



The Candymakers

Wendy Mass

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In the town of Spring Haven, four children have been selected to compete in the national candymaking contest of a lifetime. Who will make a candy more delicious than the Oozing Crunchorama or the Neon Yellow Lightning Chew?

Logan, the candymaker's son, who can detect the color of chocolate by feel alone?

Miles, the boy allergic to rowboats and the color pink?

Daisy, the cheerful girl who can lift a fifty-pound lump of taffy as if it were a feather?

Philip, the suit-and-tie-wearing boy who's always scribbling in a secret notebook?

This sweet, charming, and cleverly crafted story, told from each contestant's perspective, is filled with mystery, friendship, and juicy revelations.

The Candymakers Details

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Author : Wendy Mass

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From Reader Review The Candymakers for online ebook

The Library Lady says

Important note: I got a copy of this at ALA in June, passed it to my 11 year old, and she really enjoyed it. That's a far better recommendation than mine or any other grownups...

This is being compared to Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, in which 5 kids win a contest to tour a magical candy factory. But here 4 kids are at a wonderful but very non-magical candy factory to COMPETE in a contest, and we see the 2 days they spend together in turn from each child's point of view--and each child's voice is clear and distinct.

Dahl's kids were cartoony--the greedy one, the TV obsessed, the good beyond good one. Bad ones get punished, good one gets rewarded. Mass's kids are much more realistic. Each is not what he/she seems from the initial view. Each has a secret. And each has a chance to reach out to the others and do something wonderful, leading to a very satisfying conclusion.

This is sweet, but it's not sticky-sweet (except for the candy being made)and it's extremely satisfying. Now WHERE do I get the recipe for that chocolate pizza?

Vonia says

This book reminds me why I always tell fellow readers to give young adult books a chance. The only complaint I have about The Candymakers is due to the fact that these books are unfortunately targeted towards young adult readers rather than adults that are young at heart. (Guess which category I fall into?)

On that note, the only real problems I had were the same reasons this was not targeted to me. Again, unfortunately. The sentences were more concise and simple then I believe necessary for teens; there was a lot more telling than necessary, although there was notable detailed showing. Some of the plot was rather unbelievable; it all came together a little too easily. But, it is a fantasy world filled with candy, after all. How could I not fall in love with this book? The only other two fictional books that I have read set entirely in the Candy World are "True Confections" by Katherine Weber and, of course, "Charlie and The Chocolate Factory" by Roald Dahl. And now this one, which holds its own among them.

My favorite thing about this novel is its structure. The author is able to successfully write from different points of view- something many adult books cannot get right. Furthermore, these accounts are sold separately, in different chapters- a difficult thing to do. With impeccable exactitude, no facts, no details, none if the timeline, not the characters are mismatched. Readers get the feeling that they are experiencing the event as they switch between the four childrens' minds, each with their own secrets.

They all have their own reasons for being there and all eventually really want to win competition. At first a few are enemies, but, of course, they eventually grow to really care about one another and sincerely can each other friends as they learn each other's secrets and inner thoughts.

**** Spoilers ****

Logan, The Candymaker's son, feels the need to prove to his parents that he is worthy of inheriting his father's position. He has no other friends because his parents have kept him sheltered since he was a young boy. During the annual factory picnic, he met Philip, who was touring the area. This was one of the first boys

had met and he was excited to find a new friend. After playing like boys do around the candy factory for most of the day, they were at the chocolate vat when Phillip lost his toy truck in it. Not wanting to upset his friend and wanting to return it, he crawled into it. He ended up not getting it in time and scarring his entire face. He is still a very happy boy; it seems that he notices his scars far less than anyone else does. In fact, he often forgets that they are there.

Daisy, who grew up in a special family- spies with all the technology and ninja moves- is on an assigned mission. She is there for reasons that at first she does only because she was told; until certain events cause her to truly consider what she is doing. And what is right and wrong. Finding and taking Life Is Sweet's secret ingredient with the goal to shut down the factory? Certainly in the latter category.

Miles, whom carries a life jacket around everywhere and has taken an interest in the afterlife ever since he was out boating and watched a girl drown. He eventually finds out that that girl was actually Daisy, who of course never died because she was utilizing her super powers.

Last but not least, there is Philip, whom is extremely negative, pretentious, rude, and full of animosity as soon as he meets the others. We eventually find out that he is the former boy with the toy truck. As expected, he typically is not this type of guy. But as an equally lonely child, when he was erroneously informed by his father that he had been banned from the Life Is Sweet candy factory (he was actually invited back by the family), he is there to win the competition; to take Logan's thunder. I also loved his secret violin talents and music genius.

Looking forward to reading her other books!

Cyn (semi-hiatus) says

"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about."

3.5 stars rounded up

This is my first book by Wendy Mass and WOW, did it get me right in the feels. I had heard a lot about Mass growing up (esp. her book A Mango-Shaped Space) but didn't have a chance to read any of her works. Let me change that now! Aka I'm going to binge this author.

At first glance, The Candymakers seemed like it be a fun, sweet (ba-dum-tss) little candy-making adventure. ~~It's not. Turn back.~~ This was so much more.

Part 1 turned out to be what I expected: a fun little candy-making adventure, with some added mystery. Part 1 is told from Logan's POV and follows him and 3 other kids' candy-making competition. (view spoiler)

Part 2 is told by Miles, he retells what happened in part 1. Now, here's where things took a turn for me. I was not expecting Miles' backstory, explaining why he is 'allergic' to all these strange things. I liked Miles in the first part (he is shy, a linguist, and a bookworm! how cute!) so it comes as no surprise that he quickly became my favorite. I also cried, did I mention that? We learn more of why Miles talks about the afterlife so much. And the scene where, in answer to Miles, Logan talks about living life all the more perfect:

"Well, if you enjoy life while you have it, then it doesn't matter how long you have it for."

Part 3 is Daisy's POV of the events of part 1 and part 4 is Phillip's. I did get a bit bored halfway through Daisy's POV and I skipped a few chapters of Phillip's POV (I hated that entitled bully and I'm almost sure that I didn't miss anything I couldn't figure out). Part 5 is Logan's POV again and the story continues. The ending is cheesy but cute.

More quotes:

"If nothing ever changed, there'd be no such thing as butterflies"

"'You're so lucky,' [Miles] said earnestly. 'A whole library inside your house.' Of all the things Logan felt lucky to have in his house, the library fell very low on the list."

Mo says

I absolutely loved this book. I was worried that it would be too close to Charlie and Chocolate Factory but it's very different. The story is fun and unexpected and the characters are totally loveable.

Claire Vanderlaan says

Since it was started, the Life Is Sweet candy factory has Participated in a contest most of the greatest candy factories around the world enter. In the town of Spring Haven, four twelve-year-olds named Logan Sweet, grandson of the famed Samuel Sweet, who started the factory and son of the current Candymaker, Daisy, who doesn't know her last name, was born into a family of spies and was hired to steal the Life Is Sweet secret formula, Philip Ransford, a kid who always has a pressed suit and briefcase, and also is the reason Logan has burn scars on his face, hands, and arms, and Miles, who needs to win this contest for the girl who ran into the lake and never came back up, and is allergic to the color pink, merry-go-rounds, jazz, and pancakes, and has a ginormous addiction to chocolate pizza. who will win? Who is the real bad guy?

Amy says

This book was clever and fun but *slow*. I forced myself through most of it. I might have liked it more if I were younger. It was imaginative and creative, especially with the 4 different POVs, but the pacing drove me crazy. I liked Daisy and Philip's POVs the best, though it took me several pages to realize Daisy wasn't just recounting a dream, but reality.

I really wanted to like this one, but I couldn't get into it. Logan was a little too perfect. It didn't get interesting until it got crazy...but perhaps this would appeal to younger readers?

Sonya says

The Candymakers is a well written book by Wendy Mass. The beginning of this book is retold 4 different times, each for one of the characters perspectives. Logan, Miles, Daisy and Phillip are finally 12, old enough

to enter the Candy- making competition, something they've been waiting to enter for a long time. This book is fun, and great for readers with a sweet tooth!

Allison Tebo says

This had to go back to the library so, note to self: I stopped on page 201.

I might not even finish it though; it wasn't holding my interest.

Lilly F. says

This book is about 4 kids, Logan, Miles, Daisy, and Philip. They all enter a candy contest and the winner's candy will be made in a factory and sold! This book makes my mouth water and is just a must read for candy lovers! Great book by Wendy Mass.

Rissa Flores says

It's time for the annual candy making competition! At the *Life is Sweet* candy factory, things are definitely much more exciting. Four 12-year-olds with their own stories to tell: Logan; the Candymaker's son, Daisy; a girl with a huge secret, Miles; an innocent thoughtful boy with a hidden past, and Phillip; a young contestant seeking revenge. As the Confectionary's Association's Annual Convention goes nearer, the contestants find themselves all facing an unlikely turn of events.

A book of unlikely friendships, self-discoveries, candies, chocolates and lots more! What I loved about the book was how I got to see different versions of one single story through different people. Part one is told through Logan's perspective, in Part Two we get to know the story through Daisy's perspective, so on and so forth. Each character has a unique and interesting personality, each character has their own back story, and the book's structure allows readers to really know who Logan, Daisy, Miles and Phillip is. I also loved how it all came together in the end. I enjoyed reading how someone's story is actually connected to someone else's. What a small world, indeed. I loved how, in the end, all the loose ends are all tied up. Hooray for happy endings!

Also, although the book talks about candies and chocolates, the book is definitely not shallow. Basically the book's main lesson is about choosing good over evil, and realizing where true happiness comes from. Cheesy and a tad bit overused lesson, yes, but the book definitely has a fun and exciting way of showing it. It can be a bit tiring to keep going back to the start of one story as another perspective retells the same story, but I think it's still quick and manageable.

A fun, quick read! Reminded me a lot of Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. :D Almost the same exact setting, but with a completely different story! I totally channeled the young teenager version of me as I read this, and so I definitely enjoyed it. PS. I REALLY WANT A CHOCOLATE PIZZA NOW. Anyone know where I can get some? Haha!

Zoejimmy Rollins says

Great book! A good surprise around every corner. It made me hungry. :)

Wendy Hall says

Haven had been asking me to read this book for many months. She loved it and was sure that I would. I finally got a kindle and it was the first full book I read on it, since it was already on our account. The first section was not what I wanted to read. Think Charlie and the Chocolate Factory meets Mary Poppins - very heavy on the candy and the adjectives, low on plot content. I threatened to Haven to stop reading numerous times. Heck, I don't even like candy (for real - I don't). She begged me to hang on to the end of part one. I did it for her, so I could then respectfully bow out of it.

However, I read one paragraph of part two and was TOTALLY hooked! I LOVED how this was written. Told from one narrator perspective for the first part, then that same story is told from the point of view of the other three main characters again - over the next three sections of the book. She had explained this to me, but I had no idea how brilliantly it would play out - the story was completely different each time, as you had no clue about the characters' true issues until they shared their story.

The story was definitely too juvenile (which is the genre, so no apologies there) to recommend, but it was a good book to connect with my daughter in literature once again.

Destinee Sutton says

I picked this up at ALA with much excitement. It was described to me as "Willy Wonka meets Mysterious Benedict Society" and I liked at least one of Wendy Mass's previous books. As I started in on it, I was pleased to find decent jokes, a quick-ish pace, and lots of mouth-watering candy descriptions. The structure of the book is interesting too: Each of the four main characters (Logan, Miles, Daisy, and Philip) narrate separate sections of the book. So after we've read Logan's POV, we go back in time and see the day through Miles' eyes, then Daisy's, etc. So it's a slow reveal of what's really going on, which definitely keeps the pages a-turnin'.

The mystery is very Wonka-esque. Three kids are invited to a candy factory to learn about candymaking so they can enter a candymaking contest (Logan, the fourth contestant, is the candymaker's son and lives at the factory). It seems as though someone is after the factory's secret ingredient and may be trying to close it down. But who's the bad guy? Why do these kids have so many secrets? Who can be trusted? Will the four kids end up best friends or bitter enemies?

I was with this book right up until the end. The finale could have really popped, but instead it fizzled. And it got pretty cheesy, too. Still, 90% enjoyable isn't bad. I always think the toughest part of writing a mystery/adventure story is coming up with a satisfying ending. Maybe it's enough that the journey is exciting, even if the destination leaves something to be desired. I think I'll still recommend this one. The premise alone will make it an easy sell.

Reading Vacation says

REVIEW

Do not read this book if you are hungry. Don't say I didn't warn you! The Candymakers is a clever middle grade book about four children in a national candy-making contest. Yummy!

The book begins from Logan's perspective. He actually lives in the candy factory, and his account of things is pretty nuts-and-bolts. Ah, but then the point-of-view changes to the other kids (Miles, Daisy, and Philip). That's when things really get interesting! With each perspective, I learned something new. I also realized that not all of the kids are entirely truthful and they don't all reveal everything they know. Things are not always what they seem to be.

A simple candy-making competition becomes a complex mystery. In the end, secrets are revealed and the mystery is solved. You'll have a good time getting to the conclusion.

The Candymakers is a fun book that will appeal to middle graders and anyone who has a sweet tooth. The candy descriptions made me hungry for a sweet treat of my own. Thank you to Little, Brown, and Company for sending this book for me to review.

RATING

5 Plot

5 Characters

4 Attention Grabbing

4 Girlie Meter

4 Ending

22 TOTAL

5 STARS

Eva says

Actual rating: 4.5

Too many feels. Phillip is my favorite character. Eat candy while you read this book. ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS EVER. I know I'm being incoherent, but I can't even with this book.
