

Character Analysis: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, published in 1964, is a children's book by British author Roald Dahl. The story features the adventures of young Charlie Bucket inside the chocolate factory of **eccentric** chocolate maker, Willy Wonka. This book remains one of Roald Dahl's most successful and well-loved novels and this is partly due to the fascinating **array** of characters and their unusual personalities. Below is an analysis of some of the key characters from the popular story.

Mr Willy Wonka and Grandpa Joe

Mr Willy Wonka is one of Dahl's most **notable** and best-loved characters. He is quirky and eccentric and no-one ever seems to know where they stand with him; something which is typical of Roald Dahl's most memorable characters. In the people he meets, Wonka inspires **awe** and admiration. He is happy and charismatic, however throughout the story he maintains a darker and more dangerous side.

He is the owner of the world-famous Wonka Chocolate Factory and has been in hiding for many years – building a sense of mystery and secrecy around his character. One day he decides to find someone to take over his business by sending out five precious Golden Tickets hidden amongst his chocolate bars.

Alongside his mysterious nature, Wonka also has a charitable side. This is shown by Wonka's treatment of the Oompa Loompas – a strange people who were terrorised by dreadful creatures such as hornswogglers and snozzwhangers in their native home of Loompaland. He brings the **malnourished** Oompa Loompas back to his factory where he cares for them in exchange for running his factory.

Throughout the story, Wonka demonstrates a strong connection with children and a **wariness** of adults. This is a theme which runs through many of Roald Dahl's books where adults often play the role of the villain and children the role of the hero.



It is this connection that causes Wonka to choose a child to take over his factory. The child he is looking for needs to be **humble**, respectful and willing to run the factory his way.

Wonka's character is certainly far from **flawless** however, as he is quite self-obsessed and wishes to mould the future owner of the factory to become just like himself. He is also unwilling to accept other people's flaws; the four children who do not win clearly disgust him. He believes that the other adults, the parents and companions of the five winners, are rather ridiculous in their treatment of their children, all apart from Grandpa Joe.

In many ways, Grandpa Joe and Mr Wonka are similar characters as they are both youthful and **exuberant**. Despite everything that happens to the visitors along their journey, Grandpa Joe maintains the belief that Wonka knows what he is doing and has a masterplan. Unlike the other adults, Grandpa Joe remains light-hearted and **optimistic** throughout.



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Charlie Bucket and the Golden Ticket Winners

Charlie Bucket is the hero of the story and is the embodiment of everything that is kind and good. This is the case with so many of Roald Dahl's stories, where characters such as James (from James and the Giant Peach), Matilda (from Matilda) and George (from George's Marvellous Medicine) all portray similar characteristics of a hard-done-to youngster who triumphs over adversity.



Like these other characters, Charlie is deprived in many ways, however in spite of this, he never complains or accepts charity from others. He absolutely loves chocolate and as such finds it difficult to live so near to the amazing chocolate factory. As his family are so destitute, he cannot afford to buy Wonka bars like the other children and therefore thinks he has no chance of winning a prized Golden Ticket.

As in so many of Dahl's stories, his description of Charlie's appearance matches his personality: he is small and undernourished and he is meek and mild. Despite facing so many hardships, he remains kind and never bitter.

But behind Charlie's meek exterior, he demonstrates an inner strength and courage. Unlike the other Golden Ticket winners, he faces the mysteries and dangers of the factory with bravery and he finds the adventures to be wild and exciting.

Now over 50 years old, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is probably Roald Dahl's most well-known story. It is thought by many that the reason for its enduring success is due to the range of unusual and exaggerated characters – something Roald Dahl is particularly famous for.

“Something crazy is going to happen now,” Charlie thought. But he wasn't frightened. He wasn't even nervous. He was just excited.

Charlie Bucket



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Character Analysis: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory – Y4m/Y5d/Y6e (Sapphire) – Text

In what year was Charlie and the Chocolate Factory first published?

Which adjectives does the writer use to describe the character of Willy Wonka?

Why does Willy Wonka appear mysterious at the start of the story?

What evidence is there that Willy Wonka has a charitable side?

How are the characters of Willy Wonka and Grandpa Joe similar?

The writer of this text believes that Charlie Bucket is a strong character. What evidence is there to support this?

What are the names of the ‘terrible creatures’ that live in Loompaland?

What does the quote at the bottom of the second page say about Charlie’s personality?

Find some examples of proper nouns within the text?

Which character is described as meek and mild?

Willy Wonka is a good character at heart. Do you agree with this? Why?

Mr Wonka has strong connections with children. How do you think this is similar to the author Roald Dahl himself?

Character Analysis: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory – Vocab 1

Write the meaning of each of these words.

eccentric _____

array _____

notable _____

awe _____

malnourished _____

wariness _____

humble _____

flawless _____

exuberant _____

optimistic _____

deprived _____

destitute _____

meek _____

enduring _____

exaggerated _____

adversity _____

Character Analysis: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory – Vocab 2

Using the letter clues, can you find which word from the vocabulary list has the same meaning as the word shown in the list on the left hand side?

When you have completed this task, find the vocabulary word hidden in the wordsearch. Words are either horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

WORD LIST

remarkable

durable

gentle

perfect

wonder

disadvantaged

VOCAB WORD

_ o t _ b _ _

_ n _ u _ i _ g

_ e _ k

_ l _ w _ e _ s

a _ e

_ ep _ i _ e _

f	e	a	f	n	e	k	d
l	n	o	t	a	b	l	e
a	d	m	b	s	w	t	p
w	u	g	z	e	q	e	r
l	r	m	i	j	u	a	i
e	i	l	e	p	c	h	v
s	n	a	r	e	d	o	e
s	g	d	i	o	k	y	d

Now write each word from the 'WORD LIST' in a sentence of your own.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Proper Nouns

Proper nouns are nouns which name specific people, organisations or places. They always start with a capital letter.

Tick the proper nouns in this list:

Australia _____

rabbit _____

notebook _____

Charlie _____

River Thames _____

Using the text, find three or more examples of proper nouns from the text.

Think of four examples of proper nouns. Try to include the name of a person, place and organisation in your list.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Character Analysis: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory – Oral Teacher Questions

In what year was Charlie and the Chocolate Factory first published? **1964**

Which adjectives does the writer use to describe the character of Willy Wonka? **The writer uses adjectives such as charismatic, quirky, memorable, eccentric, memorable and happy.**

Why does Willy Wonka appear mysterious at the start of the story? **Although he is the owner of a world-famous company, Mr Wonka has been in hiding for many years.**

What evidence is there that Willy Wonka has a charitable side? **Willy Wonka has a charitable side because he helped the struggling Oompa Loompas escape torture. He is also generous as he is giving away the opportunity for someone to take over his factory.**

How are the characters of Willy Wonka and Grandpa Joe similar? **They are both described as being youthful and exuberant. Grandpa Joe has a great belief in Mr Wonka and seems to understand him.**

The writer of this text believes that Charlie Bucket is a strong character. What evidence is there to support this? **Charlie faces many adversities in life and yet never complains and remains optimistic. Despite his love of chocolate, he cannot afford to buy it and yet he lives so close to the factory and doesn't grumble. He may appear quiet and gentle, but when faced with the adventures inside the factory he finds them wild and exciting.**

What are the names of the 'terrible creatures' that live in Loompaland? **Hornswogglers and snozzwhangers.**

What does the quote at the bottom of the second page say about Charlie's personality? **It shows that, unlike the other Golden Ticket winners, Charlie finds the adventures thrilling and exciting rather than terrifying. This helps the reader to understand he is a brave and strong character.**

Find some examples of proper nouns within the text? **Willy Wonka, Roald Dahl, Grandpa Joe, Charlie Bucket, Wonka Chocolate Factory.**

Which character is described as meek and mild? **Charlie Bucket.**

Willy Wonka is a good character at heart. Do you agree with this? Why? **Yes or no (dependent on child's own opinion). Some mention of his generous nature or his darker side could be mentioned.**

Mr Wonka has strong connections with children. How do you think this is similar to the author Roald Dahl himself? **Dahl portrays many of the children in his books as heroes, whereas the adults tend to be villains. This shows he relates to children. The fact that he has also written a large number of highly successful children's books also shows that he has a connection with children.**

Write the meaning of each of these words.

eccentric – **unconventional and slightly strange**

array – **a wide range of a particular type of thing**

notable – **worthy of attention or notice; remarkable**

awe – **a feeling of interest or respect mixed with fear or wonder**

malnourished – **lack of proper nutrition and food**

wariness – **being cautious of possible dangerous or problems**

humble – **someone who has a low opinion of their own importance**

flawless – **having no imperfections or faults**

exuberant – **full of energy, excitement and cheerfulness**

optimistic – **hopeful and confident about the future**

deprived – **being disadvantaged and in need**

destitute – **poor, underprivileged and lacking the means to provide for yourself**

meek – **quiet and gentle**

enduring – **lasting over a period of time; durable**

exaggerated – **over the top; something which is represented as better than it is**

adversity – **struggles and hardships faced by a person**

Character Analysis: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory – Vocab 2

Using the letter clues, can you find which word from the vocabulary list has the same meaning as the word shown in the list on the left hand side?

When you have completed this task, find the vocabulary word hidden in the wordsearch. Words are either horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

WORD LIST VOCAB WORD

- remarkable
- notable
- durable
- enduring
- gentle
- meek
- perfect
- flawless
- wonder
- awe
- disadvantaged
- deprived

f	e	a	f	n	e	k	d
l	n	o	t	a	b	l	e
a	d	m	b	s	w	t	p
w	u	g	z	e	q	e	r
l	r	m	i	j	u	a	i
e	i	l	e	p	c	h	v
s	n	a	r	e	d	o	e
s	g	d	i	o	k	y	d

Now write each word from the ‘WORD LIST’ in a sentence of your own.

Individual pupil responses to include the six words above

Proper Nouns

Proper nouns are nouns which name specific people, organisations or places. They always start with a capital letter.

Tick the proper nouns in this list:

Australia ✓

rabbit

notebook

Charlie ✓

River Thames ✓

Using the text, find three or more examples of proper nouns from the text.

Roald Dahl

Willy Wonka

Grandpa Joe

Charlie Bucket

Oompa Loompas

Think of five examples of proper nouns. Try to include the name of a person, place and organisation in your list.

Individual pupil responses.