

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Charlie Bucket is a young boy living in a tiny wooden house at the edge of a big city with his parents and four grandparents: Mr. Bucket, Mrs. Bucket, Grandpa Joe, Grandma Josephine, Grandpa George, and Grandma Georgina. The family is very poor, living only on what Mr. Bucket makes screwing toothpaste caps on at a toothpaste factory. They are constantly hungry, which is especially hard for Charlie, since they live down the street from an enormous chocolate factory and he loves chocolate more than anything else.

Every night, Charlie listens to Grandpa Joe tell stories about Mr. Willy Wonka, the owner of the chocolate factory and the greatest chocolate maker the world has ever seen. Nobody has ever seen the inside of this peculiar factory, and nobody knows what kind sort of people works there.

One day, the newspaper reveals that Mr. Wonka has decided to open up his factory to a lucky few. He has hidden five Golden Tickets inside his chocolate bars and shipped them all over the world, and the five children who find the Golden Tickets will be invited to tour his factory and will receive a lifetime supply of chocolate. Charlie wants to find a ticket so badly, but he only receives a Wonka bar once a year on his birthday, so he believes he does not stand a chance.

The first four Golden Tickets are found by four naughty children. Augustus Gloop is a large boy who is constantly eating, Veruca Salt a spoiled girl constantly asking her parents to buy her things, Violet Beauregarde a compulsive gum-chewer, and Mike Teavee a child who wastes his life away in front of the television. Their parents indulge them and do nothing to stop their terrible behavior. Charlie reads about them and grows hopeless, wishing he were in their position.

Two weeks later, Charlie finds a dollar lying in the street and excitedly uses it to buy two Wonka Bars. He does it because he is hungry, since Mr. Bucket lost his job at the toothpaste factory and has not been bringing much money home for food, not because he wants to find a Golden Ticket—however, he unwraps the second bar to reveal the telltale shimmer of gold. He has found the fifth Golden Ticket!

The following day is the factory visit; Charlie chooses to bring Grandpa Joe with him, since it will mean the most to the old man out of everyone in the family. The other four children have all brought their parents. Mr. Wonka comes out of the factory to greet them, and Charlie is amazed at the sight of him. He takes them into the factory to begin the tour.

They start with the Chocolate Room, an enormous room containing a valley of edible grass and plants and a chocolate river. Churning up the river is a chocolate waterfall. In this room, the visitors see the factory workers for the first time. They are tiny people called Oompa-Loompas, who Wonka smuggled from their dangerous home Loompaland in order to work in the factory.

Augustus Gloop begins to grab fistfuls of chocolate from the river, and does not stop when Mr. Wonka asks him to. Suddenly he leans too far and falls in, getting sucked up one of the tubes that carries the chocolate away. A pair of Oompa-Loompas escort Mr. and Mrs.

Gloop up to the Fudge Room to retrieve him, and then the Oompa-Loompas sing a song to teach a lesson about the dangers of being a glutton like Augustus.

The group takes a pink candy Viking boat down the chocolate river to the Inventing Room, where Wonka shows them his new invention: chewing gum that tastes like a full, three-course meal. Because it is gum, Violet Beauregarde insists on trying it, despite Wonka's warning that he has not gotten it quite right yet. When she gets to the dessert, blueberry pie and ice cream, her skin begins to turn blue and she blows up like a blueberry. The Oompa-Loompas roll her away to be squeezed, and sing a song that speaks against chewing gum all day long.

Next is the Nut Room, where hundreds of real squirrels work to shell walnuts from their shells. Veruca decides she wants a trained squirrel like this, and goes to grab one—the squirrels retaliate before she can, pinning her down and tapping her on the head to see whether she is a bad nut. They find that she is, and carry her over to the garbage chute as they would any bad nut. They push her parents in as well, and the Oompa-Loompas' next song is about parents who spoil their children.

Charlie and Mike Teavee are the last ones left. Wonka takes them in a special glass elevator that can move sideways as well as up and down, and they head to the Television Chocolate room, where Wonka takes giant bars of chocolate and sends them by television so that they can be taken from the television screen on the other side. Mike decides that he will be the first person ever to be sent by television, and before Wonka can stop him he flips the switch to send himself, becoming tiny on the other side. The Oompa-Loompas take Mike and his parents to the taffy puller so Mike can be stretched out to normal size, and sing a song that recommends giving your children books instead of letting them watch television.

Now Charlie is the only one left, and Wonka says that means he has won the grand prize. Wonka originally started the Golden Ticket contest so that he could find an heir, since he has no family and he is getting old. His favorite child at the end of the day would inherit the factory, and that child is Charlie. Elated, Charlie goes with Mr. Wonka and Grandpa Joe to fetch the rest of his family to live in the factory full-time and help run it until Charlie is old enough to do it himself.

Character Analysis

Willy Wonka

Wonka is a chocolatier, and one of Dahl's most famous characters. Wonka is exceedingly eccentric, with many odd qualities. Wonka confuses most of the people who meet him, but Charlie is fascinated. Wonka loves nonsense and mischief, but can't abide ugliness. Wonka is described as full of life. In the book, Wonka has a goatee and bright, mischievous eyes. Wonka is fantastically bizarre, and remembered as one of Dahl's most famous characters. He is also well traveled, having been to space. Wonka also visited Loompa Land, which was where he met the mysterious Oompa Loompas.

Charlie Bucket

Charlie is the titular character and the protagonist of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Charlie is the last one to find a Golden Ticket. He is very kind and brave, but also extremely poor. He lives with his mother, his father, and his four bed-ridden grandparents. Charlie, being poor, doesn't get much food, which makes living near a chocolate factory hard. He also loves chocolate. Unlike the other contestants who find a Golden Ticket, Charlie is generous

and selfless. He is the only one who would have been fit to run the factory. Even when he drank the Fizzy Lifting Drink, he admitted it and apologized, in a situation where lesser children might have lied and not owned up to their misdeeds. At the end of the story, Wonka bequeaths the factory to Charlie, as a reward for his good heart. His whole family is allowed to come with him.

Oompa-Loompas

Oompa-Loompas are creatures from Loompa Land. They are the only workers in Wonka's chocolate factory. Wonka discovered them when he traveled to Loompa Land. In Loompa Land, the Oompa-Loompas were in constant danger from many different predators. Wonka offered them jobs. They are paid in cocoa beans, which are their favorite food, and were in short supply on the island. Before publication, they were named 'Whipple-Scrumpets'. They are as mischievous as Wonka. As each child exits, they sing a song about the child's bad deeds to serve as a moral lesson. In the text, Oompa-Loompas insist on wearing the same clothing that they wore in Loompa Land. They are described as small people with long hair.

Grandpa Joe

Grandpa Joe is Charlie's grandfather, Mr. Bucket's father. He is the oldest of the grandparents, with his age put at 96 and a half. He tells Charlie many stories about Wonka's factory and his secret worker, as he shares the same love of Wonka chocolate that Charlie does. Joe is married to Grandma Josephine. He loves to tell stories and very optimistic. In fact, he is the one who gives Charlie the money to buy another chocolate bar. In the beginning of the story, Grandpa Joe hasn't been out of bed in years, but when it is revealed that Charlie has won a Golden Ticket, he leaps out of bed with the energy of a man a quarter of his age. As such, Grandpa Joe is the one who accompanies Charlie to the factory.

Augustus Gloop

Gloop is incredibly greedy and the first child to find a Golden Ticket. He is also the first child to fail Wonka's tests. Gloop eats an extraordinary amount of chocolate, so much that his mother says it would have been impossible for him not to have eventually found a Golden Ticket. While his origin is unknown in the book, he tends to be thought of as German, since he is from Germany in both movies. His mother seems to delight in her son's gluttonous habits and encourages them. Augustus leaves the factory when he drinks from the chocolate river, and falls in, getting sucked up a pipe and sent to the Fudge Room.

Veruca Salt

Veruca is very spoiled. She is the second person to find a Golden Ticket, and the third to leave Wonka's factory. She has very little familial respect and is a brat to everyone. Veruca also doesn't care about other's property. She frequently bullies her parents into getting things for her. She is sent away when she interferes with the squirrels that Wonka trains to choose nuts for his chocolate bars. Veruca yells at her father to buy her some of the squirrels. She is judged as a 'bad nut' and sent down the garbage shaft.

Violet Beauregarde

Violet is a girl who can never stop chewing gum. She is the third child to find a Golden Ticket and the second to be ejected from Wonka's factory. Violet is always chewing something and claims that she has been chewing the same piece of gum for three months straight. She is also very competitive and has won many gum chewing competitions. In most adaptations, she is American. While in the factory, she eats an experimental piece of gum.

The gum turns her into a human blueberry, and she is rolled away to have the juice squeezed out of her.

Mike Teavee

Mike, who loves to watch television, finds the fourth Golden Ticket. He is also the last one to be ejected from the factory. Most adaptations place him as being from America. Mike loves TV and electronics much more than he likes people. In the novel, he loves only TV. In the 2005 movie he is obsessed with video games. Mike leaves the factory after he tries to teleport. During this process he is shrunk to a fraction of his former size. He is taken away by the Oompa Loompas to go to the taffy stretching room.

Mr. Bucket

Mr. Bucket, Charlie's father, works in a toothpaste factory screwing caps onto tubes of toothpaste. Though his job is modest, he works extremely hard and cares deeply about his family.

Mrs. Bucket

Mrs. Bucket, Charlie's mother, keeps the household running while Mr. Bucket works long hours at the factory. She takes good care of all four frail grandparents, and she is a loving mother to Charlie.

Grandma Josephine

Grandma Josephine is one of Charlie's four grandparents, married to Grandpa Joe. She is the mother of Mr. Bucket.

Grandpa George

Grandpa George is another of Charlie's grandparents, married to Grandma Georgina. He is the father of Mrs. Bucket.

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Cornelia Prinzmetel

Violet Beauregarde's best friend.

Slugworth

One of the chocolate makers who constantly tries to steal Wonka's recipes.

Mr. and Mrs. Salt

Veruca's parents, who constantly indulge her, spoil her, and give her anything she wants. Because of this, they are pushed down the garbage chute with her.

Mr. and Mrs. Gloop

Augustus Gloop's parents, who believe that his constant overeating is only because of his lacking certain vitamins and nutrients.

Mr. and Mrs. Beauregarde

Violet's parents, who, just like Violet, are concerned primarily with seeing their daughter be the best at everything.

Mr. and Mrs. Teavee

Mike's parents, who let Mike watch as much TV as he wants.

Personal Assessment

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is an imaginatively phenomenal book that talks of an exotic and genius chocolatier, Mr. Wonka, who is looking for a heir. He gives away Golden Tickets and invites their finders into his factory. The tour through the factory is a memorable one and gives life lessons about a number of things. The book is a great read for children and young adults alike as it talks of the dangers of greed in many levels.