allow a student to relate personal experiences, make choices, empathize with a story character, and/or imagine.

Structure. . .

The organizers do not repeat a set pattern of circles, squares, lines, etc., prescribed for a particular type of writing. Each one is tailored to a **specific idea** pulled from the novel. **Structured directions** for organizing the topic support the student at this stage of the process so that **writing** is the major focus.

Non-writing Organizers. . .

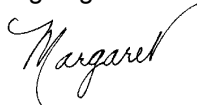
Sometimes, students are enticed to stretch their imaginations by filling out "forms" or writing "diary entries." One graphic organizer from **Hatchet**, for example, allows students to assume the persona of the pilot who rescued Brian by writing three entries into his log—the day before the rescue, the day of the rescue, and the day after the rescue. In the **Holes** Novel Teaching Pack, students become detectives and conduct a "background check" on Mr. Sir, recording their findings on the provided "official form." In these cases, composition skills take a back seat to **imagination, empathy, and pure enjoyment**. Teachers may wish to capitalize on student enthusiasm by asking for a written "report" based on the information entered on the forms.

7. Answer Keys

Keys for **all items that require a specific answer** are included in this section.

A final note from the author. . .

It is my personal wish that when the last page has been read, the last activity completed, and the last idea discussed, at least one of your students will ask, "What are we going to read next?"



Margaret Whisnant

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By Betsy Byars

A Teaching Guide

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Chapter Summaries

1

- One summer two boys and a girl go to a foster home to live together.
- One of the boys is Harvey. Both of his legs are broken because his father ran over him with a car.
- When Harvey wins third prize of two dollars for his essay, "Why I Am Proud to Be an American," his father promises to drive him to the meeting to see him get the award. The winners and their parents will have their pictures in the newspaper.
- On the night of the awards, Harvey sits waiting in the car for his father. He cannot believe it when the man tells him to get out of the car. He is late for his poker game at the Elks Club.
- Harvey reminds his father of his promise, but the man denies having promised Harvey anything. He leans over and pushes his son out of the car. When Harvey grabs for the car door, the red-faced man locks it.
- Harvey runs around the front of the car to try to open the other door. His father accidentally throws the car into drive instead of reverse and steps on the gas. The Trans Am runs over Harvey and breaks both his legs.
- The court takes Harvey away from his father and puts him in the foster home until his father can control his drinking and give the boy a safe home.
- The second boy is Thomas J. He doesn't know anything about his family. At the age of two, he had been dropped off in front of the Benson twins' farmhouse. They are eighty-two years old, and the oldest twins in the state. Thomas J stays with them for six years.
- The Bensons mean to take Thomas J to town to the authorities, but he is pleasant company. He is also good help in the garden. When the twins both fall and break their hips at the age of eighty-eight, the authorities discover Thomas J. He is sent to the foster home until his identity can be established or permanent adoptive parents can be found.
- The girl is Carlie. She never says anything polite. She throws things at people who block her view when she is watching television, which is her main fun.
- Carlie has had two stepfathers, but Russell is the worst. She has been sent to the foster home because she can't get along with him.
- Once Russell hit Carlie so hard, she got a concussion. Before she collapsed, she had managed to hit him back with a double boiler. She has to stay at the foster home until her own home situation stabilizes.
- The first thing Carlie does at the Masons' is pull the plastic footrest up close to the TV and warn Mrs. Mason not to talk to her when "Young and Restless" is on. Her foster mother can welcome her during the commercial.

2

- Carlie has been suspicious of people since the day she was born. She believes everyone is out to do her in. She dislikes Mrs. Mason, the foster mother, as soon as she sees her standing in the doorway. She tells the social worker that the woman is trying to copy Mrs. Walton (Note: *character from 1971-1981 TV series "The Waltons"*) by wearing an apron, but she is not fooled by such things.
 - Carlie is especially disturbed by the Masons' living room, where there are seventeen pictures, probably of foster children. Carlie vows that her picture will not go up over the fireplace with the others.
 - Mrs. Mason waits until "Young and Restless" is over to ask Carlie to come have some lunch. Afterwards, they will get the boys' room ready. Carlie is interested.
 - The boys are eight and thirteen—too young for Carlie. Mrs. Mason says the boys will have to tell Carlie about their troubles. All she knows is that the thirteen-year-old has two broken legs.
 - Carlie says that lets out dancing.
-

Vocabulary Lists with Definitions

Set One: Chapter 1—Chapter 7


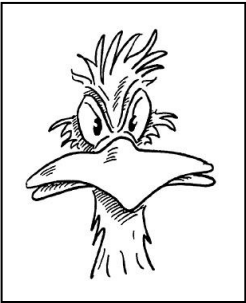
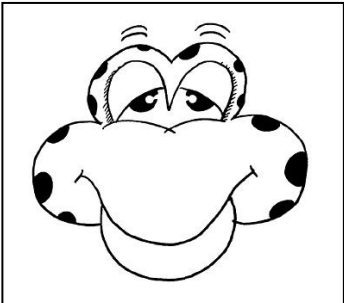
(30 words) Some words may appear on more than one page.

- foster** To feed, nourish, nurture, bring up, or support, as a child in need of parental care; to cherish; to promote the growth of; to encourage;. (p. 3)
- authorities** Persons having the legal power to make and enforce the law; the government;. (p. 5)
- identity** The condition of being oneself or itself, and not another; who a person or what a thing is, such as that defined by genetic kinship or relationships . (p. 5)
- resented** Disliked; bore a grudge against, felt or showed displeasure, anger, or offense at a person, a remark, or act, etc. because of a sense of injury or insult. (p. 6)
- concussion** Injury to the brain or spinal cord due to jarring from a blow, fall, or the like, and followed by a temporary or prolonged loss of function; a violent jarring; a shock caused by the collision of two objects (p. 6)
- collapsed** Fell down or inward suddenly; caved in. (p. 6)
- stabilizes** Maintains at a given level or quality without changing; balances; equalizes. (p. 6)
- suspicious** Distrustful; the act of believing something, especially wrong doing, on little evidence or entirely without proof; cautious; doubtful; skeptical. (p. 9)
- lunged** Moved forward suddenly, as to attack; jumped; charged; sprang. (p. 11)
- forge** To imitate handwriting, a signature, etc. fraudulently; faked; to move ahead slowly and steadily; to move ahead with increased speed and efficiency. (p. 12)
- twinge** A sudden, sharp pain; a mental or emotional pang. (p. 15)
- technique** The manner in which something is accomplished; technical skill; ability to apply procedures or methods so as to effect a desired result; craft; capability. (p. 17)
- lose** To come to be without; to be unsuccessful in retaining possession of; mislay (p. 18) Compare with **loose** *Free or released from fastening or attachment; not tight.*
- fetching** Coming or going after and taking or bringing back; charming or captivating; attractive; pleasing to the eye; bringing in as a price. (p. 18)
- scraggly** Shaggy; irregular; unkempt; uneven. (p. 18)
- vaccine** A substance prepared from dead or living microorganisms that is introduced into the body through inoculation (a shot) and causes the development of antibodies, which produce immunity to the disease caused by the microorganism. (p. 20)
- hesitated** Waited to act because of fear or indecision; paused; faltered in speech; stammered; balked; delayed; pondered; thought about. (p. 23, 81)
- abruptly** Suddenly or unexpectedly; in a manner than is rude or brief; curtly; brusquely. (p. 23)
- commune** A small group of persons living together and sharing work, possessions, income, etc., and often pursuing unconventional lifestyles; to talk together, with profound intensity concerning one's thoughts or feelings; to be in intimate communication or rapport with, as nature. (p. 24)
- crouched** Stooped, especially with the knees bent; stooped low; huddled; stooped.(p. 25)
- peering** Looking at intently, searchingly, or with difficulty; being partially visible; gazing. (p. 25)
- gnarled** Twisted; bent; snarling; growling; distorted; deformed. (p. 25)
- clenched** Closed or squeezed together tightly; clamped; constricted. (p. 25)
- rave** To talk wildly, as if delirious; to roar; rage; to speak or write with wild enthusiasm. (p. 30)
- superior** Showing an attitude or feeling of being better than or above another. higher than another in rank, station, or authority; of a higher nature or kind; excellent; first-rate. (p. 33)
- crumpled** Crushed; pressed or crushed into irregular folds or into a compact mass; bent out of shape; gave way suddenly, as confidence. (p. 35)
- hovered** Remained or lingered in or near a place; remained floating, suspended, or fluttering in the air; floated; lingered. (p. 35)
- pester** Annoy; to bother persistently with petty annoyances; harass; bother; badger; hassle. (p. 36)
- majorette** A female baton twirler who accompanies a marching band. (p. 37)
- startled** Surprised; suddenly shocked or alarm; frightened; stunned. (p. 38)

Dictionary Digs

Chapter 1—Chapter 7

Dig into your favorite dictionary to answer the following questions about some important words from Chapters 1 through 7 of **The Pinballs**. Write the **letters** of the correct answers in the blanks to the left.

- _____ 1. A **synonym** for **hesitated** is (A) faltered, (B) surged, (C) resolved.
- _____ 2. Which of the following phrases is **not** a good example of the correct use of the word **forge**? (A) *forge a signature*, (B) *forge through a mountain of homework*, (C) *forge a song for his own entertainment*.
- _____ 3. The correct spelling of the word meaning *to come to be without* is (A) **loose**, (B) **lose**, (C) **louse**.
- _____ 4. Which word can be substituted for **resented** in the following sentence so that it is changed to an *opposite* meaning?
*Isaiah stood expressionless, trying to hide the fact that he **resented** every word Mrs. Nieman spoke.*
 (A) savored, (B) begrudged, (C) disdained
- _____ 5. To say that someone has a **superior** attitude means that the person (A) fancies himself to be better than another or others, (B) has a healthy self-esteem, (C) doesn't care.
- _____ 6. Something **not** likely to have **hovered** in midair is (A) a UFO, (B) a hummingbird, (C) a fast-pitched softball.
- _____ 7. A **majorette** is (A) a male drummer in a marching band, (B) a female baton twirler who accompanies a marching band, (C) any uniformed member of a marching band.
- _____ 8. Which of the following caricatures is the *best example* of a facial expression that could be interpreted as **suspicious**?
 (A)  (B)  (C) 
- _____ 9. A word that is an *antonym* of **stabilizes** is (A) equalizes, (B) varies, (C) balances.
- _____ 10. An incorrect definition of the word **commune** is (A) to begin on schedule, especially a vital undertaking, (B) to talk together, (C) a small group of people living together and sharing work, possessions, income, etc.
- _____ 11. A tiger is *most likely* to be in a **crouched** position when it is (A) sleeping, (B) hunting, (C) running.
- _____ 12. The **authorities** are people who (A) have legal power to make and/or enforce the law, (B) carry out search and rescue, (C) make rules and decisions for corporations.
- _____ 13. If Mr. James has *decided to foster* the idea of creating a neighborhood playground, then he will (A) try to stop the project, (B) support and encourage the idea, (C) not take sides.
- _____ 14. The purpose of a **vaccine** is to (A) cure disease, (B) provide immunity and prevent disease, (C) gather information about certain infectious diseases.

Short Answer Questions

Chapter 1-Chapter 2


1. What time of the year was it when Harvey, Carlie, and Thomas J went to live with the Masons?
2. On the day of his accident, why had Harvey sat in the car waiting for his father?
3. Explain why Harvey was in front of his father's Grand Am when it lunged forward.
4. How old was Thomas J when someone left him in front of the Benson Twins' farmhouse?
5. What event led to Thomas J's being discovered by the authorities?
6. What did Carlie think about other people and how did she treat them?
7. How did Carlie's stepfather Russell treat her?
8. What did Carlie say about the collection of photographs that were displayed over the fireplace?
9. What was Carlie doing when Harvey arrived?
10. How did Harvey explain his broken legs to Carlie?

Chapter 3—Chapter 4

1. Why did Thomas J yell everything he said?
2. What was Mrs. Mason's reason for putting Thomas J and Harvey in the same room?
3. Summarize the event that had sent both of the Benson twins to the hospital.
4. What facts did Thomas J learn for the first time when the Benson twins were admitted to the hospital?
5. Until Carlie had come to the foster home, what had her sleeping accommodations been like?
6. Where did Thomas J find the earring that Carlie said someone had stolen?
7. Explain the reason Thomas J wanted the Benson twins to keep losing their father's gold watch so he could keep finding it.
8. Rather than thanking Thomas J for finding her earring, what did Carlie do?
9. How did Mrs. Mason know that the first night in a foster home was always the hardest?
10. What did Carlie think she could always do if things weren't better the next day.

Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
Pages 3-12

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- 
- _____ 1. It was summer when the three children came to the foster home.
 - _____ 2. Harvey had expected his father to drive him to a meeting where he was to receive an award for winning third prize in an essay contest.
 - _____ 3. The night of the accident, Harvey's father had pushed him out of the car and locked the door.
 - _____ 4. Harvey's legs had been broken when he fell trying to run from his angry father.
 - _____ 5. Harvey's father had a drinking problem.
 - _____ 6. The Benson twins were Thomas J's great-aunts.
 - _____ 7. The Benson twins were eighty-eight years old, and Thomas J had lived with them for six years.
 - _____ 8. Thomas J came to the foster home because both the twins fell and broke their hips.
 - _____ 9. Carlie always had something kind and pleasant to say to everybody.
 - _____ 10. Watching television was Carlie's main fun.
 - _____ 11. Carlie came to the foster home because her stepfather had hit her so hard she had gotten a concussion.
 - _____ 12. The first thing Carlie did in the foster home was pull a plastic footrest close to the television and watch "Young and Restless."
 - _____ 13. Carlie usually liked and trusted everyone she met.
 - _____ 14. Carlie felt better about her situation when she saw the pictures of the Masons' seventeen foster children displayed over the fireplace.
 - _____ 15. Thomas J was eight years old and Harvey was thirteen.
 - _____ 16. Harvey was in a wheelchair.
 - _____ 17. Carlie was watching television when she and Harvey first met.
 - _____ 18. Harvey told Carlie he had been injured playing quarterback in a football game.
 - _____ 19. Harvey's casts were covered with autographs.
 - _____ 20. Carlie believed Harvey's story about how he had been injured.

Chapter 3 and Chapter 4
Pages 13-21

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Why did Thomas J yell when he talked? (A) The Benson twins were almost deaf, and he had to yell to be heard. (B) He was angry with everyone. (C) He was hard of hearing.
- _____ 2. Mrs. Mason put Thomas J and Harvey in the same room (A) because there wasn't another bedroom in the house, (B) because she knew Thomas J was terrified of sleeping in a room by himself, (C) so Thomas J could help Harvey if he needed it.
- _____ 3. Watching "Tony Orlando and Dawn" with Carlie made Thomas J sad because (A) the Benson twins had never allowed him to watch television, (B) it had been one of the Benson twins' favorites, (C) his mother had loved listening to their music.
- _____ 4. The Benson twins had (A) fallen coming from the garden and each one had broken a hip, (B) suffered broken arms when one fell from a ladder and the other tried to stop the fall, (C) both caught colds which turned into pneumonia.
- _____ 5. Thomas J had been named after (A) his father's favorite president, (B) the Benson twins, Thomas and Jefferson, (C) both of his grandfathers.
- _____ 6. The only time the Benson twins had been angry with Thomas J was when (A) he tried to run away, (B) he accidentally dug up the tomato plants in their vegetable garden, (C) he broke up the tree limb that had fallen on their father so it could be used for firewood.
- _____ 7. Harvey's right leg (A) had been broken so badly the bone had gone through the skin, (B) seemed to be healing quicker than the left, but sometimes it ached, (C) had minor scrapes and bruises, but the left leg had a broken bone.
- _____ 8. Harvey didn't return Carlie's insult about Andy Griffith because he (A) didn't want to cause trouble his first night in the foster home, (B) knew Carlie could out-insult anybody, (C) agreed with her.
- _____ 9. In the Masons' home, for the first time, Carlie had (A) a color television, (B) an adult to do the cooking and cleaning, (C) a bedroom by herself.
- _____ 10. Carlie had accused everyone in the house of stealing (A) her earring, which went missing just after "Tony Orlando and Dawn," (B) her gold locket with her mother's picture in it, (C) a wrist watch that her real father had given to her.
- _____ 11. When the Benson twins had patted Thomas J's head for finding their father's watch, it made him feel (A) self conscious, (B) warm and happy, (C) like a pet animal.
- _____ 12. Thomas J wanted (A) Carlie to like him, (B) a reward for finding Carlie's lost jewelry, (C) to make friends with Carlie so she wouldn't be mean to him.



Chapter 5 and Chapter 6

Pages 23-31

Write either **Yes** or **No** in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Did Thomas J climb up to his bunk to say his prayers because he was shy about praying in front of Harvey?
- _____ 2. Did Harvey tell Thomas J that his broken legs were the result of being tackled too hard during a football game?
- _____ 3. Before he came to the foster home, had Harvey been able to visit his mother or talk to her on the phone several times a month?
- _____ 4. Had Harvey overheard the last terrible quarrel between his parents?
- _____ 5. Did Harvey's mother say she had lost her identity, and she had to find herself?
- _____ 6. Did Harvey's father understand his wife's reasons for leaving to live on the commune in Virginia?
- _____ 7. When the picture of Harvey's mother appeared in *the New York Times Magazine*, did Harvey and his father hug each other and cry together?
- _____ 8. Did Carlie take a breakfast tray to Harvey because his legs hurt and he didn't feel like getting out of bed?
- _____ 9. When Carlie gave him the chance, did Harvey insult Carlie?
- _____ 10. Did Carlie tell Harvey the slave of the world would come back for his tray when he got through eating?
- _____ 11. Did Carlie get a good feeling when people said something polite or nice to her?
- _____ 12. Was Carlie about to make a long-distance call to her mother when Mrs. Mason appeared in the doorway?
- _____ 13. Did Mrs. Mason say they were going to have to be especially nice to Harvey for the next few weeks?
- _____ 14. Was Carlie yelling and crying when she asked if she had to break both her legs to get some attention?
- _____ 15. Did Mrs. Mason believe that Carlie was a strong girl, whether she knew it or not, and that she could help Harvey?
- _____ 16. Did Carlie compare herself, Thomas J, and Harvey to pinballs being punched around, not able to help themselves or each other?
- _____ 17. Did Harvey listen to the conversation between Carlie and Mrs. Mason?
- _____ 18. When Harvey had asked him for money for food, did his father rave about how easy Harvey had it?
- _____ 19. Did Harvey wonder if his broken legs were what his father had meant by "the hard way"?
- _____ 20. After thinking about his father, did Harvey refuse to eat his cereal?



Whole BOOK TEST

Harvey	the Benson twins	a nurse	their papa's watch
Thomas J	Kentucky Fried Chicken	a writer	Virginia
Carlie	stepfathers	halters	a mayonnaise cake
Mrs. Mason	a puppy	alcohol	a Bible story book
Mr. Mason	Snoopy	a concussion	Appalachian Nurse
watching TV	playing football	pinballs	laugh
Harvey's father	a floating opal	shouted	an eraser

From the list above, choose the word, name, or phrase that fits the description and write it in the blank. **All** answers will be **used at least once**. **Some** answers will be **used more than once**.

- _____ 1. They took care of Thomas J from the time they found him until he was eight years old.
- _____ 2. Carlie wanted to be this when she grew up.
- _____ 3. His father ran over him with a car and broke both his legs.
- _____ 4. Carlie had lived with two of these.
- _____ 5. The Benson twins patted Thomas J on the head when he found this.
- _____ 6. Carlie thought it would be nice if people could get to their brains with one of these.
- _____ 7. He didn't know who his parents were.
- _____ 8. Thomas J and Carlie gave Harvey one of these for his birthday.
- _____ 9. She had a sense of humor and called herself "the slave of the world."
- _____ 10. She was Carlie, Thomas J, and Harvey's foster mother.
- _____ 11. Their first names were Thomas and Jefferson.
- _____ 12. This was the name of the book that Carlie "read" in the library.
- _____ 13. Harvey tried to convince Carlie that he had broken his legs doing this.
- _____ 14. Carlie's stepfather gave her one on these.
- _____ 15. He told Thomas J stories about his childhood.
- _____ 16. It was Harvey's favorite food.

Think, Write, Create

(Chapter-by-Chapter)

Chapter 1-Chapter 2

Harvey's father had promised to take him to the meeting where he was to get a two-dollar award for the winning essay he had written. Instead, on the day that was supposed to be one of the happiest of his life, Harvey got two broken legs. The court had said that Harvey could not go back home until his father could control his drinking and make a safe home for his son.

- Explain how a broken promise put Harvey in a position of danger. What do you suppose Harvey had intended to do when he went around the car?
- Besides the broken legs, in what other way(s) had Harvey been injured by his father?
- What do you suppose Harvey's father did when he realized he had injured his son?
- Using only the information you have about Harvey's life so far, do you think Harvey should ever go back to live with his father? Why or why not?

Thomas J was dropped off in front of the Benson twins' farmhouse when he was two years old, and he didn't know anything about his real family. He lived with the two old women for six years before he was discovered by the authorities.

- In addition to the fact that Thomas J was good company and good help in the garden, what other reason(s) can you think of to explain why the Benson twins didn't tell the authorities about Thomas J?
- If you could make the final decision, would you have the Benson twins arrested and charged with child abuse? Why or why not?
- What are some possible explanations for Thomas J's abandonment by his biological family?
- Make a list of things and people that you enjoy because you have a family. Put a check beside the items on your list that Thomas J could not enjoy because he did not know who his family was. What things on the list do you think the Masons will be able to provide? Will Thomas J be better off with them than he was with the Benson Twins? Explain your answer.

Carlie never said anything polite, she threw things, and she hit back. She had been suspicious of people since the day she was born. She believed that everyone was out to do her in.

- How was Carlie's behavior and attitude toward people the result of the way she was treated by the adults in her life?
- Does it seem that Carlie's mother loved her very much and made her daughter a priority? Explain your answer.
- Based on what you know about her experiences, explain why Carlie's main fun was watching television. (Use the word *fantasy world* in your answer.)
- How do you know that what she saw on television influenced the way she looked at her life and other people?

Think, Write, Create (Whole Book)

Harvey's mother went to Virginia to live on a commune.

- How are *communes* different from regular *communities*?
 - Do communes still exist? Do some research and write a short report about what you learned.
-

Carlie had a great sense of humor, and her quips were usually sarcastic in nature.

- Which of **your** favorite jokes do you think Carlie would enjoy? Do you think Harvey and Thomas J would like it as well?
 - Would you like to have Carlie as a friend? Why or why not?
 - Other than cheering up her friends, how else could Carlie put her sense of humor to good use? Suggest several different possibilities.
-

Find facts from the story to support the possibility that Carlie was a bit boy-crazy. Do you think she and Harvey would be a good boyfriend/girlfriend duo when they get a little older? Why or why not?

What was Mr. Mason's first name? What was Mrs. Mason's first name? If you can't come up with an answer, reread Chapter 17.

From the list below, choose **two** or **three** words that you think *best* define Mrs. Mason's skills as a foster mother. Then choose **two** or **three** terms that describe Mr. Mason's *strongest* points as a foster father. You may use some of the same words for both people.

<i>patient</i>	<i>sympathetic</i>	<i>nurturing</i>	<i>dedicated</i>	<i>loving</i>
<i>inspiring</i>	<i>gentle</i>	<i>persistent</i>	<i>understanding</i>	<i>calm</i>
<i>insightful</i>	<i>empathetic</i>	<i>supportive</i>	<i>non-judgmental</i>	<i>flexible</i>
<i>tactful</i>	<i>tolerant</i>	<i>attentive</i>	<i>dependable</i>	<i>optimistic</i>

Begin with a short definition for each word and then cite facts from the story to prove that you made the correct choices. Use your notes to write about **Mr. and Mrs. Mason, Foster Parents Extraordinaire**. (See **Graphic Organizer # 6**)

When she first saw the photographs of the Mason's seventeen foster children, Carlie grumbled to herself, "*Well, my picture's not going up there.*"

- Do you think Carlie stuck by her statement? Why or why not?
 - Write the conversation you imagine Mrs. Mason had about Carlie with one of her future foster daughters.
-

Three Children

Carlie, Harvey, and Thomas J came to live with the Masons as a result of having been let down by at least one parent. Each child reacted to his or her individual trauma in different ways.

Which person do you think was the **angriest**? Which child do you see as the **loneliest**? Which youngster was the **saddest**? Give story clues to prove that you made the correct choices. What important things do you predict the Masons will do to help each child feel better?

Organize your ideas on the form below and then write a composition about **Three Children**.

The **angriest** of the three was _____ because. . .



The **loneliest** child was _____. Here's why. . .

The **saddest** youngster was _____ for the following reasons. . .

For **Harvey**, I think the Masons will _____

I predict that the Masons will help **Carlie** by _____

Thomas J's life will improve because the Masons will _____
