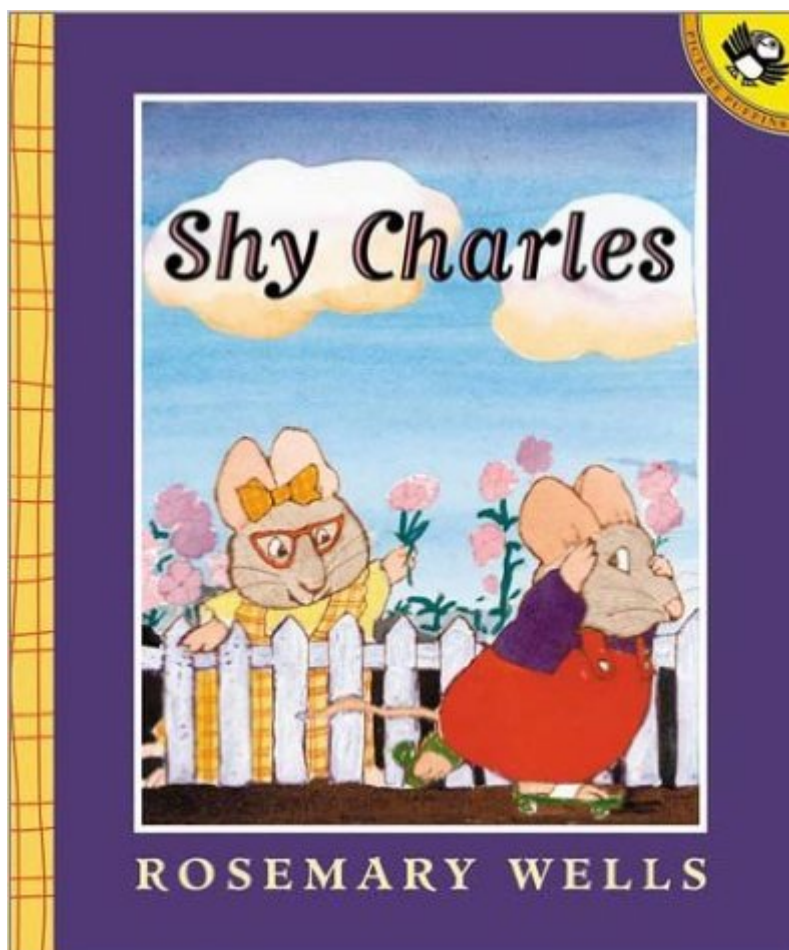


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# Shy Charles



## Synopsis

Charles is a mouse of few words. He doesn't like to talk, and he's perfectly happy playing by himself. But his parents are not happy. "The time he played football or joined the ballet," says Charles's father. So off Charles goes to ballet class, where he curls up and pretends to be asleep. Football proves even less successful. Will anything bring Charles out of his shell? A nicely told fable as helpful for their parents as for shy children in need of respect. "The New York Times Book Review" Wells has a time-tested talent for taking a keenly felt emotion "in this case shyness" and exploring it in a manner that is reassuring to young listeners. "Booklist

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0370 (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books; Reissue edition (June 25, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0140568433

ISBN-13: 978-0140568431

Product Dimensions: 8.6 x 0.2 x 10.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (23 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #176,864 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #53 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Babysitting](#) #534 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Mice, Hamsters, Guinea Pigs & Squirrels](#) #9662 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

As I read this book to my shy 3 year old daughter, I found that I needed to add text to clarify to her what was going on. Although the premise for the book is good, I feel it was not well written. I also was somewhat taken aback by the verbal cruelty of Charles' parents. Basically they told him he wouldn't amount to anything and some might spank him, just for being shy. This is NOT the message I wanted to send my kid. In the end, Charles shows everybody what he's made of, and they say thank you, but no one ever apologizes to him. I suppose you could argue that this represents the real world, but wow, how harsh. Since my daughter loves the illustrations, we keep

reading and I keep add-libbing.

We are tried and true Rosemary Wells fans, and are familiar with most of her books. I borrowed this one from the library, and was disappointed to find Charles' parents expressing their frustration through language like "another mother would have spanked you" for not saying thank you or goodbye (maybe Wells could have the mother model good manners rather than threatening punishment) and the father actually calling him names for not participating in football, which Dad forced on him. What a negative approach to modeling the behavior you want your child to adopt, never mind giving parents the idea that it's OK to treat a child in this manner. Needless to say, I edited it heavily when I read it, then returned it to the library post haste! Not one for my library!

I bought this for my 3 year old who is very shy. In the book, Charles' parents get angry at him for being shy, threaten him, and try to "toughen" him up. As you can imagine, his parents approach doesn't help and his anxiety / shyness remains at the end of the book. It has a very negative message. Better books for shy children include: Shy Guy & Maya's Voice.

This is not the sort of book that you're supposed to read and over-analyze! It is a funny exploration of life with a shy kiddo whose parents, trying to help him and getting frustrated along the way, say and do silly things that my two and four year old ( one of whom is named Charles which is how we found this book in the first place) find hilarious. Ultimately, shy Charles saves the day and does exactly what you'd expect..he doesn't say anything when everyone around him praises his outgoing actions, which my kids also think is so silly, and I think is so true to life that it is funny. This isn't a parenting book, and not everything has to be so politically correct...some of the other reviewers need to relax a little....

I have to write in defense of "Shy Charles"! We love Rosemary Wells at our house and all her wonderful stories, illustrations and characters -- Charles, Nora, Yoko, the original Max & Ruby stories, etc. My children love the rhyming story of "Shy Charles" and laugh their heads off at the voices I do for all the characters. Sure, Charles' parents were hard on him at first because of his shyness, but if you look at when Charles cried on the football field, his dad realized they were pushing him too much and comforted him and told him "everything will be all right" -- i.e. they would let Charles be Charles. The book has a good lesson in that when it was important, Charles did what needed to be done and called "the emergency service" when Mrs. Block got hurt. But in the end,

Charles' natural temperament is that of an introvert, and everyone accepts that. As an introvert myself, I love the book. And children know humor -- at least mine do -- when Charles' mother says, "you never say good-bye or thank you/lucky for you I'm so nice, another mother would spank you!" my children giggle themselves silly--no one seriously thinks this condones violence. :)

Charles is a terribly shy young mouse, and his parents want to know what is wrong with him. Will he ever be able to function normally? But, when Charles' babysitter falls down the stairs, Charles gets a chance to show just how normally he can function. This is a nice little book with a nice lesson. One of my siblings had a daughter that was terribly shy, and when this sibling asked the doctor what could be done about it, he rather correctly answered, "What's wrong with being shy? She has a right to be shy." That's right, they learned the same lesson that the parents in this book needed to learn - there's nothing wrong with being shy. I found this to be a very pleasant book with lots of very well done illustrations. I like the lesson, which for once is a lesson for the parents rather than for the child, and recommend this book.

If I could leave worse feedback, I would. The story does not flow. The story encourages spankings and does not encourage children to achieve their best. I would NEVER buy nor read this to my kids again. I threw the book away.

I was at the library with my children tonight when I saw this book on the shelf. The title intrigued me as I have a 4 year old son Charles (we call him Charlie) who can be shy from time to time. I stopped what we were doing retrieved the book, and read it to him and my 2 daughters. I really liked the concept: a painfully shy child who in difficult circumstances can function at a very high level. My children all liked it as well, my 6 year old reread it to everybody once I had finished. Parents often worry needlessly about the level that their children are functioning. I can understand the fears of Charles's parents that his shyness will be a detriment to him later in life. I think my parents had similar fears when I did not talk in sentence form until I was already four. As it turns out, I might not have talked much for the first 1/2 decade of my life, but as they like to say: I haven't shut up since. My Dad now says if he knew I was going to talk so much, he would have worried less and enjoyed the peace and quiet more. Given Well's fine illustrations and good storytelling ability, my affinity for the subject, and my children's positive reviews, I will not be shy in my praise for Shy Charles.

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