

# Charlie and the Chocolate Factory



## INTRODUCTION

### BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF ROALD DAHL

Dahl was born in Cardiff, Wales to Norwegian immigrant parents. When he was still very young, Dahl's sister and father died within weeks of each other. Rather than return to Norway to live near family, Dahl's mother remained in Wales so her children could be educated in English schools. However, Dahl's school days were unpleasant for him—he hated the hazing rituals and prevalence of corporal punishment. Following school, Dahl worked for Shell Oil until World War II, in which Dahl served as a fighter pilot. In 1940, Dahl was seriously injured in a crash landing that temporarily robbed him of his sight. He flew again and served briefly as a flight instructor after his recovery, but then became a diplomat in Washington, D.C. During his time in the U.S., Dahl published his first story, anecdotes about his time as a pilot. Throughout the 1940s and 50s, Dahl published a number of short stories for adults as well as *The Gremlins*, his first book for children. 1961's [James and the Giant Peach](#), however, catapulted him to fame and became the first of his many successful children's novels. Dahl was married twice, first to actress Patricia Neal and then to Felicity Dahl. He had five children with Neal. In his lifetime, Dahl was a fierce advocate for immunization—his daughter died of measles in 1962—and posthumously, Felicity Dahl created Roald Dahl's Marvellous Children's Charity to support sick children. His novels have sold millions of copies and remain immensely popular. Dahl is often considered one of the most influential British authors of the late 20th century.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Published in the 1960s, it's possible to see the influence of mid-20th-century culture and media on *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. In particular, the way that Dahl portrays Mike Teavee reads as a condemnation of television—which, by the 1960s, had become a staple in many upper-middle-class people's homes. The Oompa-Loompas' song about television states that television “*makes a child so dull and blind / he can no longer understand / a fantasy, a fairyland!*” This can be read as a jab at television shows that featured fantastical elements or circumstances, such as the titular talking horse in *Mr. Ed* or, indeed, the entire premise of the sci-fi series *The Twilight Zone*. *Charlie* specifically makes note of *The Lone Ranger*, which was adapted into a television series in the 1950s and then into a 1961 feature film. Chocolate, meanwhile, had become affordable for many American and British households by the late 1930s and was at that point no longer considered a luxury item. It was even deemed an “essential food” during World War

II. The British chocolate company Cadbury introduced its famous Cadbury Crème Eggs in 1963, and many other classic candies—such as Swedish Fish, Sweet Tarts, and Lemonheads—were first released in the 1960s. In 1966, two years after *Charlie* was published, Razzles came on the scene; the candies are Wonka-like in that they transform in a person's mouth from hard candy to gum. In its original version, *Charlie* also reflected the racial tensions at the heart of the civil rights movements happening around the world in the 60s, as Dahl initially wrote the Oompa-Loompas as Black. Some readers were offended by this, since the Oompa-Loompas work in Mr. Wonka's factory in an arrangement that resembles slavery. After receiving criticism, Dahl changed the Oompa-Loompas to their final, “rosy-white” skin color.

### RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Like *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, many of Roald Dahl's children's novels feature adult characters who are evil and cruel; magic and nonsense; and bright young children as protagonists. *Charlie* is one of Dahl's most famous books and has influenced a number of authors since its publication—J. K. Rowling, especially. She's said that *Charlie* is one of her favorite books, and its influence shows up in the Harry Potter series in a variety of ways, such as in the similarities between Augustus Gloop and Harry's cousin, Dudley Dursley. For his children's books, Dahl drew inspiration from Lewis Carroll's books *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and [Through the Looking-Glass](#). Published about a century before *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, the Alice novels brought the genre of nonsense literature to the forefront—and they were some of the first to present stories for children that weren't simple morality tales. Dahl also grew up listening to his mother, a Norwegian immigrant, tell him Norwegian folk and fairy tales, which influenced a number of his novels. Within the novel itself, Dahl references several classic works of children's literature, including stories by Rudyard Kipling (“How the Camel Got His Hump”) and Beatrix Potter (the Peter Rabbit stories), and the novel [The Wind in the Willows](#) by Kenneth Grahame. Though Dahl is best known for his children's literature, he also wrote a number of short stories for adults that share some of the same bizarre, macabre elements.

### KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
- **When Written:** 1963
- **Where Written:** England
- **When Published:** 1964

- **Literary Period:** Postmodernism
- **Genre:** Children's Novel; Fantasy
- **Setting:** An unnamed city in England
- **Climax:** Mr. Wonka tells Charlie that he's leaving him the Wonka chocolate factory.
- **Antagonist:** The Salts; the Gloops; the Beauregardes; the Teavees; Greed; Selfishness
- **Point of View:** Third Person

## EXTRA CREDIT

**Problems with Product Placement.** The 1971 film adaptation of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was a sore spot for Dahl, who wrote the original screenplay. Other writers made a number of changes to the screenplay that Dahl didn't like, and he was particularly upset about the film's title change to *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*. The title change was made in part because the Quaker Oats Company sponsored the film to promote its launch of Wonka Bars.

**Too Much of a Good Thing.** Cacao beans (and the processed chocolate that the beans are made into) contains a substance called theobromine, which in small doses acts as a mild stimulant in humans. However, in extremely large quantities, theobromine is toxic. A person would have to eat over 7,000 Hershey's kisses to reach a toxic level.



## PLOT SUMMARY

Charlie Bucket, the novel's protagonist, is a little boy who lives with his parents, Mr. Bucket and Mrs. Bucket, and both sets of grandparents (Grandma Georgina, Grandpa George, Grandma Josephine, and Grandpa Joe), who spend all their time lying in the one bed the family can afford. The Bucket family is extremely poor, as Mr. Bucket is the only one who's employed. They live in a tiny, drafty two-room house and subsist on cabbage and potatoes. What Charlie wants most in the world is **chocolate**—so his walk to and from school every day is torturous, as he has to pass Mr. Wonka's chocolate factory each way.

Every night, Charlie's grandparents tell him stories. One night, Grandpa Joe tells Charlie about Mr. Wonka and his chocolate factory. Mr. Wonka is a genius inventor—he once made a palace entirely out of chocolate for an Indian prince. His factory used to employ local workers, but Mr. Wonka suddenly shut the factory down when spies kept stealing his candy recipes. After a closure of several years, the factory suddenly came to life again and resumed production. Nobody knows who works there, as the gates are perpetually locked; Mr. Wonka and his factory are totally mysterious.

One evening, Mr. Bucket comes home with a newspaper

bearing exciting news: Mr. Wonka has hidden five **Golden Tickets** in five Wonka candy bars. The children who find the Golden Tickets will have the opportunity to tour his factory. Within days, two children—the extremely fat Augustus Gloop and a wealthy, spoiled girl named Veruca Salt—find two Golden Tickets. When Charlie's birthday arrives soon after, he receives a Wonka bar, though it doesn't contain a ticket. In the weeks after, a gum-chewing girl named Violet Beauregarde finds a ticket, as does a boy named Mike Teavee, who's obsessed with watching television. The Bucket family agrees that all four of the children who found tickets are horrible. Grandpa Joe gives Charlie a saved dime to buy another Wonka bar for another chance at a Golden Ticket, but the bar doesn't have a ticket.

In the months that follow, the Bucket family starts to starve. It's a bitterly cold winter, which makes it hard to keep warm—and to make matters worse, Mr. Bucket loses his job at the toothpaste factory. Then, one day after school, Charlie finds a dollar bill in the gutter. This means that he can buy food for his family—but he decides to buy himself a Wonka bar first. The bar contains only chocolate, but when Charlie buys a second bar, he finds a Golden Ticket inside. When Charlie tells his family, Grandpa Joe leaps out of bed for the first time in 20 years. The family agrees that Grandpa Joe should accompany Charlie to the factory for the tour tomorrow.

The next morning, Charlie and Grandpa Joe stand quietly near the other ticket winners, whose parents have to restrain them so that they don't climb over the gates. Finally, Mr. Wonka opens the gates and ushers them inside. He leads them into his chocolate room, which looks like a beautiful landscape. Everything in the underground room is edible, from the meadows to the trees—and the wide, rushing chocolate river.

Mr. Wonka then introduces the party to his workers, the Oompa-Loompas, who are knee-high people from Loompaland. Mr. Wonka convinced them to come work in his factory after discovering that the Oompa-Loompas lived in constant danger in Loompaland and couldn't get ahold of the one food they crave: cacao beans, which are what chocolate is made of. They love to sing, and they're always laughing.

Mr. Wonka breaks off his explanation as greedy Augustus Gloop begins to drink from the chocolate river and then falls in. Massive glass pipes suck him up, though Augustus barely fits. Several Oompa-Loompas lead Augustus's parents to find him and keep him from getting made into fudge, while other Oompa-Loompas sing the remaining children a song condemning Augustus for his greed and his weight.

When the song is over, Mr. Wonka ushers the party into a boat made of candy. They rush down the chocolate river to Mr. Wonka's secret Inventing Room. He shows off his in-progress candies, including a gum that provides the chewer with a three-course meal. Violet Beauregarde, the gum-chewer, can't resist snatching it from Mr. Wonka, even though he tells her not to. She thoroughly enjoys the first two courses but turns blue and

expands like a blueberry when she gets to the dessert course. Oompa-Loompas roll her away to juice her while others sing a song about how nasty it is to chew gum all the time.

Next, Mr. Wonka shows Charlie, Veruca, Mike, and their guardians a room where trained squirrels shell walnuts and check for “bad nuts.” Veruca, who’s very spoiled, wants one and rushes into the room to snatch a squirrel. But instead, the squirrels hold her down, decide she’s a “bad nut,” and toss her down the garbage chute. When Veruca’s parents go into the room after her, the squirrels shove them into the garbage chute, too. This time when the Oompa-Loompas sing, they acknowledge that spoiled kids are horrible—but spoiled kids, they insist, are the way they are because their parents make them that way.

Finally, Mr. Wonka leads the remaining children and adults to an elevator that moves in every direction. Tired, Mike wants to watch television, so Mr. Wonka hits a button that takes them to a room where he’s developing Television Chocolate. He has a special camera that takes a mattress-sized chocolate bar and transmits it into a television—where viewers can take it out and eat it. Excited to be the first person to be transmitted by television, Mike throws himself in front of the camera. He appears in the television a minute later, but he’s only an inch tall. Oompa-Loompas lead Mike’s parents away to the gum-stretching machine, which they’ll attempt to use to return Mike to his normal size. Oompa-Loompas then sing another song, this time insisting that television rots kids’ brains. According to the Oompa-Loompas, kids are better off reading books.

Once Mr. Wonka, Charlie, and Grandpa Joe are back in the elevator, Mr. Wonka realizes that Charlie is the only child left. Mr. Wonka reveals that Charlie won: the Golden Tickets and the tour were a way for Mr. Wonka to select a child to inherit the factory and keep it running once he’s gone. He presses a button that causes the elevator to burst out of the factory roof. After watching the other Golden Ticket winners leave the factory (all of whom have been squeezed, juiced, or stretched to make them either their original size or thinner), Mr. Wonka flies the elevator to the Buckets’ house and in through the roof. After Charlie and Grandpa Joe explain to the family what’s happening and that they’ll now get to live in the chocolate factory, they push the grandparents’ bed into the elevator. Mr. Wonka and the Bucket family then fly through the air in the elevator, headed for the factory.

with his parents, Mr. Bucket and Mrs. Bucket, and all four of his grandparents: Grandpa Joe, Grandma Josephine, Grandpa George, and Grandma Georgina. Charlie is kind, generous, and wants nothing more than to make his family members happy. However, he also longs for **chocolate**, especially since he has to walk past Mr. Wonka’s chocolate factory on his way to and from school every day. Charlie looks at the world with wonder, accepting it as it is; he spends his evenings with his grandparents, listening to their stories. Though he asks his grandparents questions, such as whether or not their stories are actually true, he nevertheless takes them at their word—and he delights in the fantastical stories. But Charlie is also sensible and practical, so when Mr. Wonka announces that he hid five **Golden Tickets** in five Wonka bars, Charlie understands his chance of finding a ticket is slim. After all, he only gets one Wonka bar per year, on his birthday. As other children (Augustus, Veruca, Violet, and Mike) find their Golden Tickets, Charlie recognizes that the other children are greedy and selfish, and that they’ve found their tickets unfairly. By a stroke of luck, Charlie manages to find the last Golden Ticket just in time to tour the factory the next day. During the factory tour, Charlie greets everything Mr. Wonka shows him with excitement and delight. He holds tightly to Grandpa Joe’s hand so that he doesn’t get lost and follows every direction from Mr. Wonka. As the other children get into trouble and have to end their tours early, Charlie expresses concern for their well-being, again emphasizing his kindness and consideration. Finally, when Charlie is the last child left, Mr. Wonka reveals that Charlie will inherit the factory when Mr. Wonka dies and be tasked with keeping his work alive. And, in the meantime, Charlie and his family will come live at the factory. This represents the end of Charlie’s poverty—he and his family will never go hungry again.

**Grandpa Joe** – Grandpa Joe is Charlie’s grandfather and Mr. Bucket’s father. He’s the oldest of the four grandparents at 96 and a half, and like the other grandparents, has spent the last 20 years stuck in bed. Despite being the oldest and frailest, Grandpa Joe is the most energetic and enthusiastic of the grandparents. He and Charlie have a special bond, and Grandpa Joe particularly loves telling Charlie stories—this not only entertains Charlie, but it also makes Grandpa Joe look younger and brighter. Grandpa Joe is very taken by the possibility that Charlie might find one of Mr. Wonka’s **Golden Tickets** in a Wonka bar. He even gives Charlie a dime he’s been hiding to buy a bar, so that Charlie has another chance at finding a ticket. But even though Grandpa Joe hopes Charlie will win, he nevertheless maintains a healthy sense of humor: when the bar doesn’t reveal a Golden Ticket, Grandpa Joe bursts into laughter. When Charlie eventually does find a ticket, Grandpa Joe immediately transforms: he leaps out of bed and begins dancing, the first time he’s been out of bed in decades. Seeing him so happy and alive, the Buckets decide that Grandpa Joe should accompany Charlie to tour Mr. Wonka’s **chocolate**



## CHARACTERS

### MAJOR CHARACTERS

**Charlie Bucket** – The protagonist of the novel, Charlie is a little boy who lives in a small house on the edge of an unnamed English town. His family is extremely poor and doesn’t have a lot to eat, which contributes to Charlie’s small size. He lives

factory. During the tour, Grandpa Joe greets new sights with wonder and awe. He finds the other children on the tour obnoxious, rude, and spoiled—and he notes at several points that it's the children's parents' fault that they're so horrible to be around. Grandpa Joe is ecstatic when Mr. Wonka reveals that he's going to bequeath his factory to Charlie; he's an instrumental figure in convincing the rest of the Bucket family to move to the factory.

**Mr. Willy Wonka** – Mr. Willy Wonka is a magical, mysterious chocolatier who runs a **chocolate** factory near Charlie's house. Until he announces that he's hidden five **Golden Tickets** in five Wonka bars and will give the winners a tour of his factory, little is known about him. He's supposedly made an entire palace out of chocolate and invented ice cream that doesn't melt in the sun. His unique inventions made him a target for copycats—and after several spies stole his recipes, Mr. Wonka shut his factory and fired all his workers. When the factory reopened some time after, the mystery surrounding Mr. Wonka grew—nobody could tell who, or what, his workers were. When the five children who win Golden Tickets—Charlie, Augustus, Veruca, Violet, and Mike—and their guardians finally meet Mr. Wonka, he's revealed to be a small, spritely man who wears bright clothing and is constantly moving and dancing. He does everything quickly and loves making puns. During the factory tour, Mr. Wonka demands that the children obey all his orders—and four of the five are unable to do so. Augustus falls into the chocolate river, Veruca gets thrown into the garbage chute, Violet turns into a blueberry, and Mike is shrunken down to an inch tall. All the while, Mr. Wonka expresses little remorse—and indeed, it almost seems as though he's planned for these things to happen. He also reveals that small men, Oompa-Loompas, run his factory and act as his test subjects for new products. As the tour progresses, Mr. Wonka's attitude suggests that he's fond of taking chances and greeting whatever comes his way. It's not concerning to him, for instance, that one of the factory elevators might crash into the second one, which goes the opposite way on the same track. When Mr. Wonka discovers that Charlie is the last child left, he reveals that Charlie has won the privilege of inheriting the factory when he's old enough. Mr. Wonka wanted to find a child to bequeath his factory to because he wants to make sure his successor is going to run the business with as much fun and silliness as he does—and only a child, he insists, will be able to do this.

**The Oompa-Loompas** – The Oompa-Loompas are the knee-high people who work in Mr. Wonka's factory. They have "rosy-white" skin and flowing brown hair. They act as a sort of moral authority, imparting some of the novel's most overt lessons about virtue and vice to readers. It seems like only the men work, while women Oompa-Loompas tend to their children. Mr. Wonka explains that Oompa-Loompas come from Loompaland, a country that's overgrown with vegetation and infested with dangerous, fantastical creatures that prey on Oompa-Loompas.

The Oompa-Loompas had little to eat aside from unappetizing green caterpillars when they lived there, but what they truly craved were cacao beans. Mr. Wonka convinced the Oompa-Loompas to come work in his chocolate factory by promising them unlimited access to cacao beans—and by offering to pay their wages in cacao beans. At the factory, the Oompa-Loompas perform most of the difficult work. They also act as test subjects for Mr. Wonka's more fantastical candies, such as those that make a person's hair grow or provide a three-course meal. As Mr. Wonka ushers Charlie, Augustus, Veruca, Violet, Mike, and their guardians on a tour of the chocolate factory, the Oompa-Loompas regularly laugh for no apparent reason at the children. Whenever a child succumbs to their vices and ends up in trouble, the Oompa-Loompas sing songs to the remaining children about why the child's vice is so bad, and how to correct or avoid it. But despite being so moral, the Oompa-Loompas have little agency and receive little or no respect from the children or Mr. Wonka—Veruca Salt even asks for an Oompa-Loompa as one might ask for a pet.

**Augustus Gloop** – Augustus Gloop is the first child to find a **Golden Ticket**; he's Mr. Gloop and Mrs. Gloop's son. He's extremely overweight and very greedy; Mrs. Gloop insists to reporters that it's unsurprising that Augustus found a Golden Ticket, since he eats chocolate bars all the time. As he waits outside the Wonka factory with his parents to start the tour, Augustus attempts to clamber over the factory fence and must be restrained by his parents. He doesn't make it very far into the tour before tragedy strikes. While Mr. Wonka is lecturing the tour attendees about the Oompa-Loompas, Augustus sneaks down to the **chocolate** river and begins to gorge himself on the chocolate, even though he has a cold and has been told not to touch the chocolate. Nobody is willing to help him when he then falls into the chocolate river. He ultimately gets sucked up a massive glass pipe—where he briefly gets stuck because his body is so large—and is presumably rescued in the factory's Fudge Room. After he disappears, the Oompa-Loompas sing a song about how horrible it is to be as greedy as Augustus. They suggest that they're going to make him better by turning him into a lovely piece of fudge. In reality, Augustus leaves the factory at the end of the day not as a piece of fudge, but as a thin boy.

**Veruca Salt** – Veruca Salt is the second child to find a **Golden Ticket**; she's Mr. Salt and Mrs. Salt's daughter. Her parents spoil her and give her everything she wants, most of which she demands by shouting. She gets a Golden Ticket because Mr. Salt, who owns a peanut factory, makes his employees unwrap Wonka bars instead of shell peanuts until they find one for her. On the morning of the factory tour, Veruca's parents have to restrain her so she doesn't scale the fence and enter the factory grounds before Mr. Wonka is ready for them. During the tour, whenever Veruca comes across something wonderful or interesting, she shouts to Mr. Salt that she wants it. She asks for

an Oompa-Loompa, a candy boat (complete with a **chocolate** river and Oompa-Loompas to row her around), and a trained squirrel. Her demand for a squirrel turns out to be her downfall: when Mr. Wonka tells her that she can't have one because the squirrels aren't for sale, Veruca races into the Nut Room to grab a squirrel herself. But instead, the squirrels restrain her, declare that she's a "bad nut," and throw her down the garbage chute. This, the Oompa-Loompas later suggest, is where spoiled kids belong—though they do insist that Veruca's parents are to blame for her behavior.

**Violet Beauregarde** – Violet Beauregarde is the third child to find a **Golden Ticket**; she's Mr. Beauregarde and Mrs. Beauregarde's daughter. She's an avid gum-chewer and has even broken a world record: the piece of gum she's chewing when she finds her Golden Ticket (and that she still has at the time of the factory tour) is the same one that she's been chewing for three months. She insists on chewing gum despite Mrs. Beauregarde's insistence that it's not ladylike. Violet and her mother have a poor relationship, as Violet regularly snaps at her mother when Mrs. Beauregarde tries to tell her to do something. Violet, like Augustus, Veruca, and Mike, needs to be restrained to stop her from clambering over the chocolate factory's fence before the tour. On the tour, Violet is the second child to have to end her visit early. In the Inventing Room, Violet snatches a piece of gum that provides the chewer with a three-course meal from Mr. Wonka, ignoring his warnings that it's not yet ready for consumption because it still has issues. Though she enjoys the tomato soup and roast beef courses, when she gets to the blueberry pie and cream, she turns blue and expands until she's round like a blueberry. The Oompa-Loompas have to juice her to return her to her normal size. As she leaves the tour group for the Juicing Room, Oompa-Loompas sing about how awful it is when people chew gum all the time.

**Mike Teavee** – Mike Teavee is the fourth child to find a **Golden Ticket**; he's Mr. Teavee and Mrs. Teavee's son. He loves nothing more than watching television—especially shows or movies with a lot of violence and guns—and he often wears shirts featuring favorite film characters and a variety of toy guns strapped to his body. Indeed, he becomes very upset with reporters when, after he finds his Golden Ticket, they try to interview him and distract him from his favorite show. Like Augustus, Veruca, and Violet, Mike's parents have to restrain him to keep him from scaling Mr. Wonka's factory fence in the minutes before their tour starts. Throughout the tour, Mike asks Mr. Wonka questions that Mr. Wonka deems "silly" or simply refuses to answer. Mike wants to understand his world and know exactly how things work, something that Mr. Wonka and the Oompa-Loompas suggest is a product of Mike's love of television. Television, according to the Oompa-Loompas, destroys children's imaginations—so Mike struggles to simply accept and enjoy many of the wonderful things he encounters

at the **chocolate** factory. Mike is the fourth child to have to end his tour of the factory early. In the Television Chocolate room, Mike refuses to follow directions and uses Mr. Wonka's special camera to transport himself into a television—causing him to shrink to only an inch tall. The Oompa-Loompas are able to stretch Mike to cause him to grow again—but after they're done, Mike is 10 feet tall and stick-thin.

**Mr. Bucket** – Mr. Bucket is Charlie's father, Mrs. Bucket's husband, and Grandpa Joe and Grandma Josephine's son. He's the only employed adult in the Bucket family; he works in a toothpaste factory, screwing caps onto tubes of filled toothpaste. Mr. Bucket is perpetually tired and worn-down from having to work so hard. Things become dire for the Buckets when the toothpaste factory goes under and Mr. Bucket loses his job. The pennies he earns shoveling snow aren't enough to keep the family fed, so Mr. Bucket's already morose demeanor becomes even sadder between when he loses his job and when Charlie goes to tour Mr. Wonka's **chocolate** factory.

**Mrs. Bucket** – Mrs. Bucket is Charlie's mother and Mr. Bucket's wife. She's a stay-at-home parent who spends most of her time caring for her parents, Grandpa George and Grandma Georgina; and her in-laws, Grandpa Joe and Grandma Josephine, all of whom are bed-bound. She's extremely kind and generous, and it seems like the most important thing to her is caring for her family. She only seems to forget her troubles for a short period of time every night, when the entire family gathers to listen to the grandparents tell stories. When Charlie learns that he'll be able to move to the **chocolate** factory at the end of the novel, he initially is sad that Mrs. Bucket won't come too—she's too loyal, he suggests, and won't leave the grandparents.

**Grandpa George** – Grandpa George is Mrs. Bucket's father, Charlie's grandfather, and Grandma Georgina's husband. Like all of Charlie's grandparents, Grandpa George is very old and has spent the last 20 years in bed. Though Grandpa George is kind and loves Charlie, he tends to be a bit more pessimistic about the possibility of anything good happening to the family—such as Charlie winning a **Golden Ticket**.

**Mr. Salt** – Mr. Salt is Veruca's father and Mrs. Salt's husband. A wealthy man who owns a peanut factory, Mr. Salt spoils Veruca and gives her everything she wants. Indeed, Mr. Salt procured a **Golden Ticket** for Veruca when she threw a fit screaming for one—and so he had the women who work in his factory unwrap candy bars instead of shelling peanuts until they found one. Whenever Veruca demands something, Mr. Salt agrees to get it for her; money isn't an issue. He's merely "cross" when trained squirrels push Veruca into the garbage chute in the Nut Room at Mr. Wonka's factory, which hints that he doesn't care very much about his daughter. When he and Mrs. Salt go in to check if Veruca is stuck in the chute, the squirrels push them both in.

**Mrs. Salt** – Mrs. Salt is Veruca’s mother. She and her husband, Mr. Salt, are extremely wealthy and spoil Veruca. Afraid for Veruca’s safety after she falls down the garbage chute at Mr. Wonka’s factory, Mrs. Salt follows her daughter into the Nut Room—and the squirrels push her into the garbage chute after her daughter.

## MINOR CHARACTERS

**Grandma Josephine** – Grandma Josephine is Mr. Bucket’s mother, Charlie’s grandmother, and Grandpa Joe’s wife. Along with the other grandparents, she’s spent the last 20 years in bed. She adores Charlie.

**Grandma Georgina** – Grandma Georgina is Mrs. Bucket’s mother, Charlie’s grandmother, and Grandpa George’s wife. A very old lady, Grandma Georgina has spent the last 20 years in bed with the rest of Charlie’s grandparents. She’s kind and generous to Charlie, but she’s also sensible and practical.

**Prince Pondicherry** – Prince Pondicherry is a character in a story that Grandpa Joe tells Charlie. An influential Indian prince, Prince Pondicherry commissioned Mr. Wonka to build him a palace made of **chocolate**—and refused to believe that the palace would melt in the sun.

**Mr. Gloop** – Mr. Gloop is Augustus’s father and Mrs. Gloop’s husband. When Augustus falls into the **chocolate** river at Mr. Wonka’s factory, Mr. Gloop refuses to go in after his son because he’s wearing his best suit.

**Mrs. Gloop** – Mrs. Gloop is Augustus’s mother and Mr. Gloop’s wife.

**Mrs. Beauregarde** – Mrs. Beauregarde is Violet’s mother and Mr. Beauregarde’s wife. She’s an ineffective parent; whenever she tries to tell Violet to do something, Violet disobeys her.

**Mr. Beauregarde** – Mr. Beauregarde is Violet’s father and Mrs. Beauregarde’s husband.

**Mr. Teavee** – Mr. Teavee is Mike’s father and Mrs. Teavee’s husband. When Mike is transformed and becomes only an inch tall at Mr. Wonka’s factory, Mr. Teavee insists that he’s throwing away the family’s television as soon as he gets home.

**Mrs. Teavee** – Mrs. Teavee is Mike’s mother and Mr. Teavee’s wife.

**The Shopkeeper** – The shopkeeper is a fat man who runs the stationery shop where Charlie buys his winning Wonka candy bar. He’s kind and protective of Charlie, ensuring that Charlie isn’t pressured into selling his **Golden Ticket**.

a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.



## VICE AND VIRTUE

Charlie, the titular protagonist of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, is characterized as a “hero” who’s kind, generous, and considerate. He, along with four other children, is lucky enough to find a **Golden Ticket** in a Wonka **chocolate** bar, a prize that earns them a tour of Mr. Wonka’s mysterious candy factory. But unlike Charlie, the four other children who find Golden Tickets—Augustus Gloop, Veruca Salt, Violet Beauregarde, and Mike Teavee—each embody a particular vice, such as greed or entitlement. As these four children each get into trouble in the factory and have to end their tours early, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* makes it clear that vice keeps children and adults alike from being functional, well-liked members of society. In this way, the novel functions as a morality tale intended to teach young readers that good things come to those who are kind, well-behaved, and virtuous. Moreover, it shows that being cruel and greedy may help people get ahead in the short term, but that acting this way inevitably leads to disappointment or even tragedy.

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* acknowledges that vices like selfishness and entitlement can, in the short term, help a person get ahead. Veruca Salt offers the clearest example of this: she has an entitled attitude, and her parents spoil her to the point that she only has to throw a tantrum and demand something for her parents to get it for her. So, when she demands a Golden Ticket, Mr. Salt (her father) goes out of his way to grant Veruca’s wish. He transforms the factory he owns, where workers shell peanuts, into a candy-unwrapping operation for several days, until one of his employees finally finds a Golden Ticket. This example illustrates two different kinds of entitlement: first, it shows Veruca’s belief that she’s entitled to get what she wants just because she wants it. Second, it shows that her father believes that he, too, can get whatever he wants and can manipulate other people for his own gain (in a way that Charlie’s and his family believe is unfair). But while Veruca is the book’s clearest example of how certain vices can help a person get ahead in the short term, Augustus, Mike, and Violet also exhibit entitlement and greed to lesser degrees. They all find Golden Tickets because their wealth and privilege enable them to buy many candy bars to increase their chances of finding one—a tactic that the novel implies is greedy and unfair, since it puts lower-class children like Charlie (whose family can hardly afford a single candy bar) at a disadvantage. Nevertheless, their strategy does result in each of them finding Golden Tickets, which win them a tour of Mr. Wonka’s factory.

The novel suggests that vices like greed and entitlement inevitably cause harm, as indulging those impulses can create dangerous situations. Except for Charlie, every child who tours



## THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don’t have

Mr. Wonka's factory suffers some sort of grisly fate. Augustus, for instance, can't help but "listen to the call of his massive stomach" (which the book implies is a greedy impulse) and ends up falling into the chocolate river—which leads to him almost being made into fudge. And Veruca is so spoiled that when Mr. Wonka insists that she can't have one of his trained squirrels, she tries to grab one for herself—but the squirrels toss her down the garbage chute instead. Mike and Violet also succumb to their vices—watching television and chewing gum, respectively—and refuse to follow directions regarding some of the more fantastical (and potentially dangerous) inventions in Mr. Wonka's factory. This leads to Mike being shrunk down to only an inch tall and Violet turning into a massive blueberry. In each of these cases, the child in question decides that their wants and needs are more important than following directions intended to keep them safe. And giving into one's vice the way these four children do, the novel shows, can put a person in dangerous, life-altering situations.

In contrast, Charlie has traits like generosity, kindness, and politeness, and the novel suggests that good things will come to those who embody these virtues. Early in the story, Charlie's father, Mr. Bucket, loses his job, and the family no longer has enough food. But Charlie refuses his mother, Mrs. Bucket's, attempts to give him some of her food, which highlights his selflessness and generosity. Later, during the tour of Mr. Wonka's factory, Charlie listens carefully to Mr. Wonka and follows directions exactly. Charlie samples candies only if he's told it's okay to do so, and he listens to Mr. Wonka's warnings about treating certain candies or machines with caution. He also grips tightly to his Grandpa Joe's hand throughout the tour, both literally and figuratively leaning on his grandfather for support and guidance—something that illustrates how much Charlie respects authority. At the end of the tour, when Charlie is the only child left who didn't get in trouble and have to leave the factory, Mr. Wonka reveals that he conceived of the Golden Tickets and the factory tour so that he could choose a child to run his factory after he's gone—and Charlie, as the last remaining child, has won that honor. Knowing this, it's possible to see the entire tour as an event designed to expose children's vices and weed out those who are selfish, greedy, and spoiled—leaving behind a child like Charlie, who is entirely virtuous. While Charlie's good fortune at the end of the novel might present an extreme, exaggerated example of the good things that may come to a person who is kind and virtuous, the novel nevertheless encourages young readers to strive to be more like Charlie. They may never inherit a chocolate factory because of their good behavior, but they *will* be safer and better able to enjoy the world around them.

where five children who find **Golden Tickets** hidden in Wonka candy bars will win a tour of the Mr. Wonka's factory. When newspapers run interviews with the first four children who find Golden Tickets—Augustus Gloop, Veruca Salt, Violet Beauregarde, and Mike Teavee—Charlie (who eventually becomes the fifth winner) and his grandparents all take issue with the children's behavior. Charlie's grandparents, for instance, describe the kids as "bratty," "beastly," and "revolting." With this, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* at first seems to suggest that the children are responsible for their own behavior, whether good or bad. But as the book progresses, it shows that this isn't true: a child's parents or caregivers, the novel suggests, are their biggest influences and have the power to shape a child's behavior. Vice or virtue, in other words, aren't innate qualities—children aren't born being good or bad, selfless or greedy. Rather, these qualities and behaviors are learned, most often through a child's parents.

At first, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* suggests that a child's good or bad behavior is something innate. This becomes clear when the newspapers run interviews with the first four Golden Ticket winners, Augustus, Violet, Veruca, and Mike. For the most part, the children's parents are notably absent from the interviews—Mike, for instance, seems entirely on his own, while Augustus's mother makes only a cursory statement during his interview. Charlie's grandparents all take issue with the children's behavior, which seems, for the most part, to exist in a vacuum. For that matter, the novel gives little indication at first that Charlie's good behavior is learned rather than innate. In the novel's introduction of the major characters, Charlie is simply described as the "hero," while the other four children are described in terms of their vices and misbehavior. Just as the other children's misbehavior seems to come out of nowhere, so does Charlie's goodness.

However, as the novel progresses, it shows that children's behavior is largely influenced from the outside: a parent's passivity or lack of discipline significantly affects their child's behavior. Mr. and Mrs. Gloop, for instance, see little wrong with Augustus's greed and desire to gorge himself on sweets all the time. By never stepping in to stop Augustus and limit his sweets, they inadvertently teach him that his greed is acceptable, which is what leads him to break the rules at the Wonka factory by eating from the chocolate river. In this way, their passive parenting style teaches their child bad habits. The song that the Oompa-Loompas sing after Mike Teavee is transformed into an inch-tall version of himself (after being transported through a magic television) offers another perspective on this dynamic. They suggest that for busy, stressed-out parents, a television can act as a kind of babysitter, keeping a child engaged and out of trouble. But according to the Oompa-Loompas, this comes at a cost: parents who sit their children in front of televisions all day essentially give up the opportunity to teach their children desirable behavior and



## PARENTING

In *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, a mysterious chocolatier named Mr. Wonka holds a contest

values. A child like Mike, the novel implies, is the expected result of this kind of absent parenting. Influenced by his favorite violent television shows, Mike is rude, selfish, and interested only in emulating what he sees on TV (his last name, Teavee, is a tongue-in-cheek nod to this).

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* also shows that children often mimic their parents' own poor behavior. The Salt family offers the clearest example of this. Veruca is selfish and entitled, and she gets whatever she wants—but through Mr. Salt's behavior, the novel shows that Veruca learned her entitlement from her father. For instance, Mr. Salt shows how powerful he is when he procures a Golden Ticket for Veruca by forcing the employees who shell peanuts in his factory to unwrap candy bars until they find a ticket. This also shows that he believes people should do whatever he tells them to do. This is why Mr. Salt is aghast when Mr. Wonka won't sell him a trained squirrel for Veruca during the factory tour; he expects others to give him what he wants, no questions asked. Seeing how Mr. Salt behaves, it's perhaps unsurprising that Veruca is as entitled and selfish as she is—he's shown her that her entitlement is acceptable and will help her get what she wants.

Overwhelmingly, the novel suggests that parents should set examples for their children of how they'd like them to act and take responsibility for their children's misbehavior. The Bucket family provides a model for how the book suggests parenting *should* work. Charlie's parents may seem hands-off at first—but this, the novel suggests, is because they've already done the hard work of leading by example. For instance, it's possible to see that Charlie learned to be generous from his mother, Mrs. Bucket, who has always shared her meals with Charlie when the family doesn't have much to eat. Moreover, Charlie's grandparents are all repulsed by Veruca, Violet, Augustus, and Mike's behavior—and in their understanding, it's those children's parents who should discipline their misbehaving children. Though the grandparents' insistence that the bad children could benefit from being spanked may seem outdated to modern readers, it nevertheless suggests that parents can—and should—step in to modify their children's behavior when leading by example doesn't work. Part of this, the novel suggests, means accepting that children aren't born good or bad—they learn certain behaviors based on what they see at home. This is why, after Mr. Wonka's trained squirrels throw Veruca, Mr. Salt, and Mrs. Salt down the garbage chute, the Oompa-Loompas' song insists that “*a girl can't spoil herself, you know*”—thereby implicating Mr. and Mrs. Salt for Veruca's rudeness and entitlement. With this, the book insists that parents are responsible for their children's behavior. While one might assume that children are in control of their actions, in reality, parents often emulate or encourage poor behavior—whether intentionally or not.



## POVERTY AND WEALTH

The characters in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* are clearly divided into two categories: those who are wealthy, and those who aren't. Charlie Bucket and his family, for instance, live in a drafty two-room house on the edge of town, where they subsist on very little food and struggle to keep warm. Charlie gets lucky and finds one of five **Golden Tickets** hidden in Wonka candy bars (which wins him the prize of touring Mr. Wonka's **chocolate** factory), but the other four children who win Golden Tickets lead wealthy, privileged lives. For example, Veruca Salt only gets a Golden Ticket because her father, Mr. Salt, converts the peanut-shelling factory he owns into a candy-unwrapping operation for several days. But *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* generally suggests that wealth (or the lack thereof) isn't everything, as Charlie and his family are portrayed as much happier and more fulfilled than the book's wealthy characters. While wealth may be able to buy something like a Golden Ticket, it can't purchase what the novel suggests are the more important things in life: happiness, love, loyalty, and a strong, supportive family.

The novel makes it clear that being wealthy can make life easier and help people get ahead in the world. It's perhaps not surprising that of the five Golden Ticket winners, four are much wealthier than Charlie is. Mike Teavee's family owns a television, which was still something of a luxury item by the mid-1960s (when the book is set); Augustus's family has the money to buy Augustus many bars of chocolate; and Veruca's father is a wealthy man who can afford to have his entire factory staff unwrap candy for several days. Even Violet's family is well-off compared to Charlie's: her interview with reporters takes place in her living room, which seems luxurious compared to the Buckets' tiny, run-down house. Particularly for Augustus and Veruca, their families' affluence—and thus, their ability to buy more Wonka bars—made it far more likely that they'd find Golden Tickets. The novel reiterates this when Charlie finds his Golden Ticket, and a boy nearby grouches that it's not fair that Charlie found one when the boy has been buying 20 bars per day. Wealth might not entirely guarantee outward success (like finding a Golden Ticket), the novel suggests, but it can certainly make success more likely.

However, it soon becomes apparent that wealth doesn't guarantee happiness or a loving, supportive family. Over the course of their Wonka factory tour, the children with wealthy parents meet disastrous fates, yet their parents don't seem particularly concerned. For instance, when Augustus falls into the chocolate river, Mr. Gloop refuses to wade in to save his son on the grounds that he's wearing his best suit. With his response, he shows that it's more important to him to preserve something that signals his wealth than it is to save Augustus. Similarly, when Mr. Wonka's trained squirrels shove Veruca down the garbage chute, and Mr. Wonka notes that there's a chance she'll end up in the garbage incinerator, Mr. Salt is



underwhelmed. He insists that he's "cross," a darkly humorous response that acknowledges he's annoyed—but again, it doesn't suggest that he loves or feels protective of his daughter, who may be in a life-threatening situation. These families may be wealthy and able to spoil their children, but the book makes it clear that this doesn't mean there's any love, affection, or loyalty among family members.

The Buckets, on the other hand, illustrate what the novel suggests is an ideal situation: they don't have a lot of money, but they're nevertheless loving, loyal, and generous with one another. Charlie only receives a single Wonka bar every year for his birthday—a stark contrast to the wealthy children in the novel—yet he never seems deprived or unhappy. With this, the novel suggests that wealth and material goods aren't necessary for people to be content and fulfilled, especially when they have a supportive family. Though Charlie has much less than other children do, he never seems to question whether or not his parents and grandparents love him. Instead, Charlie's family members show their love to one another in other ways. For instance, Charlie brightens his grandparents' days by spending every evening with them, listening to them tell stories—which brings the whole family together and makes them forget about their difficulties. Being poor doesn't take away from the fact that they enjoy spending time together, and these evenings are very fulfilling for everyone involved. Indeed, the quality time that Charlie and his family members spend together make the fact that they live in poverty easier to bear. With this, the novel suggests that it doesn't take money or lavish gifts for family members to be happy, live fulfilling lives, or show one another that they care.

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* never shies away from the fact that living in poverty, as opposed to being wealthy, can be dangerous and even life-threatening. The narrator, for instance, describes Charlie and his family's starvation, Charlie's increasingly bony face, and the habits he develops to conserve his strength. But on the whole, the novel also suggests that poverty and happiness aren't mutually exclusive, and it also shows that poverty can sometimes be improvable or escapable—in Charlie's case, by getting lucky, finding a Golden Ticket, and eventually inheriting Mr. Wonka's chocolate factory. On the other hand, the novel suggests there's no real way to fix a family dynamic that's uncaring or disloyal, no matter how much money that family might have.



### FUN, ABSURDITY, AND WONDER

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is a fundamentally absurd and funny book. The candy factory where most of the novel takes place is filled with amazing fictional sweets, like chewing gum that provides a three-course meal and ice cream that doesn't melt in the sun. Moreover, the eccentric chocolatier Mr. Willy Wonka and his Oompa-Loompas (the tiny men who work in his factory) seem

fantastical and even magical. Particularly when Mr. Wonka takes Charlie Bucket and four other children on a tour of his factory, readers are encouraged to engage with the Wonka factory's delights like Charlie does: with awe and wonder. Through the lessons that Mr. Wonka and the Oompa-Loompas impart during the tour, the book suggests that people should simply enjoy the world around them for what it is, acknowledging and accepting rather than manipulating or rejecting their surroundings.

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* first suggests that absurd, entertaining stories are worthwhile—no matter how outlandish they might be. For example, as Grandpa Joe tells Charlie about Mr. Wonka and his chocolate factory, he shares a fantastical story about a palace made of **chocolate** that Mr. Wonka built for Prince Pondicherry (an Indian prince). Grandpa Joe describes faucets that dispense hot chocolate and massive bricks of solid chocolate that make up the palace's walls. The story enchants Charlie—and most importantly, the narrator notes, these fantastical stories distract the Bucket family from their poverty and their hunger. Stories, the novel shows, can help a person escape from circumstances that are less than ideal. Later, at the chocolate factory, the novel shows that this idea applies to real-life experiences as well. Charlie is entranced as Mr. Wonka leads the group of children and parents through his factory and accepts without question the chocolate river, edible grass, and other bizarre and unique candies. To Charlie, it all seems too good to be true. And especially given Charlie's poverty, he seems to realize the importance of enjoying the tour as much as possible. While the other, wealthier kids may have opportunities to experience fantastical things again because their families can afford such luxuries, Charlie's can't—so for him, it's essential to make the most of his visit. As far as he knows, it's the only exciting, fun trip he'll ever get to take.

On the other hand, the novel shows that questioning or trying to control something fun and absurd can take away from its entertainment value. The clearest example of this is when television-obsessed Mike Teavee is confronted with a chocolate bar inside of a television. Mike knows how television works, so he's skeptical when Mr. Wonka demonstrates that he can take a mattress-size bar of chocolate and transmit it so that it appears inside a television screen—where a viewer can then pluck the bar out of the screen and eat it. Believing that such a thing is impossible, Mike only laughs when Mr. Wonka invites him to take the chocolate bar out of the television. So Charlie, who sees the world with wonder and is willing to take things as they come, ultimately removes the chocolate from the television. This suggests that questioning something like this, rather than trusting and accepting it, can cause people to miss out on truly fantastical things. And throughout the factory tour, Veruca Salt shouts at her father, Mr. Salt, that she wants to own the fantastical items she sees. She wants a candy ship on a

chocolate river, an Oompa-Loompa, and one of the squirrels that Mr. Wonka trained to shell walnuts. While Charlie takes the time to enjoy and savor all the delights that Mr. Wonka shares with the group, Veruca's only thought is how to possess the things she sees. And this, the novel suggests, diminishes her enjoyment of the factory tour: she looks at the factory only with greed, not with wonder or delight.

Finally, the novel suggests that readers should try to emulate Charlie's way of seeing the world and offers several ways to do that. Throughout the novel, Charlie and Grandpa Joe—who looks at the world with the same kind of childlike wonder as Charlie does—have more fun than the people on the tour who are skeptical and critical. Through their example, the novel implies that accepting and enjoying things for what they are results in a happier life, as people with this attitude are better able to appreciate and take full advantage of their experiences. More concretely, though, the novel suggests that readers can learn to think this way by doing two related things: watching less (or no) television and reading books instead. After Mike Teavee shrinks himself in Mr. Wonka's Television Chocolate room, the Oompa-Loompas sing a song about how television "rots kids' brains," makes them "dull," and destroys a person's imagination. The fact that Mike has spent his life in front of a television, the Oompa-Loompas imply, is why he's not willing to reach into the television and grab the chocolate when Mr. Wonka invites him to—his imagination no longer allows for that sort of thing. According to the novel, books provide the antidote to television. Where television destroys imaginations, books, according to the Oompa-Loompas, expand imaginations and allow children to experience all sorts of fantastical, nonsensical worlds. With this, the novel's message is twofold: first, it champions looking at the world with wonder, excitement, and acceptance. Second, it encourages readers to keep reading and experiencing new worlds, long after *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory's* last page.



### PREJUDICE AND BIGOTRY

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, about a group of children who tour a fantastical **chocolate** factory, teaches young readers the value of being kind and virtuous. However, there is also underlying prejudice and bigotry in the world of the novel. For instance, Augustus Gloop (one of the children who tours the factory) is characterized as an antagonist, simply because he's very overweight—the implication being that his greed is tied directly to his size. By contrast, both Charlie and Mr. Wonka—two of the novel's protagonists—are notably thin and spritely. Moreover, the characters tasked with delivering the novel's most overt lessons on morality are Mr. Wonka's Oompa-Loompas, small men who live and work in Mr. Wonka's factory in an arrangement that resembles slavery. So, while *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* teaches lessons about virtue and kindness, it

also implies that only certain kinds of people, or people who look a certain way, are worthy of respect and fair treatment.

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* equates vices, like greed, with being overweight. Augustus, the only overweight child of the group, is the most overt example of the link between physical appearance and morality in the novel. The way the narrator describes Augustus introduces his vice: his face is like "a monstrous ball of dough with two small greedy curranty eyes." This description not only ties Augustus's greed to his weight (by describing his "greedy" eyes), but it also suggests that he's so large as to be "monstrous." The idea that Augustus is "monstrously" large shows up again after Augustus gets sucked into the glass pipes that are "enormous." Onlookers are surprised that Augustus fits through the pipes at all—he's too large, even, to fit into something at an industrial scale. The novel also implies that Augustus is greedy and selfish *because* of his weight. The narrator notes that the reader "might have guessed" that Augustus would sneak over to the chocolate river to gorge himself. In other words, readers are meant to infer that because Augustus is overweight, it makes sense that he (rather than one of the other children, who are all thin) would do such a thing. But Augustus isn't the only character whose vice is connected to weight or is described in language that suggests prejudice against overweight people. When Violet snatches the three-course meal gum from Mr. Wonka, she does so with a "fat hand"—and after chewing the gum, she, like Augustus, expands until she's a massive, round blueberry with a tiny head and limbs. Her punishment for snatching the gum, in other words, is to become too huge to effectively function. In this way, the novel implies that being overweight is a kind of moral failing, and that becoming larger is a punishment.

Thinness, on the other hand, is something the novel holds up as a marker of virtue and goodness. All members of the Bucket family and Mr. Wonka are extremely thin. In the case of the Bucket family, this is because of their poverty—they survive on meals of cabbage, potatoes, and bread. But regardless of the reason for their thinness, the Buckets are nevertheless the heroes and the role models of the novel. Charlie, for instance, accepts what he's given and never asks for more, even when he's literally starving, which equates his virtue with his thinness. Mr. Wonka, meanwhile, is held up as a "magician" and a "genius." He's described as a small, spritely man who's always moving and dancing—which means that he's able to quickly navigate his maze-like factory. So, as he leads the group on the tour of his factory, the thin Charlie and Grandpa Joe (in addition to Mike, Veruca, and Violet) are able to keep up with Mr. Wonka without issue—while Mrs. Salt, who's "a great fat creature," pants "like a rhinoceros" as she tries to keep up. It's also worth noting that both Mike and Augustus leave the factory thinner than when they entered—and the Oompa-Loompas and Mr. Wonka suggest that the children are leaving the factory "better" than

when they came in. It's unclear if the children actually learned the moral lessons the Oompa-Loompas intended to teach them, so the only verifiable thing that has changed about the children is their sizes. Again, thinness is presented as being better—that is, more virtuous and desirable—than being overweight.

Finally, despite acting as a kind of moral authority, the Oompa-Loompas have the least amount of power and receive the worst treatment in the world of the novel. Mr. Wonka expresses little regard for the Oompa-Loompas' well-being. He betrays no emotion, for instance, when he mentions that all the Oompa-Loompas who have tried the three-course meal gum have turned into blueberries, or when he tells Charlie about an Oompa-Loompa who tried his Lifting Soda and floated into the sky, never to be seen again. Instances like these suggest that Mr. Wonka doesn't necessarily see his Oompa-Loompas as people who are worthy of concern or should be able to make choices about being used as test subjects. In this way, the novel portrays the Oompa-Loompas as little better than animals. This is made even clearer when Veruca Salt shouts that she wants one, and her father agrees to buy her an Oompa-Loompa, just like he later offers to buy her a squirrel. Veruca and Mr. Salt's attitude denies the Oompa-Loompas their humanity and suggests that they're more like pets than people. This is particularly ironic given that the Oompa-Loompas are the most moral characters of the novel—and the narrator and Mr. Wonka do describe them as people. So, despite their moral behavior, important lessons, and the fact that they are human, they nevertheless receive the least amount of respect and have no agency.

With this, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* paints a chilling picture of a world that is rooted in bigotry and prejudice despite its emphasis on the importance of kindness and generosity. Through its treatment of characters who look different from others—overweight characters and the Oompa-Loompas—the novel sends the discriminatory message that not everyone in its world deserves to be respected, no matter how virtuous they might be.

a Golden Ticket. It's possible for anyone to succeed if they happen to get lucky.

But as the first four children find their Golden Tickets, the novel reveals that the system is far more corrupt, as it favors people with wealth and privilege. Augustus Gloop, Violet Beauregarde, and Mike Teavee, for instance, find Golden Tickets because their families have the money to buy the children huge numbers of candy bars—thereby upping the chances that the children will find Golden Tickets. The circumstances surrounding the discovery of Veruca Salt's Golden Ticket make this even clearer: Mr. Salt converts his peanut-shelling factories into candy bar-unwrapping factories until one of his employees finds a ticket for Veruca. This requires a great deal of money and influence, and it suggests that it's easier to achieve success in Charlie's world if a person has the money to buy it.

Nevertheless, it's important that Charlie still manages to find a ticket, despite only being able to afford a total of four candy bars throughout his search. It's possible, this suggests, for someone without wealth, power, or privilege to get lucky and find success—it's just rare. With this, the novel makes it clear that power and privilege, on the whole, make it much easier to get ahead—though there's always the chance that someone like Charlie, who lives in poverty, can also experience a stroke of luck and better their position in the world.



## CHOCOLATE

The way that different characters consume or think of chocolate correlates to their wealth and privilege. For instance, Charlie Bucket and his family are extremely poor, so the only chocolate Charlie ever gets is a single candy bar every year on his birthday. This on its own drives home how poor Charlie's family is, if a 10-cent chocolate bar is a once-per-year luxury item. Furthermore, the narrator notes that Charlie makes his candy bar last a whole month by nibbling only a tiny bit of it every day. Charlie nevertheless longs to live a more economically secure life in which he can afford to eat chocolate more often—this is why he stops every day on his walk to and from school to sniff the chocolatey smells coming from Mr. Wonka's chocolate factory. The way that Charlie craves and savors chocolate highlights his poverty and his desire for a better life—one where a luxury like chocolate isn't so rare.

Augustus Gloop, on the other hand, reveals how wealthy and privileged he is through the way he greedily consumes chocolate. He eats dozens of candy bars every day—and according to Mrs. Gloop, his mother, this is because Augustus needs the vitamins in chocolate. However, readers are meant to infer that Augustus eats so much chocolate simply because he wants to, and because his privileged circumstances allow him to. Unlike for Charlie, chocolate isn't a luxury for Augustus—it's



## SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.



## GOLDEN TICKETS

Golden Tickets symbolize the system of wealth, power, and privilege that guides Charlie's world.

Mr. Wonka hides five Golden Tickets in five Wonka candy bars and announces that the five children who find the Golden Tickets will have the opportunity to tour his factory. At first glance, this seems like a system based purely on luck and chance—anyone who buys a Wonka bar has a chance at finding

an everyday staple food. In Augustus's case, then, his gluttonous relationship to chocolate represents his easy, indulgent lifestyle.

At the end of the novel, Charlie learns that Mr. Wonka is going to bequeath the factory to him, a moment that crystallizes Charlie's ascension into a higher economic class. Living at the factory, Charlie is never going to want for chocolate again, which more broadly represents the newfound comfort and security that his life as an heir will afford him.





## QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Puffin edition of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* published in 1964.

### Chapter 1 Quotes

☝ Mr. Bucket, however hard he worked, and however fast he screwed on the caps, was never able to make enough to buy one-half of the things that so large a family needed. There wasn't even enough money to buy proper food for them all. The only meals they could afford were bread and margarine for breakfast, boiled potatoes and cabbage for lunch, and cabbage soup for supper. Sundays were a bit better. They all looked forward to Sundays because then, although they had exactly the same, everyone was allowed a second helping.

**Related Characters:** Charlie Bucket, Mrs. Bucket, Mr. Bucket, Grandma Georgina, Grandpa George, Grandma Josephine, Grandpa Joe

**Related Themes:**  

**Page Number:** 5

#### Explanation and Analysis


The narrator is introducing the Bucket family and establishing how impoverished the Buckets are. Mr. Bucket, the only employed adult in the family, can't earn enough money to support his family of seven—six adults and Charlie, a little boy. The way that the narrator describes the Buckets' poverty makes it seem that they're doing all they can, but there's little hope that they'll ever be able to improve their economic status. Rather, Mr. Bucket—and by extension, his entire family—is at the mercy of an employment system that will force him to work harder and harder while still earning very little money. It's nearly impossible, in the world of the novel, for a family like the Buckets to do any better without a stroke of luck.

But describing what the Bucket family eats doesn't just show how poor they are—it also helps the reader develop empathy for Charlie, the story's protagonist. The fact that cabbage in particular features so prominently in the Buckets' diet seems designed to arouse sympathy in young readers who perhaps don't like cabbage themselves. Getting a second helping of something like cabbage, then, is a luxury for Charlie—but it also makes it clear to readers just how dire the Buckets' situation is, as they're forced to eat food that others might find unappetizing or dissatisfying.

☝ Charlie felt it worst of all. And although his father and mother often went without their own share of lunch or supper so that they could give it to him, it still wasn't nearly enough for a growing boy. He desperately wanted something more filling and satisfying than cabbage and cabbage soup. The one thing he longed for more than anything else was...CHOCOLATE.

**Related Characters:** Charlie Bucket, Mrs. Bucket, Mr. Bucket, Mr. Willy Wonka

**Related Themes:**   

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 6

#### Explanation and Analysis

In describing the Bucket family's poverty, the narrator explains that Charlie, the only child in the Bucket family, wants more filling meals and chocolate in particular. First, it's important that Mr. and Mrs. Bucket, Charlie's parents, make a point to give Charlie some or all of their meals. This shows that while Charlie's goodness may seem to come out of nowhere, that's actually not true—Charlie's parents are modeling kindness, selflessness, and generosity for him by giving him their food. Put another way, Charlie is learning from his parents the value of sharing what he has with others. This, of course, sets Charlie apart from the other children who eventually tour Mr. Wonka's chocolate factory with him, as their parents overwhelmingly set poor examples of how children should behave. Many of the parents and children are selfish, acting as though sharing all of what they have would never even occur to them.

And yet, Charlie is still a normal kid: he wants chocolate just like anyone else. The novel treats it as a fact that, in general, people desire chocolate and other similar luxury items, so


this makes Charlie a relatable protagonist. In other ways, he may seem almost too virtuous and kind to be true, but his desire for chocolate shows that he still has self-centered desires like any other kid.

Finally, this once again shows just how poor the Bucket family is. Charlie craves chocolate, but he can't have it because it's a luxury that his family can't afford—even though, in the world of the novel, chocolate bars only cost 10 cents (still less than a dollar in modern currency). He both needs and wants more food (and more nutritious meals, at that), but his family can't afford much besides cabbage. His parents are giving him their portions of their food because that's the only way to help Charlie grow—again, an indicator of the family's deep poverty as well as their deep loyalty to one another.

## Chapter 2 Quotes

☝☝ He was the only bright thing in their lives, and his evening visits were something that they looked forward to all day long. Often, Charlie's mother and father would come in as well, and stand by the door, listening to the stories that the old people told; and thus, for perhaps half an hour every night, this room would become a happy place, and the whole family would forget that it was hungry and poor.

**Related Characters:** Charlie Bucket, Mrs. Bucket, Mr. Bucket, Grandma Georgina, Grandpa George, Grandma Josephine, Grandpa Joe

**Related Themes:** 

**Page Number:** 8

### Explanation and Analysis

The narrator explains how, every evening, Charlie goes into his grandparents' room to listen to them tell stories. This ritual becomes a way for Charlie's family to emotionally escape from their poverty. The narrator implies that Charlie's family has nothing fun or engaging to do in the evenings, aside from spending time together and listening to stories. This makes several points: first, it suggests that Charlie's family isn't necessarily less happy or less fulfilled because they're poor. They set an example of something that the novel suggests is desirable: without anything else to distract them (such as television or sweets), they have to talk to one another. And being able to connect with one another in this way isn't just simply entertaining—it actually helps them cope with their poverty by distracting them from how cold and hungry they are. With this, the novel also shows the power of storytelling. Telling stories, the Bucket

family shows, can help shape a person's (or an entire family's) outlook on life and can help them feel happier and more fulfilled.

Regardless, the novel still doesn't shy away from the reality that the Buckets are struggling with financial issues. Saying that the room becomes "a happy place" for a half hour every night implies that outside of that half hour, the room isn't happy. Being poor detracts from their happiness, unless they have something like storytelling to distract them.

## Chapter 5 Quotes


☝☝ "Wouldn't it be something, Charlie, to open a bar of candy and see a Golden Ticket glistening inside!"



"It certainly would, Grandpa. But there isn't a hope," Charlie said sadly. "I only get one bar a year."

"You never know darling," said Grandma Georgina. "It's your birthday next week. You have as much chance as anybody else."

"I'm afraid that simply isn't true," said Grandpa George. "The kids who are going to find the Golden Tickets are the ones who can afford to buy candy bars every day. Our Charlie only gets one a year. There isn't a hope."

**Related Characters:** Grandpa Joe, Charlie Bucket, Grandma Georgina, Grandpa George (speaker), Mr. Bucket

**Related Themes:**  

**Related Symbols:**  

**Page Number:** 21

### Explanation and Analysis

Mr. Bucket has just read his family the announcement in the newspaper saying that Mr. Wonka has hidden five Golden Tickets in five Wonka bars, and Grandpa Joe is excited that Charlie might have a hope of finding one. In this passage, Grandpa Joe shows just how hopeful and excited he is. The novel suggests that Grandpa Joe is more childlike than Charlie's other three grandparents (and in this passage, Grandma Georgina is also more childlike, though she behaves more like the other grandparents for most of the rest of the novel). To Grandpa Joe, the world is a place full of wonder—anyone, even someone like Charlie (who is very poor and can rarely afford luxuries like chocolate), has a chance to have something amazing happen to them.

But though Charlie acknowledges that finding a Golden Ticket would certainly be amazing, his poverty has made him less willing to really lean into that hope. In order to



protect himself, it's easier for him to essentially tell himself that he doesn't have a chance at a Golden Ticket; this will make it easier to bear if he doesn't find one. Grandpa George shares this outlook, and though his words may seem pessimistic, he also seems to be trying to protect Charlie by preparing him for failure.


Charlie and Grandpa George also get at the idea that Charlie is less likely to experience success, specifically because he's poor. In this situation, where there are five Golden Tickets on the line and thousands of Wonka bars that might contain them, wealthier people have an advantage: they can buy more Wonka bars and increase their chances of finding a Golden Ticket. And the first four children who find Golden Tickets suggest that this is true (they're all obviously wealthier than Charlie's family and have the money to buy more chocolate bars). But still, Charlie does find one—showing readers that a person's circumstances aren't necessarily set in stone and can change due to sheer luck.

## Chapter 6 Quotes

☝☝ The picture showed a nine-year-old boy who was so enormously fat he looked as though he had been blown up with a powerful pump. Great flabby folds of fat bulged out from every part of his body, and his face was like a monstrous ball of dough with two small greedy curranty eyes peering out upon the world.

**Related Characters:** Augustus Gloop, Mr. Bucket

**Related Themes:**  

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 21

### Explanation and Analysis

Mr. Bucket brings home a newspaper introducing readers to the first child who finds a Golden Ticket: a very overweight boy named Augustus Gloop. The way that the narrator describes Augustus situates him as an antagonist, introduces readers to his vice (greed), and ties that vice to his weight.

First, it's worth paying attention to the kind of language the narrator uses to describe Augustus's weight. He's "enormously fat," "flabby," and "monstrous," and his face is like dough. He looks like "he had been blown up with a powerful pump." Taken together, the narrator essentially

suggests that Augustus is too large to be believed. In particular, saying that he looks like he's been blown up suggests that no person could normally be as big as Augustus is; it takes an outside force, like a pump, to make someone that big. And using words like "monstrous" and describing his face as doughy also suggests that in a way, Augustus is less human because of his size. The novel may intend "monstrous" to simply convey that Augustus is extremely large, but it nevertheless compares Augustus to a monster and not a human—a creature with negative, frightening connotations.

The narrator then connects Augustus's size to his vice, greed. Throughout the novel, Augustus shows that he's greedy for food and sweets in particular—which, the novel implies, is how he became so large in the first place. Augustus's greed has given him this "monstrous" shape, and now, his size signals to readers that he's an antagonist. And though the novel tries to impart important lessons to its readers—such as that greed isn't a good thing, and that bad things will happen to greedy kids just as tragedy eventually befalls Augustus—it nevertheless encourages some level of prejudice against overweight people. In the world of the novel, a person's weight is connected to their morality—and through Augustus's example, it suggests that overweight people are greedy and selfish.

☝☝ "Oh, it was terrible! My little Veruca got more and more upset each day, and every time I went home she would scream at me, 'Where's my Golden Ticket! I want my Golden Ticket!' And she would lie there for hours on the floor, kicking and yelling in the most disturbing way. Well, sir, I just hated to see my little girl feeling unhappy like that, so I vowed I would keep up the search until I'd got her what she wanted. Then suddenly... on the evening of the fourth day, one of my women workers yelled, 'I've got it! A Golden Ticket!'" [...]

"She needs a real good spanking," said Grandma Georgina.

**Related Characters:** Mr. Salt, Grandma Georgina (speaker), Veruca Salt

**Related Themes:**   

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 24-25

### Explanation and Analysis

In the Salt family's interview with the newspaper after Mr.



Salt finds a Golden Ticket for his daughter Veruca, Mr. Salt explains exactly how and why he found the Golden Ticket. This passage introduces Veruca's vice: she's extremely spoiled and selfish. Through her tantrums, Veruca demonstrates that she expects to get whatever she wants, when she wants it. But the novel also shows here that Veruca's behavior doesn't come out of nowhere—in fact, she likely learned her entitled behavior from her father, Mr. Salt. After all, Mr. Salt doesn't scold Veruca for her tantrums or otherwise check her behavior. Rather, he throws himself into finding her a Golden Ticket to make her stop throwing the tantrums. This shows Veruca that acting in this way is acceptable and will get her what she wants. Grandma Georgina suggests that this is a poor way to parent, and that it's actually Mr. Salt's responsibility to stop Veruca from acting this way. While the suggestion that Mr. Salt should spank his daughter may seem outdated to modern readers, it nevertheless proposes that it's a parent's duty to manage their child's behavior.


It's also significant that Mr. Salt also shows Veruca it's okay to act this way through the specific way he goes about finding her Golden Ticket. He's converted his peanut factory into a candy unwrapping factory—which is, in effect, a way for him to demonstrate his wealth and power, and the fact that he can pay or otherwise force people to do whatever he wants. So, Mr. Salt isn't just entitled; he has the wealth and influence to back up his entitlement and get what he wants.

“I don't think the girl's father played it quite fair, Grandpa, do you?” Charlie murmured.

“He spoils her,” Grandpa Joe said. “And no good can ever come from spoiling a child like that, Charlie, you mark my words.”

**Related Characters:** Charlie Bucket, Grandpa Joe (speaker), Veruca Salt, Mr. Salt

**Related Themes:**  

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 26

### Explanation and Analysis

After hearing how Mr. Salt made the workers in his peanut factory unwrap Wonka bars until they found a Golden Ticket for Veruca, Charlie and Grandpa Joe take issue not with Veruca's behavior, but with Mr. Salt's. This is one of the novel's clearest indicators that it's a parent's job to monitor a child's behavior, and that it's inappropriate to simply

blame a child entirely for their behavior—good or bad. Charlie realizes that without Mr. Salt's willingness to throw himself into finding Veruca a Golden Ticket, Veruca's behavior wouldn't have gotten her anywhere. She may have still thrown a tantrum, but her tantrum wouldn't have been rewarded. So the issue, as Charlie sees it, is that Mr. Salt gave into Veruca's tantrum and showed her that acting out like that is going to yield the results she wants.

Veruca's behavior, in other words, isn't entirely her fault: Mr. Salt has turned her into an unpleasant, entitled person by behaving unfairly to get her what she wants. Grandpa Joe reinforces Charlie's assessment when he notes that it never ends well to spoil a child. In addition to simply reinforcing this to Charlie, though, this also shows that Charlie relies on Grandpa Joe to guide him and help him be a better person. Grandpa Joe is, in this sense, doing the exact opposite of Mr. Salt.

## Chapter 8 Quotes


“And who's she to criticize, anyway, because if you ask me, I'd say that *her* jaws are going up and down almost as much as mine are just from *yelling* at me every minute of the day.”

“Now, Violet! Mrs. Beauregarde said from a far corner of the room where she was standing on the piano to avoid being trampled by the mob.

“All right, Mother, keep your hair on! Miss Beauregarde shouted.”

**Related Characters:** Violet Beauregarde, Mrs. Beauregarde, Mr. Bucket (speaker), Charlie Bucket

**Related Themes:**   

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 31

### Explanation and Analysis

During Violet's interview with the newspaper after finding her Golden Ticket, she quips that her mother, Mrs. Beauregarde, has no right to criticize her for chewing gum when Mrs. Beauregarde scolds Violet all the time. Mr. Bucket is reading this exchange aloud from his newspaper. Violet and Mrs. Beauregarde's exchange shows that Mrs. Beauregarde is an ineffective parent. Though she makes attempts to keep Violet in check (and makes those attempts often, if readers are to take Violet's word for it), Violet doesn't believe she has to listen to her mother. Instead, Violet knows that she can shout at her mother to calm

down, and nothing else will come of the interaction. This highlights the importance of parents following through on their discipline: simply scolding a child, Violet demonstrates, isn't enough if a parent doesn't actually enforce the change they want to see. Her parents may be the only ones in the novel who try to modulate their child's behavior, yet Violet's behavior is no better than any of the other "bad" children.

This passage also highlights that the Beaugardes are better off financially than the Buckets are. Mrs. Beaugarde is standing on a piano—a luxury item that the Buckets, for instance, could only dream of affording. But more obviously, this interview is taking place in the Beaugardes' living room. The fact that they have one shows that they're more financially secure than the Buckets, who live in a two-room house where both rooms function as bedrooms for Charlie and his six family members. Having an extra room is therefore a mark of the Beaugardes' comparative wealth.

## Chapter 10 Quotes

☝ “That child,” said Grandpa Joe, poking his head up from under the blanket one icy morning, “that child has got to have more food. It doesn't matter about us. We're too old to bother with. But a *growing boy*! He can't go on like this! He's beginning to look like a skeleton!”

“What can one *do*?” murmured Grandma Josephine miserably. “He refuses to take any of ours. I hear his mother tried to slip her own piece of bread onto his plate at breakfast this morning, but he wouldn't touch it. He made her take it back.”

“He's a fine fellow,” said Grandpa George. “He deserves better than this.”

**Related Characters:** Grandpa Joe, Grandma Josephine, Grandpa George (speaker), Charlie Bucket, Mrs. Bucket, Mr. Bucket

**Related Themes:**   

**Page Number:** 38-40

### Explanation and Analysis

Several weeks after Mr. Bucket loses his job and the Bucket family begins to starve, Charlie's grandparents discuss what to do about Charlie—the one person in the family, they believe, who actually needs more food. The simple fact that Charlie's family members are willing to give up their own meals in order to help him survive shows just how loyal the Buckets are to one another. Grandpa Joe makes it seem like giving up his food is inconsequential—it's just what the

grandparents should do, in his opinion. Moreover, Grandma Josephine also makes it clear that it's not just the grandparents who are trying to take extra care with Charlie during this trying time: Mrs. Bucket is also trying to make sure her son has enough to eat. The family's dynamic, this shows, is one where every member looks out for the others.

This passage also shows that Charlie has learned to be virtuous from his family members. Prior to Mr. Bucket losing his job, Charlie's parents would regularly give him some of their food—and at that point, Charlie accepted the food. Through doing this, Mr. and Mrs. Bucket demonstrated for their son that it's good to be generous, particularly when it comes to food. Now, Charlie is putting that into practice by refusing his parents' offerings. In this way, the novel gives an example of what it suggests is good parenting in action: Charlie has learned from his parents to give and to make sure that everyone has enough to eat. Finally, this shows just how virtuous Charlie is. He's giving up food when he's literally starving—something that makes it clear that he's not selfish, entitled, or otherwise self-absorbed. His family is what's most important to him, and he's willing to essentially sacrifice himself (by refusing his parents' offerings of food) to make sure that everyone else stays as healthy as possible given the circumstances.


## Chapter 13 Quotes

☝ The tall bony old figure of Grandpa Joe could be seen standing quietly among them, and beside him, holding tightly on to his hand, was little Charlie Bucket himself.

All the children, except Charlie, had both their mothers and fathers with them, and it was a good thing that they had, otherwise the whole party might have gotten out of hand. They were so eager to get going that their parents were having to hold them back by force to prevent them from climbing over the gates.

**Related Characters:** Grandpa Joe, Charlie Bucket, Veruca Salt, Violet Beaugarde, Augustus Gloop, Mike Teavee, Mr. Willy Wonka

**Related Themes:**  

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 54

### Explanation and Analysis

On the morning of the Wonka factory tour, all five children who found Golden Tickets gather outside the factory. But



Charlie is the only one who stands politely as he waits for the tour to begin, while the other four children try to climb the factory fence.

This is the first time that readers see Charlie—the hero of the novel—beside all the other kids, who are antagonists. This encourages readers to compare Charlie to the other kids, and to see that he's more well-behaved than the others. Notably, Charlie isn't just standing quietly and politely to wait for the tour to start, which on its own is a sign that Charlie follows rules and is respectful of Mr. Wonka's time and schedule. In addition, Charlie is also holding onto Grandpa Joe's hand. This is an indicator that Charlie respects Grandpa Joe, looks to him to show him how to behave, and in general relies on his grandfather for guidance.



The other children, though, are literally trying to break away from their parents as they try to scale the fence. They don't rely on their parents to encourage them to behave well—rather, the other kids see their parents as unfair and overbearing for trying to keep them in line. It's also possible to read the other four kids' attempts to climb inside the factory as an indicator of their greed. All four children are selfish: all of them show here that they want to start the tour on their terms, without any regard for what Mr. Wonka has planned or for the rules of the factory.


## Chapter 15 Quotes

☝☝ “Don't you think they look pretty? I told you I hated ugliness! And of course they are *all* eatable! All made of something different and delicious! And do you like my meadows? Do you like my grass and my buttercups? The grass you are standing on, my dear little ones, is made of a new kind of soft, minty sugar that I've just invented! I call it swudge! Try a blade! Please do! It's delectable!”

Automatically, everybody bent down and picked one blade of grass—everybody, that is, except Augustus Gloop, who took a big handful.

**Related Characters:** Mr. Willy Wonka (speaker), Charlie Bucket, Augustus Gloop, Violet Beauregarde, Veruca Salt, Mike Teavee

**Related Themes:**  

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 66

**Explanation and Analysis**

In the factory's chocolate room, Mr. Wonka excitedly points out his chocolate river, the candy trees and bushes, and the sugar grass to the awestruck tour group. First, this passage shows just how interested Mr. Wonka is in making his factory into a place where things are beautiful, awe-inspiring, and somewhat absurd. Indeed, he sees making things beautiful as the antidote to “ugliness,” particularly ugly factories (which he mentions earlier in the tour). The world, he seems to imply, is full of ugliness. It's therefore important to him to create something like his chocolate factory, which inspires wonder and awe in all who enter and creates a sort of paradise within an unattractive world.

Then, the novel also continues to establish Augustus's greed in this passage. While the other three “bad” kids (Violet, Veruca, and Mike) are, they're not as greedy as Augustus is—they're lumped in with Charlie, who picks a single blade of grass both because he's virtuous and because he follows directions. This also shows that the other three antagonists are somewhat more willing to follow directions than Augustus is, at least at this early point in the book—foreshadowing Augustus's fall into the river and trip up the pipes, making him the first child to succumb to his vice and have to leave the tour early.

## Chapter 16 Quotes

☝☝ “*Daddy!*” shouted Veruca Salt (the girl who got everything she wanted). “*Daddy!* I want an Oompa-Loompa! I want you to get me an Oompa-Loompa! I want an Oompa-Loompa right away! I want to take it home with me! Go on, Daddy! Get me an Oompa-Loompa!”

“Now, now, my pet!” Her father said to her, “we mustn't interrupt Mr. Wonka.”

“*But I want an Oompa-Loompa!*” screamed Veruca.

“*All right, Veruca, all right. But I can't get it for you this second. Please be patient. I'll see you have one before the day is out.*”

**Related Characters:** Veruca Salt, Mr. Salt (speaker), The Oompa-Loompas, Mr. Willy Wonka

**Related Themes:**   

**Page Number:** 71

**Explanation and Analysis**

After Mr. Wonka finishes explaining how the Oompa-Loompas came to work in his factory, Veruca Salt demands that her father, Mr. Salt, get her an Oompa-Loompa to take home with her. This illustrates how entitled Veruca is. She



only has to learn of something (or someone's) existence to decide that she wants it and demand that her father get it for her. She's also interrupting Mr. Wonka and making this moment about her and what she wants—even though she's in the middle of a group tour. So, in addition to showing that she's entitled and selfish, she also shows here that she doesn't respect anyone else's time.


Then, the way Mr. Salt handles Veruca's demands is also important. At first, he tries to encourage her to be more polite by reminding her that they shouldn't interrupt Mr. Wonka. Notably, he's asking her to show Mr. Wonka respect—but he's not telling her no. Then, when Veruca doubles down and screams again for an Oompa-Loompa, Mr. Salt agrees to get her one—it'll just happen later in the day. With this, he shows Veruca that she can make demands like this and expect to get what she wants, no matter how rudely she asks for things. She might have to wait a little while, but she's inevitably going to get whatever she wants if she asks for it.

Finally, it's curious that Veruca feels it's okay to ask for an Oompa-Loompa. Mr. Wonka and the narrator have already made it clear that the Oompa-Loompas are people, just like Veruca is, even though they're much smaller than an average human adult. This gives a decidedly sinister feel to Veruca's request—the fact that she wants to possess another human being makes the Oompa-Loompas seem more like slaves than like equals. With this, the novel starts to show that while the Oompa-Loompas might be the story's most moral characters, they get the least amount of respect, and their living and working conditions seem somewhat unethical.

☛☛ Augustus Gloop, as you might have guessed, had quietly sneaked down to the edge of the river, and he was now kneeling on the riverbank, scooping hot melted chocolate into his mouth as fast as he could.

**Related Characters:** Augustus Gloop, Veruca Salt, The Oompa-Loompas, Mrs. Gloop, Augustus Gloop, Charlie Bucket

**Related Themes:**  

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 72

### Explanation and Analysis

Everyone's attention suddenly shifts away from Veruca's

demands for an Oompa-Loompa when Mrs. Gloop notices that Augustus has snuck away to drink from the factory's chocolate river. This, at first reads, as another (and perhaps not unexpected) indicator of how greedy Augustus is. The novel has already established that out of the four misbehaved children, Augustus's vice is greed. This is presumably what the novel means when the narrator says that the reader "might have guessed" that Augustus would do such a thing.

However, it's also possible to read this another way: Augustus may be greedy, but the novel also expects readers to look at Augustus—who's very overweight—and infer that of all the kids, he's obviously going to be the greediest and the most likely to do something like this. This ties a person's weight to their relative morality, with people who are overweight being less moral and thin people (like Charlie and Mr. Wonka) being the good, moral characters of the novel. With this, the novel exposes its underlying prejudice against overweight people.

## Chapter 17 Quotes

☛☛ "Save him!" screamed Mrs. Gloop, going white in the face, and waving her umbrella about. "He'll drown! He can't swim a yard! Save him! Save him!"

"Good heavens, woman," said Mr. Gloop, "I'm not diving in there! I've got my best suit on!"

**Related Characters:** Mrs. Gloop, Mr. Gloop (speaker), Augustus Gloop, Mr. Willy Wonka, Mr. Teavee, Mrs. Teavee

**Related Themes:**  

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 73

### Explanation and Analysis

Augustus Gloop has just fallen into Mr. Wonka's chocolate river, and his parents argue about who should save their son. Mr. Gloop's response in particular highlights several interesting things about the Gloop family. First, it's worth noting Mr. Gloop's implication when he insists that he's not getting into the chocolate river because he's wearing his best suit. This is meant to be a darkly humorous moment in the novel, but it nevertheless suggests that Mr. Gloop prioritizes his suit and all it symbolizes (his wealth and power) over taking care of his son, who might be in grave danger. Having wealth, the novel suggests at various points, doesn't guarantee that a family will be happy and loyal—and

the Gloops' behavior here makes this clear.


Then, it's also telling that Mrs. Gloop wants someone else to save her son; she's not willing to do it herself. This highlights the habit of parents in the novel to try to offload the work of disciplining or caring for their children onto other people or things. In Mrs. Gloop's case, she wants anyone but her to try to save Augustus, while later, the Teavees illustrate the consequences of leaving childrearing to the television. In both cases, the novel suggests, it's damaging to a family's loyalty and love when parents won't do the work themselves. Moreover, it can result in situations like this where, ultimately, no one is able to save Augustus before it's too late, and he's sucked into the pipe.

## Chapter 18 Quotes

☝☝ Charlie was holding tightly onto his grandfather's bony old hand. He was in a whirl of excitement. Everything that he had seen so far—the great chocolate river, the waterfall, the huge sucking pipes, the candy meadows, the Oompa-Loompas, the beautiful pink boat, and most of all, Mr. Willy Wonka himself—had been so astonishing that he began to wonder whether there were could possibly be any more astonishments left. Where were they going now? What were they going to see? And what in the world was going to happen in the next room?

**Related Characters:** Charlie Bucket, Grandpa Joe, Mr. Willy Wonka, The Oompa-Loompas, Augustus Gloop

**Related Themes:** 

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 83

### Explanation and Analysis

When it's time to leave the chocolate room, Mr. Wonka ushers the tour group onto a pink candy boat that Oompa-Loompas row down the chocolate river into a tunnel. Charlie is sitting in the back of the boat with Grandpa Joe, totally in awe of everything he's seen. It's significant that this passage begins with Charlie, once again, clinging tightly to Grandpa Joe's hand. With this, Charlie continues to show readers that he respects and relies on Grandpa Joe to keep him safe and show him how to behave. Broadly speaking, this shows that Charlie respects authority, both his grandfather's and Mr. Wonka's. This means that he's in a better position to not end up like Augustus Gloop, who was just sucked up a massive pipe because he didn't follow

instructions and leave the chocolate river alone.

Then, Charlie's perspective is also interesting: he's simply shocked by everything he's seen in the factory. Everything from the chocolate river to the candy boat is something that he's making a point to savor and enjoy. And while Charlie is curious about what could possibly come next, his main goal seems to be to enjoy what he's seeing and accept it for what it is. He's not—as Augustus did—going to try to inappropriately possess and consume the candy in the factory.

## Chapter 21 Quotes

☝☝ “I want the gum!” Violet said obstinately. “What’s so silly?”  
 “I would rather you didn’t take it,” Mr. Wonka told her gently. “You see, I haven’t got it *quite right* yet. There are still one or two things...”

“Oh, to heck with that!” said Violet, and suddenly, before Mr. Wonka could stop her, she shot out a fat hand and grabbed the stick of gum out of the little drawer and popped it into her mouth. At once, her huge well-trained jaws started chewing away on it like a pair of tongs.

**Related Characters:** Violet Beauregarde, Mr. Willy Wonka, Mrs. Beauregarde (speaker)

**Related Themes:**   

**Page Number:** 95

### Explanation and Analysis

In Mr. Wonka's Inventing Room, Violet demands and then takes Mr. Wonka's three-course meal gum without permission. With this, Violet demonstrates her vices clearly for the reader: she not only chews gum, something the novel frames as a vice; she's also selfish and greedy, and she can't take no for an answer.

Notably, Violet grabs for the gum despite Mr. Wonka telling her no and gently telling her why taking the gum isn't a good idea. But the novel has already shown that in general, Violet has had no practice listening to authority figures who tell her no. Just as she shouted at her mother when Mrs. Beauregarde reminded her to be polite during her interview with the newspaper earlier in the novel, now she refuses to listen to Mr. Wonka tell her no and correct her behavior. As Violet's eventual fate (turning into a blueberry) shows, it can end badly when children don't listen to directions intended to keep them safe and healthy. And generally speaking, grabbing the gum like this shows that Violet prioritizes her

own desires and happiness over everything else—no matter how much the novel suggests she should do the opposite.

Then, it's also significant that the novel describes Violet's hand as "fat" when she snatches the gum out of the machine. This continues to associate vices with being overweight, revealing the novel's underlying prejudice against overweight people. Being overweight, the novel seems to imply, is a moral failing—and if a person does something bad or immoral, like taking this piece of gum, that automatically associates them with being overweight.

☞ Her body was swelling up and changing shape at such a rate that within a minute it had turned into nothing less than an enormous round blue ball—a gigantic blueberry, in fact—and all that remained of Violet Beauregarde herself was a tiny pair of legs and a tiny pair of arms sticking out of the great round fruit and a little head on top.

"It *always* happens like that," sighed Mr. Wonka. "I've tried it twenty times in the Testing Room on twenty Oompa-Loompas, and every one of them finished up as a blueberry. It's most annoying. I just can't understand it."

**Related Characters:** Mr. Willy Wonka (speaker), Violet Beauregarde, The Oompa-Loompas

**Related Themes:**   

**Page Number:** 99-100

### Explanation and Analysis

When Violet gets to the dessert course of the three-course meal chewing gum, she turns into a blueberry. The novel intends for this to act as a lesson as to why chewing gum is rude and a vice, while also punishing Violet for her greed and selfishness. It's a play on the saying "you are what you eat"—in this case, Violet literally turns into a version of the blueberry pie she was eating through the gum.


But while Violet turning into a blueberry might provide a cautionary tale as to why chewing gum and being greedy is bad (per the novel), turning into such a massive blueberry has a deeper connotation. In a way, Violet's punishment for not following the rules is to become too large to function—she can't walk or do anything else in her current state; the Oompa-Loompas eventually roll her out of the room because that's the only way to move her around. And while it's no doubt intended to just be absurd that Violet becomes this large, it nevertheless shows again that the novel sees being overweight as a moral failing—and in this case, as a punishment for bad behavior.

Aside from this, Mr. Wonka is oddly unconcerned about the fact that 20 Oompa-Loompas have ended up in the same state as Violet. This makes it clear that he's tested this gum on 20 Oompa-Loompas, but the book doesn't make it clear whether the Oompa-Loompas were given a say in the matter. Indeed, given how unconcerned Mr. Wonka seems for their welfare, it seems likely they weren't given a choice. With this, the novel shows again how little respect the Oompa-Loompas receive from any of the novel's other characters. To Mr. Wonka, they seem more like convenient test subjects than people with thoughts, feelings, and desires all their own—seemingly because they simply look different from average-sized people.

## Chapter 24 Quotes

☞ *For though she's spoiled, and dreadfully so, A girl can't spoil herself, you know. Who spoiled her, then? Ah, who indeed? Who pandered to her every need? Who turned her into such a brat? Who are the culprits? Who did that? Alas! You needn't look so far To find out who these sinners are. They are (and this is very sad) Her loving parents, MUM and DAD. And that is why we're glad they fell Into the garbage chute as well.*

**Related Characters:** The Oompa-Loompas (speaker), Veruca Salt, Mr. Salt, Mrs. Salt, Charlie Bucket

**Related Themes:**  

**Page Number:** 117-118

### Explanation and Analysis

After Mr. Wonka's trained squirrels throw Veruca and her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Salt, down the garbage chute, the Oompa-Loompas sing another song detailing what readers and the remaining children should learn from Veruca's fate.

Through their song, the Oompa-Loompas back up what Charlie's grandparents have been saying all along: that spoiled kids are no fun to be around, but it's not entirely their fault that they're spoiled. Rather, it was their parents' mistakes that turned them into "brats," and in turn, it's a parent's responsibility to keep their children from becoming as spoiled as Veruca. Throughout the novel, Charlie's grandparents have suggested that Veruca in particular needs to be spanked, or that her parents should otherwise

step in and modify her behavior. Again, while this might be jarring to modern readers, the Oompa-Loompas nevertheless back up the idea that a parent is responsible for their how their children act. And punishment, in this case, shouldn't just be for the misbehaving child—it should also be for the parent who created that child and encouraged their bad behavior.

## Chapter 26 Quotes


☞ “That isn't *exactly* how [television] works,” said Mike Teavee.

“I am a little deaf in my left ear,” Mr. Wonka said. “You must forgive me if I don't hear everything you say.”

“I said, that isn't exactly how it works!” shouted Mike Teavee.

“You're a nice boy,” Mr. Wonka said, “but you talk too much.”

**Related Characters:** Mike Teavee, Mr. Willy Wonka (speaker)

**Related Themes:** 

**Page Number:** 126-127

### Explanation and Analysis

Mr. Wonka is explaining how television function. According to him, it works by taking a picture of something, breaking that picture into tiny pieces, and then reassembling those pieces inside a television screen. In reality, this isn't how television actually works. But the novel as a whole encourages readers—and the children enjoying the factory tour—to look at the world with wonder and awe, and to not try to ascribe too much logic to something or otherwise try to make a given situation make conventional sense. Mr. Wonka wants to teach the children that it's more fun to accept his version of how television works and simply enjoy it for the absurdity. It doesn't matter as much that television doesn't actually work that way; that doesn't make the idea any less absurd, funny, or interesting.


Mike, though, is insistent on correcting Mr. Wonka and setting the record straight about how television works. The novel later reveals that this is because Mike has spent too much time watching television—something that the novel suggests causes kids to become too literal in their worldview and robs them of the ability to use their imaginations. In this sense, Mike is incapable of seeing the world how Mr. Wonka would like him to see it. So, to Mr. Wonka, because Mike is saying the things that indicate he's incapable of imagination, Mike “talk[s] too much.”

## Chapter 27 Quotes

☞ *They leave you free to cook the lunch  
And wash the dishes in the sink—  
But did you ever stop to think,  
To wonder just exactly what  
This does to your beloved tot?  
IT ROTTS THE SENSES IN THE HEAD!  
IT KILLS IMAGINATION DEAD!  
IT CLOGS AND CLUTTERS UP THE MIND!  
IT MAKES A CHILD SO DULL AND BLIND  
HE CAN NO LONGER UNDERSTAND  
A FANTASY, A FAIRYLAND!  
HIS BRAIN BECOMES AS SOFT AS CHEESE!  
HIS POWERS OF THINKING RUST AND FREEZE!  
HE CANNOT THINK—HE ONLY SEES!*

**Related Characters:** The Oompa-Loompas (speaker), Mike Teavee, Mrs. Teavee, Mr. Teavee

**Related Themes:**  

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 139

### Explanation and Analysis

After Mike Teavee is reduced to being only an inch tall after transporting himself through Mr. Wonka's special movie camera, the Oompa-Loompas explain why television on the whole is so bad. Notably, they begin by acknowledging that television—which was gaining in popularity during the 1960s, when Roald Dahl wrote *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*—is fast becoming an integral part of people's lives. It engrosses children, allowing parents to accomplish household tasks without worrying about whether their kids are getting in trouble. In this way, the Oompa-Loompas frame television as a sort of surrogate parent. In a household where parents are too busy to be able to balance childcare, paid work, and housework, television provides an attractive alternative to a babysitter—it can keep kids entertained and under control.



However, the Oompa-Loompas make it clear that in the world of the novel, television does awful things to young viewers who spend too much time in front of the TV. In short, the Oompa-Loompas propose that watching television deprives a child of the ability to tell what's real and what's not. In addition, watching too much TV makes kids unable to enjoy the many wonderful things around them. This, for instance, is why Mike wasn't willing to trust Mr. Wonka and pull the Television Chocolate out of the TV

earlier—such a thing is total nonsense to him, because he’s watched so much television. He doesn’t have the imagination or the willingness to accept that something like that can happen.

So, while television might be a convenient way for parents to deal with childcare, the Oompa-Loompas make it clear that parents are actively hurting their children by parking them in front of the television. Children who are raised by televisions, rather than their parents, will grow up without critical thinking skills and without a good sense of what’s true or not in the world around them. In Mike’s case, this can be seen in his love of violent movies. The movies are fictional—but this doesn’t stop Mike from acquiring as many toy guns as he possibly can and firing them at various points for no reason. He seemingly doesn’t grasp that the guns are dangerous weapons—to him, because he’s mostly seen them on the television, they’re toys like any other.

☞☞ *‘All right!’ you’ll cry. ‘All right!’ you’ll say,  
‘But if we take the set away,  
What shall we do to entertain  
Our darling children? Please explain!’  
We’ll answer this by asking you,  
‘What used the darling ones to do?  
‘How used they keep themselves contented  
Before this monster was invented?’  
Have you forgotten? Don’t you know?  
We’ll say it very loud and slow:  
THEY...USED...TO...READ!*

**Related Characters:** The Oompa-Loompas (speaker), Mike Teavee, Mr. Willy Wonka

**Related Themes:**  

**Page Number:** 139-140

### Explanation and Analysis

As the Oompa-Loompas continue their song after Mike Teavee’s disastrous trip through Mr. Wonka’s magical television, they offer parents an alternative to television: books. The Oompa-Loompas again acknowledge that television is a convenient invention for parents, as it allows them to leave their children in front of a babysitter of sorts while they perform other tasks. Parents, the Oompa-Loompas note, need something to give their kids to keep them entertained; this is to be expected. But the Oompa-Loompas also suggest that parents have forgotten a way of life that, at the time of the novel’s publication in 1964,



wasn’t that far gone: a time before television, when children had books to keep them entertained.

With this, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* justifies its own existence. The novel, the Oompa-Loompas imply, can keep kids entertained, leaving their parents able to go on about their lives and perform essential tasks. It also encourages young readers to continue reading other books, long after they’ve finished this one.

## Chapter 30 Quotes

☞☞ “Mind you, there are thousands of clever men who would give anything for the chance to come in and take over from me, but I don’t *want* that sort of person. I don’t want a grown-up person at all. A grownup won’t listen to me; he won’t learn. He will try to do things his own way and not mine. So I have to have a child. I want a good sensible loving child, one to whom I can tell all my most precious candy-making secrets—while I am still alive.”

**Related Characters:** Mr. Willy Wonka (speaker), Charlie Bucket, Grandpa Joe

**Related Themes:**  

**Page Number:** 151

### Explanation and Analysis

Mr. Wonka explains to Charlie and Grandpa Joe that he’s going to leave his factory to Charlie. Specifically, he makes it clear that he wants to leave the factory to a child, rather than a fellow adult. In this passage, Mr. Wonka makes the case that adults see the world very different than children do. Adults, he suggests, are more interested in possessing and controlling the world around them. When it comes to the future of his candy factory, this is unacceptable to Mr. Wonka. A person who’s interested in control and power would presumably come in and change things—and not change them for the better. This would go against everything that Mr. Wonka has worked toward for the last several decades. Mr. Wonka’s candy-making philosophy prizes fun and wonder, something that he seems to fear an adult coming in to take over the factory wouldn’t prioritize anymore.

The obvious alternative, to Mr. Wonka, is to find a child to take over the factory. Charlie, incidentally, fits the bill: he is, as Mr. Wonka says, “a good sensible loving child.” As the novel’s hero, Charlie is characterized as selfless, humble, and polite—qualities that Mr. Wonka prizes. And while

Charlie looks at the world like Mr. Wonka does (with wonder and without wanting to possess or control things), he's also sensible and practical. Finally, Charlie is loyal and loving to the people and places he loves, such as to his family and now to the chocolate factory. So, because of this, the novel frames Charlie as the only child who's worthy of taking on Mr. Wonka's factory, since he and Mr. Wonka share the same worldview.

“I'm afraid my mother won't come with us,” Charlie said sadly.

“Why ever not?”

“Because she won't leave Grandma Josephine and Grandma Georgina and Grandpa George.”

“But they must come too.”

“They can't,” Charlie said. “They're very old and they haven't been out of bed for twenty years.”

“Then we'll take the bed along as well, with them in it,” said Mr. Wonka. “There's plenty of room in this elevator for a bed.”

“You couldn't get the bed out of the house,” said Grandpa Joe. “It won't go through the door.”

“You mustn't despair!” cried Mr. Wonka. “Nothing is impossible! You watch!”

**Related Characters:** Charlie Bucket, Mr. Willy Wonka, Grandpa Joe (speaker), Mrs. Bucket, Grandma Josephine, Grandma Georgina, Grandpa George

**Related Themes:**   

**Page Number:** 152

### Explanation and Analysis

Mr. Wonka has just offered to let Charlie come live at the factory, now that he's going to inherit it—along with the rest of Charlie's family. Though Charlie shares Mr. Wonka's willingness to look at the world with awe and wonder, Charlie is still practical and sensible. He thinks that there are things that just aren't going to happen—such as convincing Mrs. Bucket that she should abandon the grandparents to their bed and come with him to the chocolate factory. With this, Charlie makes it clear that his family members are very loyal to one another. Even the draw of living in a chocolate factory, he suggests, isn't enough to pull his mother away from what she believes is most important in life: caring for her family.

Mr. Wonka, though, makes the case that Charlie and his family members don't have to choose between improving their fortunes and abandoning beloved family members in their drafty little house. Indeed, the candy factory is where Charlie and his parents and grandparents will be able to live securely and have enough to eat. Given Charlie's difficult, impoverished upbringing, this is difficult for him to conceptualize—and it shows how much more he has to learn after the close of the novel.

Then, Mr. Wonka makes one final attempt to teach Charlie and readers the importance of using one's imagination. By insisting that they couldn't get the bed out of the house, Charlie is essentially looking for reasons why Mr. Wonka's plan isn't going to work. This, Mr. Wonka seems to imply, is cutting Charlie off from all the wonderful possibilities in the world. Life will be richer if Charlie (and, by extension, readers) look at the world with the attitude that anything is possible.



## SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

## CHAPTER 1

The narrator introduces two elderly people sitting in bed. They're Grandpa Joe and Grandma Josephine, Mr. Bucket's parents. The other two old people, also in bed, are Mrs. Bucket's parents, Grandpa George and Grandma Georgina. Mr. and Mrs. Bucket have a son too, named Charlie. (Charlie is very pleased to meet the reader.) Charlie's entire family lives in a tiny wood house on the outskirts of a big town. The house isn't big enough for everyone—there are only two rooms and one bed—so the grandparents spend all their time in the bed and never get out. Charlie and his parents sleep on mattresses on the floor in the other room.

Things aren't so bad in the summer, but in the winter, the Buckets' house is freezing cold. They're too poor to be able to afford a bigger house or another bed, since Mr. Bucket is the only member of the family with a job. He works in a toothpaste factory, screwing caps onto filled tubes of toothpaste. No matter how much he works, he barely makes enough money to support his family. So, the family subsists on meals of bread, margarine, boiled potatoes, boiled cabbage, and cabbage soup. On Sundays, they get second helpings. Everyone is always hungry, but nobody starves.

Charlie suffers the most out of his family. Mr. Bucket and Mrs. Bucket regularly give Charlie their helpings of food, but it's not enough for a growing boy like Charlie. What he really wants is **chocolate**. Every morning as Charlie walks to school, he passes shops with slabs of chocolate stacked in the windows. His classmates eat candy bars all day long, which is torture for Charlie.

Charlie gets **chocolate** once per year, on his birthday. His parents and grandparents save their money to buy Charlie a single, small chocolate bar. Every year, he makes his chocolate bar last as long as possible. He first spends several days staring at it; then, he nibbles a tiny bit every day until it's gone. He can make his candy bars last a month like this.

*The way that the novel introduces Charlie and the Bucket family highlights their poverty first and foremost. They seem to be poorer than most everyone else in town, given how separate and different from the rest of the town their house looks. The fact that all seven of them live in two rooms and don't have enough space makes this even clearer. Then, having Charlie essentially introduce himself as he does (saying that he's pleased to meet the reader) shows readers from the beginning that Charlie is polite and kind.*



*The Buckets live a difficult, deprived life. For much of the year they're not warm enough, and it's a challenge to get enough to eat. This continues to drive home that Charlie is coming from hardship. However, there are nevertheless funny and absurd aspects to this passage. For instance, getting a second helping of soup on Sundays seems darkly humorous, given that an extra serving of something as meager as cabbage isn't likely to fill the family up.*



*Charlie lives in a world that's filled with luxuries like chocolate—and he spends a lot of his time looking at it, unable to indulge. His family's attempts to help him get more food aren't enough to satisfy him, though there's no indication that he resents this or complains about it. However, giving Charlie their food does show that his family is generous and giving, which is perhaps why Charlie is sweet and polite himself.*



*The Buckets might be very poor, but they nevertheless feel that it's essential to indulge in a treat once in a while. Charlie shows just how appreciative and resourceful he is by making his candy bars last a full month.*





But what makes life even worse for Charlie is that he not only sees **chocolate** all the time in shop windows—from his house, he can see a massive chocolate factory. The factory, Wonka’s factory, is the biggest and most famous in the world. A man named Mr. Willy Wonka, a great inventor and chocolatier, owns it. His factory is mysterious, with high walls, smoking chimneys, and odd sounds. The air around it smells like chocolate. Charlie has to pass it every day as he walks to and from school. He loves the smell and wishes that he could get inside the factory.

*Again, the fact that Charlie lives so close to this massive, famous chocolate factory drives home the inequality in his world. The way the narrator describes the factory as mysterious and somewhat odd suggests that the life of luxury the chocolate represents is totally unfamiliar to Charlie. Charlie dreams of bettering his circumstances and being able to afford chocolate more often—but he doesn’t know how to get there yet.*



## CHAPTER 2

Every night, after Charlie finishes his cabbage soup supper, he goes to listen to his grandparents tell stories. Each of his grandparents is over the age of 90, shriveled, and bony. They spend their days huddled in bed with nothing to do—but once Charlie comes in and greets them, they all perk up and smile. They love their little grandson and look forward to their evenings with him all day long. Often, Mr. Bucket and Mrs. Bucket stand in the doorway and listen to their parents’ stories. For the half hour every night that the family is all together sharing stories, they can all forget that they’re poor and hungry.

*Being together as a family is very important to the Buckets, particularly the grandparents. It seems that the way they contribute to the family is by providing stories, which function as a form of escapism. This allows the family to focus on something other than their struggles. The grandparents’ reaction to Charlie’s arrival in their room each evening shows that to them, Charlie represents the future—and their stories are a way of inspiring him to survive the hardship that they’re all experiencing.*



One night, Charlie asks his grandparents if it’s true that Mr. Wonka’s **chocolate** factory is the biggest in the world, and if Mr. Wonka is the cleverest chocolate maker ever. All four grandparents insist that these things are true. Grandpa Joe, though, sits up in bed and insists that *everyone* knows that Mr. Wonka is the greatest, most extraordinary chocolate maker ever. He says that Mr. Wonka is a “magician” and can make anything he wants.

*The way that Grandpa Joe describes Mr. Wonka suggests that Wonka is, at least to outsiders, something of a magician. He’s not only creating “extraordinary” confections; he’s doing so primarily out of chocolate, something that the novel associates with luxury. This makes stories about Mr. Wonka all the more exciting for young Charlie, as they’re a source of wonder and escapism.*



Grandpa Joe asks if he really hasn’t told Charlie about Willy Wonka’s factory. He hasn’t, so Charlie asks him about it. Grandpa Joe is the oldest grandparent at 96 and a half (which is almost as old as people can be). He’s frail and weak, but whenever Charlie’s around, Grandpa Joe seems to become young again.

*Being around young children, the novel seems to imply, can help a person hold onto their youth. It’s significant that the elderly Grandpa Joe seems to become young again when he’s with Charlie. This suggests that Charlie and Grandpa Joe have a special relationship, and that Charlie’s ability to look at the world with wonder has the ability to help others do the same.*



With excitement, Grandpa Joe says that Mr. Wonka has invented more than 200 new candy bars and sent them all over the world. Kings and presidents eat them. But he doesn’t just make candy bars: he’s also made ice cream that doesn’t melt outside of a freezer. Charlie insists that this is impossible, and Grandpa Joe doesn’t argue—but nevertheless, it’s true. The other grandparents nod in agreement.

*Grandpa Joe emphasizes that Mr. Wonka makes his candies for very powerful people. This solidifies the idea that chocolate is associated with wealth and luxury. Though Charlie insists that ice cream that doesn’t melt is impossible, Grandpa Joe proposes that it’s not worth it trying to ask too many questions about whether or not that’s true. Instead, people should simply accept and enjoy things that seem wonderful or outlandish.*



In addition, Grandpa Joe says, Mr. Wonka has made violet-flavored marshmallows, caramels that change colors, and chewing gum that never loses its shape. He makes blue birds' eggs that, when sucked, eventually reveal a tiny sugar bird. Charlie and Grandpa Joe's mouths water talking about all the sweets, but Charlie wants his grandfather to tell him more. As the stories continue, Grandma Josephine tells her husband to tell Charlie about "that crazy Indian prince."

*Because the Buckets are so poor, talking about these fantastical sweets provides wonderful escapism for Grandpa Joe and Charlie. The candies may be real, but because the family has no hope of ever being able to afford such luxuries, they might as well be totally fictional. But this doesn't negate their value: they're still entertaining and enjoyable, even as nothing more than stories.*



## CHAPTER 3

Grandpa Joe explains that once, an Indian prince named Prince Pondicherry asked Mr. Wonka to come to India and build a huge palace out of **chocolate**. Mr. Wonka did just that: the palace had 100 rooms and was made entirely of chocolate. When he completed the palace, Mr. Wonka warned Prince Pondicherry that the palace wouldn't last long. Prince Pondicherry insisted that was nonsense—but not long after, on a hot day, the palace began to melt. The prince woke up from a nap swimming in a lake of chocolate.

*This passage shows, first of all, that Mr. Wonka is capable of truly amazing things when it comes to candy-making—the chocolate palace, for instance, sounds incredibly luxurious and almost dreamlike. But Mr. Wonka also seems to suggest that chocolate is ephemeral—it won't last forever, no matter how much a person (even a very powerful and wealthy person) believes they can control it.*



Charlie stares at Grandpa Joe, transfixed. He asks if this is really true, or if Grandpa Joe is just kidding around, but his grandparents all insist that it's true. Grandpa Joe leans in closer to tell Charlie another true thing about Mr. Wonka: nobody ever goes in, or comes out, of Wonka's factory. All factories, he explains, have workers that go in and out every day. But nobody does that at Mr. Wonka's factory. Charlie studies his grandparents' faces. They're smiling, but they also look dead serious. Charlie admits he's never seen anyone enter or exit the factory and asks who works there. Grandpa Joe starts to tell Charlie who runs Mr. Wonka's factory, but Mrs. Bucket insists that it's time for bed.

*Again, Charlie isn't able to just enjoy the stories as entertainment—he feels compelled to confirm whether or not Grandpa Joe's stories are true. But as Grandpa Joe pivots to talk about Mr. Wonka's mysterious workers, it becomes clear that he can't answer all of Charlie's questions. And perhaps, the novel suggests, the answers aren't as important as Charlie might have thought. Instead, it may be better to accept that the stories are entertaining and delightful—even if they're not actually true.*



## CHAPTER 4

Grandpa Joe continues his story the next evening. He explains to Charlie that not long ago, thousands of people worked in Mr. Wonka's factory—but all of a sudden, Mr. Wonka fired all of them. This, Grandpa Joe says, was because of spies. Other chocolate makers were jealous, so they planted spies at Mr. Wonka's factory to learn his secrets. The spies returned to their real employers, and other candy makers soon began manufacturing candy balloons and ice cream that didn't melt, just like Mr. Wonka.

*While competition might be a normal part of doing business, Mr. Wonka's reaction to the spies shows that he takes issue with such unethical behavior. In some sense, stealing the recipes for these candies takes away from the candies' mystery and wonder—knowing exactly how they're made and replicating them on a large scale takes away some of the magic.*



Mr. Wonka was incensed and closed the factory. For months, even Mr. Wonka disappeared and everyone else in town was sad. But then, one day, people noticed smoke coming from the factory's chimneys. People ran to the gates, expecting Mr. Wonka to be there welcoming his employees—but the gate was locked and chained. People were confused, since the factory was definitely working and making **chocolate**. Grandpa Joe leans close to Charlie and says that the most mysterious thing was that people noticed small shadows in the factory's windows. The shadows were clearly workers, but no one knew who they were or where they lived.

Grandpa Joe says that the factory has been running like this for the last 10 years, and the **chocolates** and candies it's produced are better than they used to be. Furthermore, no one copies Mr. Wonka's candies anymore. Charlie asks who works in the factory, but Grandpa Joe says that nobody knows. And Mr. Wonka never comes out—only candies do, and they come out of a special trapdoor. Charlie repeats his question. This time, Grandpa Joe says that all anyone knows is that the employees are very small—they don't even come up to a man's knee. Charlie insists people that small don't exist.

Suddenly, Mr. Bucket bursts into the house, waving a newspaper. He asks if anyone has seen the news and holds up the paper. The headline reads: "Wonka Factory to be Opened At Last to Lucky Few."

## CHAPTER 5

Grandpa Joe is thrilled and asks Mr. Bucket to read the article aloud. Mr. Bucket reads that today, Mr. Willy Wonka sent out a notice that says he's decided to allow five children to visit his factory. He'll give them a tour of the factory and even let them in on his secrets. At the end, all the children will receive a lifetime supply of Wonka candy. He'll choose which children get to visit with five **Golden Tickets** that have been printed on golden paper and tucked into normal-looking candy bars. They could be anywhere in the world. In closing, Mr. Wonka wishes everyone luck finding the tickets.

Grandma Josephine grouses that Mr. Wonka is "dotty," but Grandpa Joe insists that this is brilliant. Now, everyone will be looking for **Golden Tickets**—it's a great marketing scheme. And, Grandpa Joe says, it would be so exciting to find one. Grandpa George says that it would be great to get enough candy to last a lifetime, but Grandma Josephine says it makes her sick to think about it.

*Again, this passage continues to build up Mr. Wonka as someone mysterious, almost magical, and capable of anything. The way that Grandpa Joe describes Mr. Wonka's strange workers, meanwhile, makes it clear that there are mysteries in the world that are more or less impossible to solve—no one is going to find out who these workers are if Mr. Wonka doesn't open his factory to the public. The novel presents this as something neutral, if not somewhat positive in that it's intriguing.*



*There's something odd and magical going on in Mr. Wonka's factory—and Charlie wants to understand what that is. Grandpa Joe, though, shows Charlie that all they can do is look at the information in front of them. They know that the chocolates are fantastic, that nobody goes in or out of the factory, and that the workers are only knee-high. But Charlie's line of questioning also suggests that it's expected that people will have questions—it's normal for people to be curious.*



*Finally, the mystery is seemingly going to be solved—a "lucky few" will be able to figure out what exactly is going on in Mr. Wonka's factory.*



*It's unclear exactly why Mr. Wonka would stipulate that the five visitors must be children. This implies that he believes there's some particular difference between children and adults—and whatever that difference is, children are preferable. Printing the tickets on golden paper highlights the fact that they represent wealth and power, as gold is very expensive and has long been a symbol of money and prestige.*



*Grandpa Joe and Grandpa George are far more excited about the Golden Tickets than their wives are. They seem to look at the world with a bit more wonder and excitement—something that differentiates them as being more childlike. These qualities are, perhaps, what Mr. Wonka values in children that most adults don't have.*



Grandpa Joe asks Charlie if he agrees that it would be amazing to find a **Golden Ticket**. Charlie sadly says that it would, but there's no chance—he only gets one candy bar per year. Grandma Georgina reminds Charlie that his birthday is next week, so he has a chance like anyone else. Grandpa George, though, insists that Charlie has no chance. He can't afford to buy candy every day, like some kids can.

*Both Charlie and Grandpa George suggest that because the Bucket family is so poor, the idea that Charlie will come across a Golden Ticket is far-fetched. It's much more likely that wealthier kids, who can regularly afford to buy luxuries like chocolate bars, will find the Golden Tickets.*



## CHAPTER 6

A boy named Augustus Gloop finds the first **Golden Ticket** the very next day. The paper prints a huge picture of him on the front page. Augustus is only nine, but he's so fat that he looks like he's been inflated. His small, "greedy" eyes peer out from a "doughy" face. In Augustus's hometown, he's being called a hero, and kids there get the day off of school. In the family's interview with the paper, Mrs. Gloop says she just knew Augustus would find a Golden Ticket, since he eats so many candy bars per day. Eating is his hobby, which is better than being a "hooligan." And clearly, she says, Augustus needs the nourishment, and candy is a good source of vitamins.

*The way that the narrator describes Augustus introduces his vice: greed. Specifically, he's greedy about food—sweets in particular. Mrs. Gloop's interview with the paper confirms what Grandpa George suggested in the previous chapter: that wealthy people who can afford to buy a lot of candy will have a better chance of finding a Golden Ticket. She also notably takes no issue with Augustus's greed and even suggests that she doesn't see his greed for what it is. Mrs. Gloop gives the absurd and rather humorous excuse that Augustus consumes candy as a source of vitamins—likely because she doesn't want to acknowledge that she spoils her son by allowing him to eat so many sweets. Further, the novel links Augustus's greed to his weight (as indicated by the way his "greedy" eyes are associated with his "doughy" face)—which exposes some underlying prejudice against overweight people.*



After Mr. Bucket reads the interview out loud, Grandma Josephine and Georgina scoff that Augustus and Mrs. Gloop are "revolting" and "repulsive." Grandpa George wonders who will get the remaining four tickets. Suddenly, the whole world seems caught up in trying to find the final tickets. People buy dozens of candy bars at a time and in one city, a gangster robs a bank and uses the money to buy candy bars. A Russian woman finds a fake ticket, while an English scientist invents a machine that can scan candy bars and detect the Golden Ticket. But as the scientist demonstrates his machine, the machine grabs for a duchess's gold filling and causes a scene.

*Charlie and his family members represent the moral high ground in this novel—so readers are meant to take Charlie's grandmothers at their word that Augustus and his mother are "revolting" and "repulsive." Describing them in this way invites readers to compare Augustus and Charlie. Charlie, the novel implies, is a better person than Augustus because he can restrain himself—after all, he can make his once-a-year birthday candy bar last a whole month.*



On the day before Charlie's birthday, a small girl named Veruca Salt finds the second **Golden Ticket**. Her family lives in a big city far away, and her parents are extremely wealthy. Mr. Bucket brings home the paper that night. On the front page is a picture of Veruca, sitting between her mother and father. Mr. Salt, her father, told the paper exactly how he found the ticket: he's in the peanut business and so, for three days, he had the women who work in his factory shelling peanuts unwrap candy bars instead. Veruca was beside herself and screamed for a Golden Ticket. Mr. Salt hated seeing her like that, and on the fourth day, one of his workers found a Golden Ticket. Now, Veruca is happy again.

*Veruca's vice isn't shared with the reader as overtly as Augustus's was (recall that the narrator described Augustus's eyes as "greedy"), but this passage nevertheless makes it clear that Veruca is extremely spoiled. And like Augustus, her wealthy family was able to pull strings and increase the chances that Veruca would find a Golden Ticket. Mr. Salt also demonstrates that he's willing to give Veruca everything she wants, no matter the cost or the imposition.*



Grandma Josephine insists that Veruca is even worse than Augustus, and Grandma Georgina suggests that Veruca could benefit from being spanked. To Grandpa Joe, Charlie murmurs that Mr. Salt didn't get the ticket fairly. Grandpa Joe says that Mr. Salt spoils Veruca, and it never ends well to spoil a child. Then, Mrs. Bucket tells Charlie it's time for bed—in the morning, he'll want to get up early to open his birthday Wonka candy bar. Grandpa Joe suggests that Charlie open his bar in front of them all in the morning, in case there's a **Golden Ticket** inside.

*Suggesting that Veruca should be spanked indicates that in Grandma Georgina's opinion, parents should step in and discipline their children for any bad behavior—and she sees Veruca's spoiled behavior as worthy of punishment. This starts to suggest that spoiled children aren't the ones at fault; their parents are to blame for not correcting them. Charlie reinforces this when he suggests that Mr. Salt, rather than Veruca, behaved unethically. Veruca may be spoiled, but her behavior pales next to her father's.*



## CHAPTER 7

When Charlie walks into his grandparents' room in the morning, they all wish him happy birthday. He sits down nervously on the edge of the bed, holding his Wonka's Whipple-Scrumptious Fudgemallow Delight bar. Mr. Bucket and Mrs. Bucket stand at the foot of the bed, and everyone watches Charlie silently. Charlie strokes the bar and makes the wrapper crackle, and Mrs. Bucket gently tells him that he shouldn't be too disappointed if there's no **Golden Ticket** inside. Grandma Georgina points out that whether there's a ticket inside or not, Charlie will still have a candy bar.

*Charlie's parents and grandparents show Charlie they care about him by preparing him for the possibility that there likely be a Golden Ticket inside his candy bar. However, Grandma Georgina suggests that simply having a candy bar to enjoy is worth being excited and grateful for. This sentiment, combined with Charlie stroking the candy bar and making the wrapper crackle, encourage readers to look on the bright side and enjoy life's simple pleasures.*



They all know it's silly to expect that Charlie will find the **Golden Ticket** inside this candy bar. But even though they know this, they also know there's a small chance that there is a Golden Ticket inside. So, although the adults pretend to be calm, they're actually just as tense as Charlie is. Slowly, Charlie starts to peel the wrapping off his candy bar. Then, he rips the rest of it off. A candy bar falls into Charlie's lap, but nothing more. Charlie looks up at his family, smiles, and offers his candy bar to Mrs. Bucket. She refuses, as do the rest of Charlie's family when he offers to let them have a taste.

*One of a parent or guardian's responsibilities, this passage suggests, is tempering one's excitement so that children can learn to do the same. But it also makes clear that being excited isn't limited to children—adults, the book implies, can (and perhaps should) approach life with awe and wonder. But as expected, this bar doesn't conceal a Golden Ticket. Charlie demonstrates his maturity and generosity by not getting upset about it—and by offering his family members a taste of his chocolate.*



## CHAPTER 8

When Mr. Bucket gets home that night, his paper announces that two more **Golden Tickets** have been found. After supper, Mr. Bucket reads that a Miss Violet Beauregarde found the third ticket. When the paper's reporter arrived at the Beauregarde house, Violet was standing on a chair in her living room, waving the ticket around, talking loudly, and chewing gum. She told the reporters that she's usually a gum chewer, but she switched to candy bars to find her Golden Ticket. Violet said that she chews gum all day long, except at mealtimes.

*Violet may not be as obviously wealthy as Veruca or Augustus, but she's still better off than Charlie—she has a living room in her home, whereas Charlie and his family only have two rooms to house the seven of them. Violet's vice, meanwhile, is that she chews gum constantly. Charlie, of course, doesn't even have the option to engage in this particular vice, since his family presumably can't afford to purchase gum.*



Mr. Bucket reads that Violet told reporters that Mrs. Beauregarde doesn't think chewing gum is ladylike, and Mrs. Beauregarde tried to scold her daughter from across the room. But Violet shouted at her mother to calm down and then shared that she's been chewing her current piece of gum for three months—a world record. She sticks it on her bedpost at night. Violet used to like sticking her gum on the elevator buttons in her apartment building, just to annoy people. Grandma Josephine and Grandma Georgina call Violet “beastly” and “despicable.”

*Mrs. Beauregarde makes an effort to correct Violet's behavior, but she doesn't escalate when Violet essentially refuses to listen to her mother. This passive parenting style, the novel implies, contributes to Violet's rude behavior. Moreover, Violet's habit of sticking chewed gum on elevator buttons shows that her misbehavior extends to how she treats others. She seemingly only cares about her own entertainment and doesn't see the value in keeping her apartment building clean for her neighbors.*



Mr. Bucket reads that the fourth **Golden Ticket** was found by a boy named Mike Teavee. The reporter shares that young Mike was annoyed when all the reporters showed up, as he was watching a gangster movie with lots of guns on a huge TV. Mike had toy pistols hanging off his body and would occasionally leap up and shoot one of them. The boy even shouted at the reporters to not interrupt his show; he loves gangster movies with lots of shooting and violence.

*Where the previous three ticket winners' parents were at least present for their interviews, Mike's parents are conspicuously absent. He's left to his own devices with only the television to entertain him. Given his love of violent shows and movies, it seems likely that Mike's toy guns help him emulate what he sees on television. The television is “parenting” Mike in this sense, and it's teaching him that violence is appropriate.*



Grandma Georgina asks if all kids are “brats” these days. Mrs. Bucket says that not all kids behave like that, and Grandpa George notes that there's still one ticket left. Grandma Georgina is certain that the child who finds the final **Golden Ticket** will be “some nasty little beast who doesn't deserve it.”

*Here, Grandma Georgina essentially suggests that life doesn't necessarily reward those who are most deserving. Even though Charlie isn't “bratty” like the other children, virtue isn't going to win him a Golden Ticket when other, wealthier kids can essentially buy them.*



## CHAPTER 9

When Charlie gets home from school the next day, he finds Grandpa Joe awake in bed. Grandpa Joe beckons Charlie to come close and then, from under his pillow, reveals a single 10-cent coin. He whispers to Charlie that he wants another shot at finding the last **Golden Ticket**. Charlie asks if Grandpa Joe is sure he wants to spend his money on chocolate, and Grandpa Joe says that he is. He tells Charlie to run to the nearest store, buy a bar, and bring it back to open it.

*This chapter drives home that Charlie and Grandpa Joe have a special relationship—in part, it seems, because Grandpa Joe sees the world in a more childlike way than the other grandparents do. He's willing to hope for the best, even if the best-case scenario in this situation isn't likely. His desire for a bar also suggests that in some cases, indulging is harmless—a simple pleasure like a chocolate bar can make life more pleasant and hardship easier to bear, whether there's a Golden Ticket in the bar or not.*



Charlie does as he's told and returns five minutes later with a bar of Wonka's Nutty Crunch Surprise. They decide to open it together. Grandpa Joe tears the paper first, giggling that they don't have a hope—but there's a tiny chance there's a **Golden Ticket** inside this bar. After more dithering, Charlie tells Grandpa Joe to open the bar all the way. There's no Golden Ticket inside, and they burst into laughter. This wakes up Grandma Josephine, and Grandpa Joe tells her to go back to sleep.

*It's significant that as Grandpa Joe is laughing when he insists that he and Charlie don't have a chance. This is a serious matter—a Golden Ticket could change their lives, after all—but it's nevertheless something that he can laugh about and enjoy. Laughing again when the bar doesn't reveal a Golden Ticket suggests that Grandpa Joe is able to enjoy even the smallest things—like the absurd thought that they'd get lucky and find a Golden Ticket.*



## CHAPTER 10

The weather becomes extremely cold over the next two weeks. It begins to snow one morning, and by the evening, it's four feet deep. Then, a freezing wind starts to blow. Whenever Charlie steps outside, the wind feels like a knife. It's hard to escape the wind inside, too: it sneaks in the doors and windows, and Charlie's grandparents struggle to keep warm. Nobody in the Bucket family cares about the **Golden Tickets** anymore—they only care about staying warm and having enough to eat.

*This passage illustrates some of the consequences of the Bucket family's poverty: they're so poor that they simply can't afford to stay warm and well-fed. And in light of this, something like a Golden Ticket suddenly becomes frivolous and totally unnecessary—survival is now the most important thing.*



When it's cold, people naturally become hungrier; it's normal to crave rich stews and other warming dishes. Most people are luckier than they think, and they get those dishes. But Charlie and his family are too poor to afford warm food, so as the weather gets colder and nastier, Charlie gets hungrier. Then, suddenly, things get even worse for the Buckets. Mr. Bucket loses his job when the toothpaste factory has to close, and he's unable to find another job. He shovels snow for people in the streets, but the pennies he earns aren't enough to buy food for his family. Slowly, the entire Bucket family starts to starve.

*Here, the narrator addresses the reader directly to help them develop empathy for Charlie and his family. This also subtly encourages readers to be grateful for what they have—thereby helping them become more virtuous and thankful, like Charlie. And notably, the novel never shies away from showing just how damaging and dangerous poverty can be. The family is starving, which shows how high the stakes are for the Buckets.*



Charlie still passes Mr. Wonka's **chocolate** factory on his way to school every day. He always lifts his head to sniff the chocolate and often spends a few minutes sniffing. As Grandpa Joe watches Charlie sniff the chocolate one morning, he announces that Charlie needs more food because he's a growing boy. Grandma Josephine frets that Mrs. Bucket tried to give Charlie extra bread this morning, but Charlie refused to take it. Grandpa George notes that Charlie deserves better.

*Now that Charlie is hungrier than usual, the chocolate smell from the factory is even more tantalizing. This builds up suspense, as it seems even less likely now that Charlie is going to get to tour the factory. Charlie refusing Mrs. Bucket's bread shows how virtuous he is—now, he's giving up extra food, even when he's literally starving.*



The cold weather continues, and Charlie grows increasingly thinner. Soon, the bones of his face stick out. Like many children who go through hardships like this, Charlie starts to change his behavior to conserve his strength, such as staying inside during recess and walking slowly, never running. But one afternoon, as Charlie walks home after school, he stops suddenly. There's a piece of green paper in the gutter—it's a dollar bill.

*Again, the novel doesn't sugarcoat the effect that poverty has on Charlie: he's growing thinner and has to change his habits to preserve his limited strength and energy. But Charlie's luck also changes in an instant when he finds this dollar bill.*



The way the dollar is partially buried makes Charlie think that someone didn't just drop it. Passersby aren't searching for money—Charlie can keep it. Charlie picks it up, knowing that this can buy his family food. He decides to buy one candy bar at the nearest shop and then give the rest of the money to Mrs. Bucket.

*Charlie's reaction to finding the money is yet another example of how generous and thoughtful he is. Though he's starving and could use the dollar to buy food, he wants to make sure that someone else didn't drop it; he doesn't want it if it's not rightfully his. And though he's going to treat himself, he's going to use the rest of the money to feed his family—a selfless and mature impulse, given Charlie's young age.*



## CHAPTER 11

Charlie enters the shop and asks for another Wonka bar like the one he had for his birthday. The fat man behind the counter hands Charlie his bar, and Charlie immediately rips it open. He shoves huge bites in his mouth, savoring the rich **chocolate**. The shopkeeper tells Charlie to be careful he doesn't get a stomachache as he gives Charlie his change. Charlie finishes his chocolate in less than 30 seconds and is extremely happy. But as he reaches for his change—nine dimes—he decides that it wouldn't hurt to buy one more bar, and he asks the shopkeeper for another.

*Charlie is indulging himself here, but given how poor and hungry he is, the novel frames his indulgence as a good thing. The chocolate bar fills Charlie up and makes him truly happy and satisfied for the first time in a long time. The shopkeeper also demonstrates care and kindness by warning Charlie against a stomachache.*



The shopkeeper hands Charlie another bar and as Charlie starts to unwrap it, he sees gold. The shopkeeper screams that Charlie found the last **Golden Ticket**. Within moments, a crowd of people gathers around Charlie. Everyone wants to see Charlie and his ticket, and one boy spits that it's not fair that Charlie found it when the boy has been buying 20 bars per day for weeks. Charlie stays still, clutching the Golden Ticket, as people approach him and talk about him. He feels a bit like he's floating.

*Once again, Charlie's life changes in an instant. Now, he's going to be able to see Mr. Wonka's factory—something he's dreamed of doing for years. But while Charlie may have gotten this opportunity because of luck, the boy who insists it's not fair proposes that this kind of opportunity should only be available to those who can pay.*



After a minute, a man puts a hand on Charlie's shoulder and in a whisper, offers Charlie \$50 and a new bicycle for the **Golden Ticket**. Another woman offers Charlie \$500. The shopkeeper tells the adults to leave Charlie alone and ushers Charlie to the door. He whispers to Charlie to run home and keep ahold of his ticket. Charlie nods. The shopkeeper stands up, smiles, and says that Charlie looks like he needed a break like this—he's glad Charlie got it. Charlie thanks the man and races home. When he passes Mr. Wonka's factory, he waves and sings that he'll see Mr. Wonka soon.

*The shopkeeper essentially suggests that Charlie deserves to have something good—like finding the Golden Ticket—happen to him. It's apparent to outsiders like this man that Charlie is virtuous and therefore deserving of happiness. But other people, like those who offer Charlie money, send the message that a person's worthiness is tied to their wealth rather than their morality or merit—what they can pay for this experience is what makes them worthy of it.*





## CHAPTER 12

When Charlie reaches his house, he bursts in the front door, shouting for Mrs. Bucket. She's serving the grandparents their soup, so Charlie rushes into the room and waves his **Golden Ticket**. In a shout, he tells them how he found the dollar and then the Golden Ticket. Mrs. Bucket stares, and the grandparents freeze. After a minute, Grandpa Joe asks if Charlie is joking. Charlie offers his grandfather the Golden Ticket, and Grandpa Joe leans in close to inspect it.

A smile spreads over Grandpa Joe's face. He looks at Charlie, and suddenly, his cheeks fill with color and his eyes shine. After taking a deep breath, Grandpa Joe throws up his arms, whoops with joy, and leaps out of bed. He dances in his pajamas, cheering for Charlie. At this moment, Mr. Bucket gets home. He's freezing and tired, and very confused by the sight in front of him. They fill him in, and Charlie offers his father the **Golden Ticket**.

Mr. Bucket sits down and inspects the ticket: it's pure gold, hammered into a sheet. On one side is a printed invitation from Mr. Wonka. With prodding from Grandpa Joe, Mr. Bucket starts to read the invitation out loud. Mr. Wonka congratulates the recipient and explains that he's inviting all the **Golden Ticket** holders to see his factory. After the tour, they'll be sent home with trucks loaded with sweets—and if the winners run out of sweets, they can always ask for more.

But the most exciting part of this visit, Mr. Wonka writes, is a surprise. He insists that nobody can imagine what they're going to see. The tour will take place on February 1, and ticketholders must be outside the factory gates at 10 a.m. with one or two family members—and their **Golden Ticket**.

*Now that Charlie knows his life is going to change for the better, all thoughts of conserving energy are gone—he likely believes that he'll never have to do so again, since he's won a lifetime supply of Wonka candy. And though Grandpa Joe was the one who talked up how great it would be to find a Golden Ticket, this doesn't make it any more believable that it's happened.*



*The Golden Ticket has the same effect on Grandpa Joe as it did on Charlie: now, it's not so necessary to conserve energy—the family will have enough to eat (albeit in the form of candy) from here on out. Meanwhile, when Charlie gives his ticket to Mr. Bucket and Grandpa Joe, it shows how much he trusts and relies on these figures.*



*This ticket is probably the most valuable thing Charlie and his family have ever owned, since it's made of pure gold. So, it's valuable on several levels, since winning the lifetime supply of candy also means that the family won't experience food insecurity in the future. And again, asking Mr. Bucket to read what the invitation says shows that Charlie relies on his father to interpret information like this for him, a sign of trust and respect.*



*Nobody can imagine what the factory tour is going to hold—but by saying this, Mr. Wonka also encourages ticketholders to imagine what might happen. Given Grandpa Joe's descriptions of how mysterious and awe-inspiring Wonka's inventions are, it's likely that the tour is going to be an exciting experience—though its events aren't something that anyone can predict or control.*



Mrs. Bucket exclaims that tomorrow is February 1; Charlie found the ticket just in time. Grandpa Joe shouts for Charlie to bathe, iron his clothes, and get ready for the big day. Mrs. Bucket tells Grandpa Joe to calm down and then asks which adult is going to go with Charlie; she can't because she needs to take care of the grandparents. Grandpa Joe leaps out of bed again and says he'll go. Mrs. Bucket smiles and asks Mr. Bucket if he wants to go. Mr. Bucket says he'd love to, but Grandpa Joe deserves to go. Grandpa Joe continues to whoop and celebrate. Then, there's a knock on the door, and when Mr. Bucket opens it, reporters swam into the house. Charlie doesn't get to bed until after midnight.

*While the narrator implied that the other children have one or two parents in their lives, Charlie has six adults who, barring the grandparents' mobility issues, could conceivably take him to the factory. When Mrs. Bucket insists that she can't go because she must care for her parents and in-laws, it shows again how loyal Charlie's family members are to one another. Even the excitement of visiting Mr. Wonka's factory isn't enough to take Mrs. Bucket's attention away from what the novel implies is most important: family.*



## CHAPTER 13

The next morning is sunny but still cold and snowy. Crowds gather outside of Mr. Wonka's factory to see the winners enter the factory; police can barely keep the crowds back. The small group of lucky children and their guardians stands off to the side. Charlie holds tightly to Grandpa Joe's bony hand, while the other children are barely under control. They try to climb the fence as their fathers scold them to be patient. People in the crowd point out Augustus, Violet (still chewing her piece of gum), Mike Teavee, and Veruca Salt. They discuss how spoiled Veruca is, and several wonder why Charlie isn't wearing a coat. The church clock strikes 10, and the gates open slowly.

*The way Charlie holds Grandpa Joe's represents his love and respect for his grandfather. But the other kids don't seem to respect their parents in the same way, since they're trying to scale the factory's fence and have to be restrained. This encourages readers to draw comparisons between Charlie and the other kids, and it shows that Charlie is the most obedient and virtuous of the bunch. It also makes it clear that Charlie's poverty is obvious to onlookers, since they notice that he's not wearing a coat (presumably because his parents can't afford to buy him one).*



## CHAPTER 14

The gates open to reveal Mr. Wonka, standing just inside the factory. He's "extraordinary": he's a small man who carries and gold walking cane and wears a black top hat, a plum tailcoat, and green trousers. His eyes sparkle, and his head makes jerking movements that make him seem full of life. He does a little dance to the gate and welcomes the children to his factory in a high voice. He invites the children to come up one by one.

*Mr. Wonka's bright, colorful clothing adds to the sense that he's a fun, absurd figure. He's also notably described as being small, just like Charlie—and this is something the novel associates with goodness and virtue. In addition, his gold walking cane indicates how wealthy he is, just as the Golden Tickets represent wealth and power.*



Augustus steps up to introduce himself first. Mr. Wonka pumps Augustus's hand up and down, greets his parents, and ushers Augustus in. Veruca steps up next. Mr. Wonka again shakes her hand, but he comments that Veruca's name is odd—he thought a "veruca" was a wart. He greets Violet and Mike in the same fashion, and then Charlie steps forward and whispers his name to Mr. Wonka. Mr. Wonka greets Charlie happily, congratulates him on finding his ticket just in time, and then asks everyone to follow him into the factory. He warns them to stay close—he doesn't want to lose anyone this early.

*Mr. Wonka is subtly needling Veruca—a verruca is indeed a type of wart, and pointing this out perhaps implies that Veruca is an unpleasant person, much like a wart is an unpleasant ailment. Whereas the other kids confidently introduce themselves to Mr. Wonka with confidence, Charlie only whispers his name, which hints that he doesn't have the sense of self-importance that the others do. Meanwhile, Mr. Wonka says that he doesn't want to lose anyone this early on the tour, which ominously foreshadows that he is going to lose kids throughout the tour—and it's possible that he planned for this to happen.*



Charlie looks back and watches the huge iron gates close. Mr. Wonka skips ahead, leading the group to a big red door. He explains that it's nice and warm inside; his workers are used to a very hot climate and would die in the cold weather they're currently having. When Augustus asks about the workers, Mr. Wonka tells him to be patient. Once they're all inside, Charlie looks around. He's in a long corridor that seems to stretch on forever, and it's wide enough to drive a car through.

*The huge, iron gates swinging closed, as well as the seemingly infinite corridor, are ominous, as both subtly hint that the people on the tour are somehow trapped in the factory. However, the factory's warmth and spaciousness also contrast with Charlie and Grandpa Joe's cold, cramped house, perhaps suggesting that the factory will become a sort of safe haven for them. Meanwhile, telling Augustus to be patient suggests that Mr. Wonka isn't interested in letting the kids ask questions and shape their own experience; Mr. Wonka wants to craft an experience for them without their input.*



Charlie remarks that the corridor is nice and warm, and Grandpa Joe agrees. It also smells delightfully of coffee, sugar, mint, violets, and apple blossoms. In the distance, Charlie can hear what sounds like a massive machine. Mr. Wonka says that this is the corridor and shows the children where to hang their coats. Then he hurries down the hallway. The group follows behind him, pushing and shoving one another as they try to keep up. Then, Mr. Wonka turns into a side passage that's a bit narrower—and then keeps turning into narrow passages. He shouts behind him that they all slope down because most of the factory is underground—there's not enough space for everything above ground. After more turns, Mr. Wonka stops in front of the **chocolate** room.

*The factory is very different from Charlie's home in that it's so warm and comparatively luxurious. Charlie and Grandpa Joe also seem to look at the factory with wonder and delight as they smell these wonderful smells. The revelation that most of the factory is perhaps unexpected and somewhat unusual—in this way, it encourages the kids to keep an open mind, as there will likely be more unexpected things around every turn. Meanwhile, the other kids' pushing and shoving once again makes Charlie look virtuous and polite by comparison.*



## CHAPTER 15

Pulling out his keys, Mr. Wonka says that this is one the most important room in the factory. It's also very beautiful, because Mr. Wonka can't stand ugly factories. He warns the children to stay calm and then pushes the door open. The sight in front of them is spectacular: there's a beautiful valley, with meadows and a brown river. There's a waterfall in the river, and below the waterfall, there are huge glass pipes that extend up into the ceiling. The pipes suck up the muddy water. There are trees and flowers alongside the river.

*It's significant that although the characters are in a factory, this room doesn't look like one would perhaps expect a factory to look. Instead, it's a natural haven of sorts in the middle of a city. Beautiful scenery isn't something that most people would expect to find in a factory, showing again that life is more interesting when people keep an open mind and can surprises like this.*



Mr. Wonka points to the river and explains that it's all **chocolate**—enough to fill every bathtub and swimming pool in the country. The pipes carry the chocolate to the other rooms. All the children and their parents are too shocked to speak. They just stare as Mr. Wonka explains that the waterfall mixes the chocolate—the *only* way to mix chocolate properly is by waterfall. Then, he explains that all the grass, trees, and flowers are edible. Everyone picks a blade of grass (except Augustus, who picks a handful). Charlie whispers to Grandpa Joe that it's wonderful, and Grandpa Joe agrees.

*This first sight in the factory impresses everyone to the point of speechlessness. Awe, this suggests, can in some cases transcend class boundaries—the other kids are just as awestruck as Charlie, even though they presumably have the money to see spectacular things more often. Noting that Augustus picks a handful of grass, rather than a single blade like everyone else, reiterates that he's greedy and selfish. He thinks only of himself and of his own pleasure, rather than following instructions.*



As Mr. Wonka encourages his guests to sample all the candy in the room, Veruca Salt lets out a scream. She points to a small person down by the river. Charlie sees multiple small men, and soon, everyone is asking questions about the people by the river. The little men are about the size of dolls. One points to the children and says something to his fellows, and they all laugh. Mr. Wonka says that the tiny men are real people called Oompa-Loompas.

*Going forward, it's important to keep in mind that in this passage, both the narrator and Mr. Wonka refer to the Oompa-Loompas as people, not an entirely different species. This factory visit isn't just going to introduce the children and their parents to new and fantastic candies—it's also going to show them that humanity comes in all shapes and sizes.*



## CHAPTER 16

Proudly, Mr. Wonka says the Oompa-Loompas have been imported from Loompaland. Mrs. Salt insists there's no such place; she's a geography teacher. Mr. Wonka says that Mrs. Salt should know everything about Loompaland, being a teacher. He says the country is terrible: it's full of thick jungles, "infested" with dangerous beasts like hornswogglers and whangdoodles. Whangdoodles eat Oompa-Loompas 10 at a time, so the Oompa-Loompas were struggling to survive. They lived high in trees, starving because all they had to eat were nasty green caterpillars.

*Mrs. Salt believes that she knows all there is to know about the world, but Mr. Wonka makes it clear that she doesn't. There's more to learn, this passage suggests, if a person keeps an open mind and is willing to learn new information. Then, it's also worth noting that saying the Oompa-Loompas were "imported" from Loompaland makes the Oompa-Loompas seem less human. People immigrate to new countries; they're not imported like material goods are. It's possible, then, that the Oompa-Loompas were shipped here and forcibly put to work in Mr. Wonka's factory without agreeing to this arrangement.*



What the Oompa-Loompas really wanted, Mr. Wonka says, was cacao beans—but those were hard to find. Cacao beans, incidentally, are what **chocolate** is made out of. So once Mr. Wonka discovered that the Oompa-Loompas loved cacao, he called on the tribe's leader (who was starving) and offered him a deal. If the Oompa-Loompas came to work in Mr. Wonka's factory, they could eat as many cacao beans as they wanted and could even receive cacao beans as wages. The leader agreed, and Mr. Wonka shipped the entire tribe home. The Oompa-Loompas now speak English and love music, dancing, and mischief.

*The way that Mr. Wonka describes the Oompa-Loompas resembles how the narrator has described Charlie. They've both come from difficult circumstances where they went hungry—and they all crave chocolate in some form. Again, Mr. Wonka saying that he "shipped" the Oompa-Loompas to the factory deprives them of their humanity.*



Veruca Salt interrupts Mr. Wonka's explanation to shout that she wants an Oompa-Loompa. Mr. Salt first tells Veruca not to interrupt, but then promises that he'll get her one by the end of the day. Then, Mrs. Gloop shouts for Augustus to stop—unsurprisingly, he's kneeling at the riverbank, scooping **chocolate** into his mouth.

*That Veruca asks for an Oompa-Loompa like this—and that Mr. Salt agrees to get her one—is dehumanizing, as the way they speak about the Oompa-Loompas suggests that they're more like animals than people, even though they're described as people earlier in the chapter. Mr. Salt is also sending Veruca mixed messages about what behavior is appropriate. Telling her not to interrupt seems, at first, like he's trying to teach her to be polite. But immediately after this, he tells her that she can have an Oompa-Loompa, which teaches Veruca that she can still get whatever she wants—no matter how rudely she asks for it. Finally, saying that it shouldn't be surprising to readers that Augustus is drinking out of the river means that readers are supposed to infer that he'd do this—presumably, because he's overweight, and the novel attributes Augustus's greed to his size.*



## CHAPTER 17

Mr. Wonka cries that Augustus can't touch the **chocolate**—it can't be contaminated by human hands. Mrs. Gloop calls for Augustus to leave the river alone again, but Augustus doesn't listen. He says that the chocolate is terrific and asks for a bucket. His parents and Mr. Wonka continue to yell at him, but Augustus only listens to "the call of his enormous stomach." Mrs. Gloop shouts that Augustus is going to give his cold to all of England, while Mr. Gloop warns Augustus that he's leaning too far out.

Suddenly, Augustus falls into the **chocolate** river with a shriek and disappears. Mrs. Gloop screams for someone to save her son, while Mr. Gloop insists that *he's* not going into the river—he's wearing his best suit. As Augustus and his parents scream, Augustus drifts closer to the massive pipes and is sucked up into one of them. Everyone on the bank watches in awe as Augustus shoots up the clear glass pipe. Mr. Gloop remarks that he didn't think the pipe would be big enough for his enormous son, and Charlie notes that it isn't: Augustus is stuck.

The pressure builds behind Augustus until finally, it's too much. The pressure of the **chocolate** dislodges Augustus, and he shoots through the pipe and into the ceiling. Mr. Wonka tells Mr. Gloop and Mrs. Gloop to stay calm and assures them that Augustus will come out the other side just fine. The pipe leads to a room that makes strawberry-flavored chocolate-coated fudge. Mrs. Gloop accuses Mr. Wonka of being a monster, since he's laughing at Augustus's plight. Mr. Wonka giggles that he'd never let Augustus be made into fudge; the fudge would taste terrible.

Mrs. Gloop tells Mr. Wonka to take her to Augustus straight away. Mr. Wonka snaps his fingers three times, and an Oompa-Loompa appears beside him. Mr. Wonka asks the tiny man to take the Gloops to find Augustus, and the Oompa-Loompa bursts into laughter. Mr. Wonka scolds the Oompa-Loompa and then tells him to hurry: they don't want Augustus to end up in the fudge boiler, since the resulting fudge would be inedible. When Mrs. Gloop shrieks, Mr. Wonka insists that he's joking and sends the Gloops on their way.

*Through this passage, Augustus shows that he's greedy and selfish. He doesn't listen to his parents or Mr. Wonka—and to make things even worse, he's sick with a cold, so he's contaminated the factory's chocolate. In short, he prioritizes his own desires over Mr. Wonka's wishes, and over the health of everyone else who eats Wonka chocolates.*



*Mr. Gloop is clearly more interested in preserving the cleanliness of his best suit—something that signals his wealth and status—than he is in saving his son. This moment is meant to be darkly humorous, but it nevertheless suggests that wealth doesn't guarantee a happy or loyal family unit. Then, the fact that Augustus doesn't fit into the pipe drives home just how overweight he is—and the fact that he gets stuck in the pipe due to his own greed implies that his weight is tied to his vice. In this way, the novel frames being overweight as a kind of moral failing.*



*Mr. Wonka seems glib about Augustus being swept away in the chocolate pipe, which makes his earlier assertion that he didn't want to lose anyone on the tour more sinister. It seems as though he may have expected a child to meet some grisly fate in the chocolate room. Then, it's worth noting that Mr. Wonka doesn't seem to care about Augustus's health or well-being—he only cares about his fudge. It's unclear why: it could be because Augustus is greedy, or Mr. Wonka may be prejudiced against overweight people.*



*Again, it's impossible to tell whether Mr. Wonka is joking or not—but either way, he proposes here that his fudge is far more important than Augustus's health and well-being. When the Oompa-Loompa laughs at Augustus's plight, it essentially gives the reader permission to do the same. The novel treats the Oompa-Loompas as its moral compass, showing readers what's right and wrong, and what's acceptable to find funny.*



Five Oompa-Loompas on the other side of the river start to beat drums and chant “Augustus Gloop!” They sing a song about Augustus, a “great big greedy nincompoop.” They sing that normally, they’d turn him into a fun toy. But Augustus is so greedy and foul that their only option was to send him up the pipe. There are “funny things” happening now.

The Oompa-Loompas warn the other children that Augustus will be fine, though he’ll be changed by the time he’s done going through the fudge machine. It’s going to slice at him and boil away the greed. By the end, where a nasty boy once stood, there will only be a delightful piece of fudge. Mr. Wonka assures his group that the Oompa-Loompas’ song is just nonsense. Grandpa Joe tells Charlie that it must just be a joke—he hopes it is, at least.

## CHAPTER 18

Mr. Wonka asks the remaining children and their parents to follow him and not worry about Augustus. Out of the mist coming from the river, a pink boat appears. It looks like it’s made of pink glass, and Oompa-Loompas sit at the oars. Mr. Wonka explains he hollowed out a huge hard candy to make the boat. When the Oompa-Loompas stop the boat at the riverbank, they all start laughing. Mr. Wonka assures the group that the Oompa-Loompas always laugh, and he ushers everyone onto the boat. As they start to move, he scolds Mike Teavee to stop licking the boat.

Veruca Salt tells Mr. Salt that she wants a boat just like this and Oompa-Loompas to row her around. Grandpa Joe whispers to Charlie that Veruca “wants a good kick in the pants,” and Charlie agrees. He’s holding tightly to Grandpa Joe’s hand and is very excited. He’s seen such amazing things so far and wonders where they’re going next. Suddenly, Mr. Wonka appears next to Charlie. He uses mugs to scoop up **chocolate** from the river and offers them to Charlie and Grandpa Joe, asking if they haven’t had much to eat lately. It’s the best thing Charlie has ever tasted.

*Here, the Oompa-Loompas suggest that they’re responsible for Augustus’s fate—they say that their only option was to send him up the pipe. This suggests that this tour is possibly a way for the Oompa-Loompas to teach naughty children lessons when they succumb to their vices.*



*The fact that Augustus may come out of this debacle as something delightful—fudge—suggests again that the Oompa-Loompas are here to teach the children a lesson. Grandpa Joe and Charlie can’t conceive of something so horrible happening to a child, but it’s hard to tell whether readers should believe the Oompa-Loompas or Mr. Wonka.*



*Again, there’s clearly some sort of joke being played on the tour group, since the Oompa-Loompas keep laughing at them—but it’s unclear exactly what the joke is. Mike might be forgiven for licking the candy boat, since Mr. Wonka has said that most things in his factory are edible. But Mr. Wonka’s scolding also suggests that even though things are edible in theory, the kids should still ask permission before sampling and show Mr. Wonka respect and deference. This dynamic is, perhaps, meant to teach the children self-restraint.*



*Veruca’s selfishness shines through when she again asks Mr. Salt for what she wants. Grandpa Joe, as the grandparents suggested earlier in the novel, insists here that what Veruca needs is for her parents to step in and tell her no. But this mostly goes over Charlie’s head, as he’s too awestruck to dwell much on Veruca or even Augustus. Mr. Wonka rewards Charlie’s interest and respect when he offers him a mug of chocolate—presumably, the appropriate way to drink from the chocolate river.*



The boat continues down the river into a tunnel, going faster and faster. Violet asks how the Oompa-Loompas know where they're going, and Mr. Wonka says there's no way to tell. He sings a song about this, and the parents in the boat shout that Mr. Wonka is "off his rocker." Grandpa Joe insists Mr. Wonka is just fine as Mr. Wonka shouts to turn the lights on. Presently, lights illuminate the tunnel, which is a pipe. Mr. Wonka is in the back of the boat, clapping, leaping, and laughing.

Charlie points to a door in the wall. They pass a room that's labeled as a storeroom for "all the creams," including hair cream. Mike Teavee asks if Mr. Wonka really uses hair cream, but Mr. Wonka says that there isn't time to answer "silly questions." When they pass a door labeled "whips," Veruca asks why Mr. Wonka needs whips. He needs them for properly whipping cream; Mr. Wonka also says that poached eggs aren't really poached eggs unless the egg is stolen. The next door contains beans, including "has beans." Mr. Wonka insists that Violet is one. Moments later, the boat stops in front of a bright red door.

## CHAPTER 19

The Oompa-Loompas guide the boat to the red door, which is labeled "Inventing Room—Private—Keep Out." Mr. Wonka unlocks the door and explains that this is where his new inventions are. He warns the group that no one should touch or taste anything in the room, and the children all agree. Then, Mr. Wonka says that nobody—not even an Oompa-Loompa—has seen the inside of this room. He leads everyone inside with another warning to not touch anything.

Charlie looks around the room, which is filled with big metal pots filled with boiling stuff. Strange machines make odd noises, and there are pipes everywhere; it smells delicious. This is clearly Mr. Wonka's favorite room. He bounces around, lifting pot lids to sniff and taste and turning knobs on machines. Then, he runs over to a machine that drops out a small green marble. Mr. Wonka explains that it's an Everlasting Gobstopper, which he invented for kids without much pocket money. You can suck them forever and it will never disappear. Violet insists that it's like gum, but Mr. Wonka says it's not—chewing an Everlasting Gobstopper would break one's teeth. He assures the children that the Gobstoppers do last forever; there's an Oompa-Loompa who's been sucking on one for a year.

*Veruca and the other parents speak as though they expect Mr. Wonka and the Oompa-Loompas to always have a plan and be in control. But Grandpa Joe expresses the opposite sentiment: it's more fun to go through life like Mr. Wonka, enjoying what comes without worrying too much about where you're going. Given that the Buckets are the heroes of the story, the novel implies that Grandpa Joe has the right idea here.*



*Again, the other kids want to understand exactly how the factory works. But Mr. Wonka's responses show, instead, that the factory is a place where it's more fun to revel in nonsense, wordplay, and wonder. It's also humorous that Mr. Wonka jokes that Veruca is a "has bean" (that is, a has-been). It seems unlikely that anyone has ever said such a thing to her, given how much her parents spoil her. This supports the idea that Mr. Wonka and the Oompa-Loompas are trying to change the kids for the better.*



*Since Augustus got sucked up the pipe because he didn't follow directions, it seems all the more necessary that the remaining children follow Mr. Wonka's instructions exactly. This means that they shouldn't touch anything—even something as seemingly innocuous as a chocolate river could be dangerous, if one interacts with it the wrong way.*



*Charlie seems to enjoy simply watching Mr. Wonka zip around the room and play with his inventions. He's following directions and accepting what's in front of him, so he's having a great time. Violet, though, is trying to relate Mr. Wonka's unique, fantastical innovations (like the Gobstoppers) to things she's seen before (like gum). She's not accepting the things in this room as they are, which the novel suggests lessens her enjoyment. What Mr. Wonka says about the Gobstoppers being good for poor kids suggests that he's sympathetic to kids from difficult economic situations—like Charlie. Finally, it's perhaps a bit alarming that there's an Oompa-Loompa who's been sucking on a Gobstopper for a year. It's unclear whether the Oompa-Loompa actually wants to be doing this, and Mr. Wonka seems unconcerned that this person has been part of a yearlong experiment that seemingly has no end.*



Then, Mr. Wonka skips across the room to show the group Hair Toffee, which, when eaten, gives the eater a new head of hair, a moustache, and a beard. Veruca is incredulous, but Mr. Wonka says that she'd look great with a beard. He explains that the recipe isn't right yet; yesterday when he tried it on an Oompa-Loompa, the Oompa-Loompa's beard grew faster than they could keep it in check, and they had to use a lawnmower to trim it. Soon, there won't be any more bald children.

*Mr. Wonka's ideas seem odd and ridiculous to someone like Veruca, who believes that there should be a good, sensible reason for everything. The Oompa-Loompa acting as a test subject for the Hair Toffee again seems somewhat sinister, as there's little indication the Oompa-Loompa had any choice in the matter.*



## CHAPTER 20

Mr. Wonka leads everyone to a huge machine. He presses three buttons and the machine shakes, fills a tub with brightly colored liquid, and then froths. Then, it sucks the mixture in and with a groan, a drawer opens. There's a small gray strip in the drawer. Mike Teavee is disgusted that that's all the machine made, but Violet says she knows what it is: gum. Mr. Wonka says that she's right.

*This entire chapter is intended to draw readers in and delight them: with the press of a few buttons, the machine makes interesting noises, swirls around bright colors, and shakes. The whole process is absurd, especially since what comes out is a gray piece of gum—but it's nonetheless fun and intriguing for the characters (and readers) to experience.*



## CHAPTER 21

Mr. Wonka explains that this is his best invention yet: the gum is an entire three-course dinner. The fathers in the group are disbelieving, but Mr. Wonka explains that with this gum, there won't be any more grocery shopping, dishes, or mess. This particular piece of gum is tomato soup, roast beef, and blueberry pie. When Violet asks how this works, he explains that the chewer can feel the food going down their throat and will be satisfied after. Veruca says that's impossible, but Violet says it's gum—so she'll take it. She puts her piece of gum behind her ear and asks for Mr. Wonka's gum.

*This gum seems to exist somewhere between being absurd and practical. It suggests that Mr. Wonka wants to make the world a better, more convenient, easier place for people to live—and that inventing the items that will help bring about that change is fun and fulfilling. Violet seems to expect that she's going to get the gum—like Veruca and Augustus, she's spoiled and expects to get whatever she wants.*



Gently, Mr. Wonka says that the gum isn't quite right yet, but Violet grabs the gum with a "fat hand" and shoves it in her mouth. As Mr. Wonka shouts "Don't!" and begs Violet to spit it out, Violet shouts about how good the tomato soup and roast beef are. Mrs. Beauregarde tells Violet that she's clever, and Mr. Beauregarde is thrilled that his daughter will be the first to have a meal of chewing gum. Charlie and Grandpa Joe gape at Violet as Mr. Wonka wrings his hands.

*Mr. Wonka gives Violet a warning here, since the gum isn't safely edible yet—but Violet disregards him and selfishly takes the gum. Again, the novel associates vice with being overweight when it describes Violet grabbing the gum with a "fat hand." Her "fat hand," much like Augustus's overweight body, is associated with her greed and selfishness.*





Violet shouts that she's gotten to the blueberry pie and cream. It's wonderful—but Mrs. Beauregarde shrieks. Violet tells her mother to be quiet, but Mrs. Beauregarde shouts that Violet's face is turning blue. Mr. Wonka sighs that the gum isn't perfect yet as Violet's whole body, even her hair, turns blue like a blueberry. As Violet starts to swell, Mr. Wonka says that it always goes wrong at dessert. Mrs. Beauregarde says that Violet is swelling like a balloon—but Mr. Wonka says that she's turning into a blueberry. There's no saving her: Violet is now a huge blueberry with a tiny head, arms, and legs.

Mr. Wonka sighs that he keeps trying this one on Oompa-Loompas, and they all turn into blueberries. He doesn't understand it. Mrs. Beauregarde commands Mr. Wonka to fix Violet, so Mr. Wonka snaps his fingers. Ten Oompa-Loompas appear to take Violet to the Juicing Room, where she'll be squeezed. The Oompa-Loompas roll Violet back to the boat, the Beauregardes behind them.

Charlie whispers that the Oompa-Loompas are singing again. They sing about how there's nothing worse than "some repulsive little bum" chewing gum. Chewing gum, they insist, will never end well. They tell the story of a woman named Miss Bigelow, who chewed gum all day—and when she couldn't find gum, she'd chew things like linoleum or people's underwear. Eventually, Miss Bigelow's jaws grew strong, and couldn't stop chewing—and one night, while she was asleep, they chewed her tongue in half. She spent the rest of her life in a sanatorium. Violet is still young, so the Oompa-Loompas will try to save her. They hope that she survives the cure.

## CHAPTER 22

Mr. Wonka sighs that there are "two naughty little children gone," and "three good little children left." Charlie asks if Violet will be okay again, and Mr. Wonka assures him that they'll juice her, and she'll be "thin as a whistle" after. She will, however, still be purple—that's what happens when you chew gum all day long. Mike Teavee asks why Mr. Wonka even makes gum if he hates it, but Mr. Wonka tells him not to mumble and hurriedly leads everyone through a secret door. The door opens into another pink corridor, and Charlie holds tight to Grandpa Joe's hand so that he doesn't get lost.

*Violet had a good reason to listen to Mr. Wonka—he knew that chewing the gum would go badly for her, and that she'd have remained her normal self if she'd listened. Here, the novel's link between greed and weight becomes even clearer, as Violet is essentially punished for her greed by becoming even more enormous than Augustus was. In the world of the novel, being overweight is an indicator of moral inferiority, and it's considered a punishment.*



*Again, Mr. Wonka doesn't express concern or remorse for having turned multiple Oompa-Loompas into blueberries. Though the Oompa-Loompas may be the most moral figures of the novel, they nevertheless have the least amount of power and don't receive any respect.*



*The Oompa-Loompas take issue with chewing gum specifically it makes a woman's jaw big and strong (that is, more masculine), and it's also framed as being another type of greed. Miss Bigelow, for instance, couldn't help but take anything in front of her to chew, to the point that she chewed her own tongue in half. This, the novel suggests, was part of Violet's problem: she selfishly believed she always needed something to chew, and so ended up in a dangerous situation.*



*Mr. Wonka sets up a dichotomy here when he implies that Augustus and Violet were "naughty," and that Charlie, Veruca, and Mike are still part of the tour because they're "good." This is more evidence that this tour is designed to weed out greedy, selfish children. Again, when Charlie grabs onto Grandpa Joe's hand, it shows how much he respects and relies on his grandfather to point him in the right direction.*



Mr. Wonka rushes ahead, past more doors. They pass rooms for Eatable Marshmallow Pillows and Lickable Wallpaper for Nurseries, which feature pictures of fruits—including snozzberries. When Mike Teavee asks what a snozzberry is, Mr. Wonka accuses him again of mumbling. They pass doors for Hot Ice Creams for Cold Days (which warms eaters up in cold weather) and Fizzy Lifting Drinks (which lift people up like balloons; you must burp to come down again). Once, Mr. Wonka says, he gave some to an Oompa-Loompa outside, and the Oompa-Loompa floated away. Perhaps he was too polite to burp. Mr. Wonka stops in front of a room for Square Candies that Look Round.

*Mike Teavee still wants to know exactly what's going on in the factory, rather than just accepting what Mr. Wonka says and enjoying it. Because of this, the novel implies that he's enjoying his tour less than Charlie is. This final Oompa-Loompa seems to be another unwilling test subject for Mr. Wonka's candies—and Mr. Wonka still doesn't seem to care about the Oompa-Loompa's fate. This drives home how little respect the Oompa-Loompas receive, even though they're the ones who keep Mr. Wonka's factory running and act as a kind of moral compass for the children and parents touring the factory.*



## CHAPTER 23

The top half of the door to the room of square candies that look round is made of glass. Inside, Charlie can see a long table with white square candies on it. They all have little faces on them, and Oompa-Loompas sit at one end painting the faces. Mike Teavee says that the candies don't look round, and Veruca agrees that they're square. Mr. Wonka insists he never said they were round; they only look round. Mrs. Salt tells Veruca that Mr. Wonka is lying, and Mr. Wonka tells the woman to go "boil [her] head." Then, he tells the group to watch. He flings open the door and all the little candies "look round" to see who came in. Grandpa Joe remarks that Mr. Wonka is right: they're square candies that look round.

*The majority of the people in the tour don't seem to find Mr. Wonka's wordplay amusing, which continues to link a person's enjoyment of something to how much or how little they try to make it make sense. Grandpa Joe is willing to laugh and enjoy the joke—but the others expected something different, and there's no indication that they find these candies amusing once they're in on the joke. In this sense, their way of looking at the world diminishes their enjoyment of the tour.*



Mr. Wonka heads down the corridor past a room labeled with Butterscotch and Buttergin. Mr. Wonka says these things make the Oompa-Loompas "tiddly." The group can hear laughter and singing from within. Mr. Wonka says that the Oompa Loompas enjoy butterscotch and soda, as well as buttergin and tonic. Mr. Salt expresses his approval. Then, he leads the group to a staircase and slides down the banister. Charlie, Veruca, and Mike are right behind him. The adults—particularly Mrs. Salt, who's very fat—struggle to keep up.

*The Butterscotch and Buttergin jokes are far more adult (they're a play on alcoholic drinks, like scotch and water and gin and tonics), so they go over better with Mr. Salt. As Mr. Wonka leads the group down the stairs, the novel shows that this world prioritizes thin people. Mr. Wonka doesn't accommodate Mrs. Salt, who is presumably the only overweight person in the group, and readers are seemingly meant to find this funny rather than cruel. In this way, Mr. Wonka (and the novel as a whole) implicitly condemn overweight people.*



## CHAPTER 24

Next, Mr. Wonka stops in front of the Nut Room. He tells the group to catch their breath and then peer in the window; they can't go in, or they'll disturb the squirrels. Charlie is entranced: there are 100 squirrels in the room, sitting around a big table and shelling walnuts. Mike Teavee asks why Mr. Wonka uses squirrels instead of Oompa-Loompas. Mr. Wonka explains that Oompa-Loompas can't get walnuts out in one piece; it's a difficult job, and only squirrels can do it. He explains that the squirrels also check for "bad nuts" (they sound hollow when tapped). He points to one squirrel, which throws a nut down the garbage chute.

Veruca Salt shouts to Mrs. Salt that she wants one of Mr. Wonka's squirrels; the pets she has at home aren't enough. Mrs. Salt assures Veruca she can have one later, but Veruca says she wants a trained squirrel. Mr. Salt steps up, pulls out his wallet, and asks Mr. Wonka what he wants for a squirrel. Mr. Wonka says simply that they're not for sale—Veruca can't have one. At this, Veruca opens the door and rushes into the Nut Room.

The squirrels stop shelling walnuts and stare at Veruca. Veruca stops and stares back. Then, as Veruca reaches for a squirrel near her, all the squirrels in the room leap for her. They pin her to the ground, and then one squirrel starts tapping Veruca's head. Mrs. Salt screams, but Mr. Wonka says the squirrels are testing to see if Veruca is a bad nut. Suddenly, the squirrels start to pull Veruca across the floor—Mr. Wonka sighs that she's a bad nut and so will go down the garbage chute. Veruca disappears.

Shrieking, Mrs. Salt asks where Veruca went. Mr. Wonka explains that that chute leads to the main garbage pipe, which in turn leads to the incinerator. Mrs. Salt screams as Mr. Wonka assures her that there's a chance the Oompa-Loompas won't light it today. Mrs. Salt yells that this has gone too far, and Mr. Salt says that this is ridiculous and that he's "cross." Mr. Wonka assures him that Veruca will be fine—and she might even still be stuck just below the entrance hole. At this, both Mr. and Mrs. Salt race into the Nut Room and look down the chute. As they bend over, the squirrels give first Mrs. Salt and then Mr. Salt a push.

*Just as before, Mr. Wonka gives clear instructions—for people to look at the squirrels and not go into the Nut Room. But given that Augustus and Violet previously disobeyed Mr. Wonka's rules, it seems likely that another child is going to disobey and get into trouble. The fact that Mr. Wonka uses trained squirrels for this task is absurd and silly—but the comparison between the squirrels and the Oompa-Loompas is disturbing. The squirrels are, of course, animals, and yet they seem to be held in higher regard than the human beings who do most of the work in the factory.*



*It becomes even clearer how little respect and humanity the Oompa-Loompas have when Veruca shouts that she wants a squirrel, just like she wanted an Oompa-Loompa in the chocolate room. This dehumanizes the Oompa-Loompas, as Veruca doesn't seem to think that they're any worthier of freedom or agency than a pet squirrel. Her demands and disobedience also illustrate how spoiled and selfish Veruca is. Mr. Salt, meanwhile, shows that he expects people to do whatever he wants them to, and to be able to simply pay for it—so it's a shock when Mr. Wonka refuses to sell him a squirrel.*



*The squirrels' test on Veruca is absurd—but again, the novel implies that Veruca is an antagonist because she's so spoiled. So, Veruca learns here that she can't control everything in Mr. Wonka's factory, and that nothing is as it seems. Indeed, by not showing the squirrels respect, she ends up getting tossed down the garbage chute—yet another lesson that weeds out a greedy, selfish child.*



*By innocently suggesting that the Oompa-Loompas might not light the incinerator today, Mr. Wonka shows that he takes things as they come. Furthermore, he doesn't much care about Veruca. Mr. Salt's "cross" feelings are humorously underwhelming here, given that his daughter's life is at risk. His attitude shows again that wealth doesn't guarantee a happy, loyal family.*



Charlie is worried and asks what's going to happen to the Salts. Mr. Wonka assures him that someone will catch them, and the incinerator might not be lit today. They could get lucky. Grandpa Joe shushes everyone; the Oompa-Loompas are singing again. They sing about all the new "friends" that Veruca will meet in the garbage chute, like fish heads and rotting fruit. This is her punishment for being so rude and greedy. But they ask if it's fair to blame Veruca for her rudeness, since "a girl can't spoil herself." Rather, her parents are the ones at fault—they turned her into a "brat." This is why the Oompa-Loompas are glad that Mrs. Salt and Mr. Salt fell down the garbage chute, too.

*Charlie demonstrates how kind and caring he is by expressing concern for Veruca. It doesn't matter to him that she was rude and selfish—he still doesn't think she deserves to die in the incinerator. The Oompa-Loompas, meanwhile, back up what Charlie's grandparents have been saying throughout the novel: that it's a parent's responsibility to step in and correct their children when they misbehave. Parents, in other words, can create "brats" like Veruca—or they can create good, virtuous kids like Charlie.*



## CHAPTER 25

Mr. Wonka remarks that children are disappearing "like rabbits" and assures the remaining people in the group that "They'll all come out in the wash!" Mike Teavee says that he's getting tired and wants to watch TV, so Mr. Wonka suggests they take the elevator. Some huge double doors slide open and the Teavees, Charlie, and Grandpa Joe follow Mr. Wonka into the elevator. Mr. Wonka asks what button they should press first. Charlie is shocked: every surface of the elevator is covered in buttons. Mr. Wonka explains that this elevator goes up and down, but also sideways and any way you can think of.

*Once again, Mr. Wonka seems to expect that kids will disappear during the tour, which calls his motives into question. Like everything else in Mr. Wonka's factory, the elevator defies all expectations since it can go in every direction and is covered in buttons. Since Mike is so tired, it's questionable whether he can actually enjoy the elevator for the amazing thing it is—or whether he's too focused on TV to care.*



Grandpa Joe murmurs that this is "fantastic," and Mr. Wonka explains that the elevator is made of clear glass. Mike whines that he can't see anything, but Mr. Wonka tells Mike and Charlie to each pick a button and press it. Charlie scans the buttons, which are for rooms for Cavity-Filling Caramels, Candy-Coated Pencils for Sucking, and Exploding Candy for Your Enemies. Mike asks if there's a television room, and Mr. Wonka points to a button labeled Television **Chocolate**. Mike whoops and presses the button.

*Mike seems to be expecting to be able to see out the elevator, but it seems more likely that the elevator itself—with all its buttons—is what he should be looking at. Put another way, Mike is unwilling to notice and enjoy the amazing things that are right in front of him because he's so caught up in trying to see what he thinks he should be seeing. Charlie, on the other hand, is the one who notices all the interesting buttons and relates them to the reader.*



The elevator leaps sideways. Mr. Wonka is the only person holding a strap on the ceiling, so everyone else falls over. Mr. Wonka laughs as the elevator swerves, and he pulls Mrs. Teavee to her feet. Eventually, Grandpa Joe grabs a strap, and Charlie clings to his legs. Grandpa Joe whoops with glee, while Mrs. Teavee screams that they're going to crash. Charlie feels like he's on a roller coaster. As they travel, Charlie catches glimpses of other rooms. Mrs. Teavee is afraid she'll be sick and asks Mr. Wonka to make it stop, but he can't. He says that he just hopes nobody is in the *other* elevator, which goes the opposite way on the same track. He's been lucky so far. Just then, the elevator comes to a sudden stop. Mr. Wonka warns everyone to be careful—this room is dangerous.

*Mr. Wonka, Grandpa Joe, and Charlie seem to be having fun, while Mike and Mrs. Teavee aren't. Mr. Wonka, Grandpa Joe, and Charlie all look at this tour and the factory as one grand adventure—while Mrs. Teavee wants to be more secure in the knowledge that she's not going to die. Mr. Wonka's glib aside that he hopes there's nobody in the other elevator is absurd and funny, but it also reminds readers that there's real danger lurking in this seemingly magical factory. He reinforces this when he says outright that their next stop is dangerous.*



## CHAPTER 26

Mr. Wonka leads the Teavees, Grandpa Joe, and Charlie into a blinding white room. He hands out sunglasses to protect everyone's eyes and warns them to not take the glasses off. Charlie puts on his sunglasses and looks around: the room is bright white and totally clean. At one end of the room is a huge camera, manned by an army of Oompa-Loompas who all wear red outfits that look like space suits. Charlie suddenly feels like he's in danger—whatever's in here *must* be dangerous. At the other end of the room is a single Oompa-Loompa at a table, staring at a TV set.

Mr. Wonka hops with excitement and says that this is where he tests his Television **Chocolate**. He explains that he doesn't like television much, but kids love to stare at TVs all day long. Ordinary television, he says, works when a big movie camera photographs something, and the photos are split into tiny pieces that whiz through the sky until they hit a TV antenna. Then they go into the wire and re-form into a picture in someone's TV. Mike Teavee says that it doesn't work that way, and Mr. Wonka replies that Mike is nice but too talkative.

Mr. Wonka explains that when he first saw a TV work, he wondered whether he could do the same thing with a bar of **chocolate**—it could emerge in the TV, ready to eat. Mike says this is impossible, but Mr. Wonka shouts for the Oompa-Loompas to bring in the chocolate. Six enter the room, carrying a mattress-sized bar of chocolate. The bar needs to be this big, Mr. Wonka says, because transmitting things by TV makes them smaller—that's why even big men are only a few inches high on TV.

Mr. Wonka shouts for Mike to get back—he's too close to the camera and isn't wearing a protective suit. When Mike is at a safe distance, the Oompa-Loompas pull a switch, and the chocolate bar disappears with a flash. Mr. Wonka leads Charlie, Grandpa Joe, and the Teavees to the other end of the room, where a tiny chocolate bar appears on the screen. He shouts for someone to take it. Mike laughs that that's impossible, but Mr. Wonka tells Charlie to take it. Charlie reaches out and the bar comes out of the TV in his fingers. Grandpa Joe says it's a miracle. Mr. Wonka says that later, he'll run commercials advertising his chocolate—and people will be able to grab the chocolate out of their screens.

*Because Charlie is so good and follows directions, it's not hard for him to trust Mr. Wonka and understand on a gut level that this room is dangerous. But although Charlie might recognize this, he nevertheless trusts Mr. Wonka and Grandpa Joe to keep him safe.*



*In his introduction to Television Chocolate, Mr. Wonka shows that he wants to reach kids—so that means making things that they'll like. Mike adores television (his last name, Teavee, is a play on this), so it follows that he'd understand something of how television works. But Mr. Wonka offers an absurd explanation for how television works. For the reader, this is meant to be funny—but for Mike, it's just not factual, so he's unable to simply accept and enjoy Mr. Wonka's invention.*



*Again, Mr. Wonka's explanation of how television works is absurd, but that doesn't make it less fun for readers. However, it's impossible for Mike to accept the possibility that he doesn't know everything about how the world works—or that something like this could surprise him—so he's unable to enjoy Television Chocolate.*



*Charlie is able to take the chocolate out of the television because he looks at the world with open-mindedness and wonder. Mike, on the other hand, expects the world to follow strict rules and for things to work a certain way—so he would never even consider plucking a bar of chocolate out of the television. Grandpa Joe reinforces that Charlie has the right idea here by deeming this a "miracle." When new, seemingly miraculous things happen, it's more fun, the novel suggests, to accept and enjoy those things for what they are.*



## CHAPTER 27

Mike Teavee is more excited than Grandpa Joe at what they just saw. He asks if Mr. Wonka could send other things, like breakfast cereal, in the same way. Mr. Wonka insists that breakfast cereal is disgusting—it's made of pencil sharpener shavings. But he could, he supposes, send cereal through. Mike asks if a *person* could also travel through the air, and Mr. Wonka is aghast. He says it'd be risky and might yield bad results, but he supposes it could be done. At this, Mike Teavee races for the camera, shouting that he'll be the first person ever to travel by television.

Mike doesn't listen as both Mr. Wonka and Mrs. Teavee shout for him to stop and come back. When he gets to the camera, he leaps and pulls the switch. The light flashes, and he disappears. Mrs. Teavee screams. Mr. Wonka says that they have to hope for the best; hopefully, Mike will come out okay on the other end. Mr. Wonka leads everyone to the television set, but nothing happens. Mr. Wonka frets that hopefully, "no part of him gets left behind"—it's been a bit of a problem that sometimes, only half the chocolate bar ends up in the TV. Mrs. Teavee screams.

The screen flickers and grows brighter as Mike's image slowly appears in the screen. He waves at his parents and celebrates his victory. Mrs. Teavee snatches her son up while Mr. Wonka celebrates—Mike is all in one piece and "unharméd." But Mrs. Teavee insists that Mike *has* been harmed—he's only an inch tall. Mr. Wonka says that's to be expected, and Mr. Teavee says he's throwing away the television set as soon as they get home. He picks up his tiny son and puts him in his breast pocket.

Mrs. Teavee asks how they can make Mike grow. Mr. Wonka says that little boys are "springy and elastic," so they should be able to stretch him in the machine that's used for testing chewing gum. Mike might be able to stretch miles, and he'll definitely be thin. Mr. Teavee and Mrs. Teavee are concerned, but Mr. Wonka says that it'll be fine—they'll then give him a dose of Supervitamin Candy, which contains vitamins A-Z (but not vitamins S and H). He'll also get a dose of vitamin Wonka, which will make Mike's toes grow as long as his fingers, enabling him to play piano with his feet. He snaps his fingers and hands an Oompa-Loompa a paper of directions. The Teavees follow the Oompa-Loompas out of the room.

*Now that Mike has seen Television Chocolate work once, he's okay accepting that it's real. But it's significant that his first instinct is then to transmit himself through this special camera, as this shows how self-centered his thinking is. In addition, it shows that he doesn't think Mr. Wonka's clear safety directions are worth following—so presumably, he's going to get in trouble for not following directions.*



*Finally, Mr. Wonka reveals why Mike should've followed his instructions: he might not end up in one piece in the television. Though Mrs. Teavee gets upset with her son now, she and Mr. Teavee haven't done much to shift Mike's behavior for much of the novel. Their parenting style seems hands-off compared to the other parents; they weren't even in the room when Mike had his interview after finding his Golden Ticket. This perhaps implies that Mike's misbehavior is in large part due to Mr. and Mrs. Teavee's passivity and lack of discipline in parenting him.*



*To Mr. Wonka, there's a bright side to all of this: Mike made it into the television in one piece. Mr. and Mrs. Teavee, though, have other ideas about how this should've gone. Notably, Mr. Teavee seems to blame what happened to Mike on their own television set at home, which underscores the fact that Mike's vice is that he's too interested in television. Interestingly, Mr. Teavee is the only parent to express any interest in changing his and child's behavior after the tour ends.*



*Mr. Wonka frames the vitamins Mike will receive as a gift, but to the Teavees, this is ridiculous and frightening. Again, Mr. Wonka notes outright that Mike will be thin when he's done being stretched, framing this as though this is a positive thing. This reiterates that in the world of the novel, being thin is better—Mike becoming thinner may accompany a change in how he interacts with television, in a way that the novel suggests will improve him.*



The remaining Oompa-Loompas start to drum and sing again. This time, they sing that children shouldn't be allowed near television sets, since they just stare at it "until their eyes pop out." TV may keep kids still and give parents time to do chores, but it kills the imagination and makes it so kids can't understand "a fantasy, a fairyland." Children who watch TV can't think anymore. The Oompa-Loompas acknowledge that parents want something to entertain their children, and they have a solution: books. Books let kids read about all sorts of fantastical adventures. The Oompa-Loompas beg parents to throw their TV away and install a bookshelf instead. It'll take a few weeks, but kids will eventually come around. In closing, they say that it serves Mike right if they can't fix him.

*The issue with television, per the Oompa-Loompas, is that it's harder for kids to learn to think for themselves and enjoy the awe-inspiring things that the world has to offer when they've already seen so much on their television screens. Even so, they nevertheless acknowledge that parents need something to keep their kids occupied, and television seems like a useful tool for this. But even as the novel insists that television is bad for children, it gives an antidote: books. With this, the novel justifies its own existence: it's a fantastical adventure that also happens to teach kids lessons about kindness and virtue.*



## CHAPTER 28

Mr. Wonka asks where they should go next and how many kids are left. Grandpa Joe says haltingly that Charlie is the only child left. Mr. Wonka pretends to be surprised and then seems overcome with happiness. He says that Charlie won and shakes Charlie's hand furiously. Mr. Wonka says that he had a hunch Charlie would win—and now, the fun can *really* start. They have lots of things to do, arrangements to make, and people to fetch. He grandly ushers Grandpa Joe and Charlie into the elevator and says that *he's* going to choose the next button.

*The fact that Mr. Wonka only pretends to be surprised that Charlie is the only child left confirms that Mr. Wonka planned to lose children throughout the tour. Given how much Mr. Wonka has already shown Charlie and Grandpa Joe, it's unclear what, exactly, will be even more fun than what they're already seen. The factory, this suggests, will continue to surprise people who know how to look at it with wonder and appreciation rather than skepticism and greed.*



Charlie just knows that something wild is going to happen—but he's not afraid. He's just excited. Grandpa Joe is too. Mr. Wonka presses a button labeled Up And Out; the doors close, and the elevator shoots straight up. Grandpa Joe and Mr. Wonka whoop with joy, and Mr. Wonka shouts that they have to go faster, or they won't "get through." He explains that they have to go through the factory ceiling. The elevator might break, but the glass is also pretty thick.

*Charlie trusts Mr. Wonka and Grandpa Joe to keep him safe and headed in the right direction, so it's not frightening to him that they're going to burst through the ceiling in a glass elevator. Mr. Wonka is so nonchalant about the glass being thick, which is humorous but also reiterates that Mr. Wonka has more fun when things might go disastrously wrong at any moment.*



With a crash, the elevator shoots out the roof of the factory and into the sky. Mr. Wonka tells Grandpa Joe to not be afraid, and he presses another button. The elevator stops high in the sky, offering its riders a view of the town. Charlie can see everything down below. Mr. Wonka explains that the elevator can do this because of "candy power," and then he points to the other children heading home.

*Finally, the readers see what the glass elevator's purpose really is: to show the winning child a view of the city from above. This symbolically suggests that the factory tour didn't just give Charlie a look at a fantastical factory: it's also going to change how he sees the outside world.*



## CHAPTER 29

Mr. Wonka says that they have to go check on the other children. He presses a button, and the elevator hovers above the factory gates. Mr. Wonka points out the huge trucks that will follow each child home, full of candy. He points out Augustus Gloop—who is now “thin as a straw.” Violet is back to her normal size, but she’s still purple. Veruca, Mr. Salt, and Mrs. Salt are all covered in garbage, while Mike Teavee is 10 feet tall and also thin. Charlie says that’s dreadful, but Mr. Wonka says Mike is lucky—basketball teams will want to hire him. As the elevator climbs into the sky again, Mr. Wonka says that he and Charlie have other important things to discuss.

*Aside from the garbage stuck to the Salts, the only thing that’s noticeably changed about any of the kids is their size. Augustus is now thin, Violet is back to her normal size, and Mike is very skinny. This again exposes the novel’s underlying prejudice against overweight people: the implication here is that all of the children are now better off than they were before they entered the factory. It’s unclear if they’ve learned the lessons Mr. Wonka intended to teach them—but they’re now thin, which is portrayed as a virtue in and of itself.*



## CHAPTER 30

When the elevator is again hovering over the town, Mr. Wonka says that he loves his factory. He asks Charlie if he loves the factory too, and Charlie says that it’s the most wonderful place in the world. Very seriously, Mr. Wonka says he’s glad to hear that—because he’s going to give Charlie his factory. The factory will belong to Charlie when Charlie is old enough. Both Charlie and Grandpa Joe are in shock. Mr. Wonka explains that he’s older than people think and doesn’t have any family. Someone needs to keep the factory going and look after the Oompa-Loompas. But though Mr. Wonka knows that lots of grownups would happily take it over, he wants to give it to a child who can learn Wonka’s way of doing things.

*Charlie’s life changes in an instant when he learns that he’s going to inherit Mr. Wonka’s factory. This signals the end of his family’s poverty, and particularly the end of their cabbage soup meals. Now, they’ll not only have candy for the rest of Charlie’s life, as promised by the Golden Ticket; they’ll also have money from the factory’s profits. Mr. Wonka also makes it clear that he prizes Charlie’s way of viewing the world with wonder and awe. It’s exactly this kind of outlook that he hoped to find in one of the children.*



Mr. Wonka explains that this is why he sent out the **Golden Tickets**: he’d planned to choose his favorite ticket winner at the end of the tour. Grandpa Joe again asks Mr. Wonka if he’s sure about this, but Mr. Wonka cuts him off. He says that they have to go fetch the rest of the Bucket family; they can live in the factory from now on. Charlie points to his house down below, and the elevator shoots for it. Sadly, Charlie says Mrs. Bucket won’t come, since she won’t leave the elderly folks in bed. Mr. Wonka insists that they can fit the whole bed into the elevator and bring them too—nothing is impossible.

*Broadly speaking, the novel suggests through Charlie that good things will come to people who look at the world with wonder and delight, without trying to possess or control the world around them. Charlie shows again how loyal his family is when he notes that Mrs. Bucket won’t want to come, since she needs to take care of the grandparents. But in the world of the novel, Charlie is still thinking too literally.*



Mr. Wonka stops the elevator right above Charlie’s house, and then, with the press of a button, the elevator crashes through the roof. Grandma Georgina faints, Grandma Josephine’s false teeth fall out, and Grandpa George hides under his blanket. Mr. Bucket and Mrs. Bucket rush to see what happened. Charlie rushes out of the elevator and into his mother’s arms. He starts to explain what happened as Mr. Bucket cries about the destroyed house.

*The grandparents’ reactions add humor and absurdity to the situation. To Mr. Bucket, what just happened is a tragedy: now, the house that he can barely afford doesn’t have a working roof, which is going to make it even harder to keep warm. He’s still focused on trying to get through the day and make sure his family survives—while Charlie’s outlook has entirely changed over the last few hours.*





Mr. Wonka steps out of the elevator, shakes Mr. Bucket's hand, and tells Mr. Bucket that he won't need his house anymore. It takes a while, but eventually Grandpa Joe and Charlie are able to tell the family about their day—and that they're going to live in a **chocolate** factory. Grandma Josephine, Grandma Georgina, and Grandpa George refuse to go, so Mr. Wonka, Grandpa Joe, and Charlie push the bed into the elevator and pull Mr. Bucket and Mrs. Bucket in after them. The elevator shoots up into the sky, and Charlie climbs onto his grandparents' bed. He assures them that this is safe and that they're going someplace wonderful. Grandma Josephine asks if there's anything to eat—and Charlie, laughing, says that she has no idea.

*Now that Grandpa Joe has spent the day in the chocolate factory with Charlie, he's emboldened to go against the other grandparents' wishes and push them into the elevator. He knows that once they get to the factory, they're going to come around and learn a new way of looking at the world. With this, the novel suggests that with certain influences, it's possible to change one's outlook and develop a healthier way of looking at the world—one where a person can enjoy the absurdity of certain situations rather than being afraid of it.*





## HOW TO CITE

To cite this LitChart:

### MLA

Brock, Zoë. "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 25 Apr 2021. Web. 17 May 2022.

### CHICAGO MANUAL

Brock, Zoë. "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." LitCharts LLC, April 25, 2021. Retrieved May 17, 2022. <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/charlie-and-the-chocolate-factory>.

To cite any of the quotes from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* covered in the Quotes section of this LitChart:

### MLA

Dahl, Roald. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Puffin. 1964.

### CHICAGO MANUAL

Dahl, Roald. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. New York: Puffin. 1964.