

Character Breakdown

Willy Wonka / Candy Man

Willy Wonka is an enigmatic character; at once mysterious and mischievous but also charismatic. There are a number of directions to take with Wonka, ranging from Gene Wilder's version in the original film, *Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory*, to Johnny Depp's portrayal in the recent film, *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory*, and everything in between. Pick a young man (or a young woman) who is charismatic, engaging and has a great voice (in the case of a young man, preferably a changed voice). The actor should be able to be funny and serious and change between the two on a dime. It is preferred that Wonka double as the Candy Man, as it helps reinforce that Wonka has staged the Golden Ticket competition and is somewhat controlling this contest along the way. Cast a fantastic actor and singer in this iconic role.

Gender: any

Vocal range top: F5

Vocal range bottom: G3

Charlie Bucket

Charlie Bucket is the emotional heart and soul of the musical. The actor performing Charlie should have an unchanged voice and lots of pluck and enthusiasm. Charlie is in nearly every scene, so make sure you select an actor who can handle the demands of a sizable role. Charlie should be a great singer, excellent actor, and hopefully reads as younger onstage.

Gender: male

Vocal range top: F5

Vocal range bottom: A3

Grandpa Joe

Grandpa Joe is the grandfather we all wish we had when we were Charlie's age. He is caring, patient, sweet, and always reminds Charlie to look on the bright side. Cast an actor who can be kind, funny, and makes a great duo with Charlie. The role sings a bit, but the singing is secondary to the actor's solid acting skills.

Gender: male

Vocal range top: Eb5

Vocal range bottom: Bb3

Mr. Bucket

This is a great role for a young person who has a nice voice, and is a natural nurturer. Mr. Bucket performs the number "Think Positive" with Charlie. Mr. Bucket can double as an Oompa-Loompasin the second half of the show.

Gender: male

Vocal range top: C#5

Vocal range bottom: D4

Mrs. Bucket

This is a great role for a young person who has a nice voice, and is a natural nurturer. Mrs. Bucket sings "Cheer Up, Charlie" with Mr. Bucket and Grandpa Joe. Mrs. Bucket can double as an Oompa-Loompa in the second half of the show.

Gender: female

Vocal range top: Db5

Vocal range bottom: Bb3

The Candy Man Kids

Candy Man Kids sing "The Candy Man," and their numbers may be expanded to include as many performers as you see fit and your program will allow. The names of the characters have been drawn from other Roald Dahl books. Feel free to assign additional names to match the number of performers you cast, like Sophie, Danny, Alfie, and Billy, for example. (All students like to go home and exclaim, "I'm playing Alfie in *Willy Wonka JR.*" versus "I'm Kid 2 in 'The Candy Man.'") You may also cast a single class (say, the sixth grade chorus) to perform these roles, as they appear only in this number unless you choose to double them as Cooks and Oompa-Loompas.

Gender: any

Grandpa George

Charlie's three grandparents are mainly non-singing character roles. Cast performers that are innately interesting, who have good comic timing and are solid actors. These actors can double as Oompa-Loompas in the second half of the show.

Gender: male

Grandma Georgina

Charlie's three grandparents are mainly non-singing character roles. Cast performers that are innately interesting, who have good comic timing and are solid actors. These actors can double as Oompa-Loompas in the second half of the show.

Gender: female

Grandma Josephina

Charlie's three grandparents are mainly non-singing character roles. Cast performers that are innately interesting, who have good comic timing and are solid actors. These actors can double as Oompa-Loompas in the second half of the show.

Gender: female

Phineous Trout

Phineous is the reporter who announces the winners of the Golden Ticket contest throughout the show. The role requires some singing, so cast a boy or a girl with a great announcer's voice and good stage presence.

Gender: male

Vocal range top: C5

Vocal range bottom: B3

Oompa-Loompa Chorus

The Oompa-Loompa Chorus, including Oompa-Loompas 1-5, can be as small as a handful of performers or as large as your stage and theater can accommodate. Consider casting your youngest performers as Oompa-Loompas (like the sixth grade chorus) and augment them with a handful of older students who can take the lead and serve as Oompa-Loompa wranglers.

Gender: any

Vocal range top: A4

Vocal range bottom: A3

Mrs. Gloop

Mrs. Gloop is Augustus' mother who has overindulged her son with food. She accompanies Augustus on the tour of the factory, and sings "I Eat More!" which is one of the more difficult songs in the score for young people. The role requires a character actress who isn't afraid to take positive risks both in her acting and her singing.

Gender: female

Vocal range top: E5

Vocal range bottom: B3

Mrs. Beauregarde

Mrs. Beauregard is a teacher of geography and has invested a great deal of hard-earned money on therapy for her gum-chewing daughter, with less than stellar results. The role is virtually non-singing. Her accent should match Violet's and the two should make a good pair onstage.

Gender: female

Vocal range top: G4

Vocal range bottom: C4

Mr. Salt

Mr. Salt's solution to most problems is to buy his way out. He is upper class, and usually portrayed with a high British accent. (But this accent is not necessary-just make sure Veruca and Mr. Salt sound like they hail from the same place.) He sings very little. A female actress playing male may also play the role.

Gender: male

Vocal range top: G4

Vocal range bottom: C4

Violet Beauregarde

Gum chewer extraordinaire, Violet hails from Snellville, Georgia, so it's nice if she has a Southern American accent, but not necessary. Violet should stand in stark contrast to Veruca Salt. Veruca is a wealthy refined brat; Violet is more of a bluecollar, middle class brat. She sings "Chew It" along with Willy Wonka. The song is a tour-de-force for the right voice, so cast a young lady with strong voice.

Gender: female

Vocal range top: G5

Vocal range bottom: G3

Mike Teavee

For this adaptation Mike is not just a TV junky. He is also addicted to video games, the Internet and any other mindnumbing technological device. Mike is bratty, loud and obnoxious. He does not understand the word "no." Mike and Ms. Teavee sing "I See It All On TV" so he should be a

reasonable singer, but does not need to be phenomenal. Mike could also be portrayed by a girl playing a boy, but generally works best with a male actor.

Gender: male

Vocal range top: G5

Vocal range bottom: G3

James

James is Charlie's friend from school. He has a few lines and sings the introduction of "The Candy Man" along with Matilda and Charlie. This is a great role for a performer who is newer to the stage.

Gender: male

Vocal range top: F#4

Vocal range bottom: A3

Chorus Of Cooks

Please note this is an optional chorus. The Cooks appear during "I Eat More!" presenting Augustus with a smorgasbord of food choices. (Check out the Director's Guide note in the song for more information.) Double the Candy Man Kids Chorus and Oompa-Loompa Chorus or cast a single class of kids to perform this section.

Gender: any

Augustus Gloop

Augustus is the overachieving eater. Be extremely sensitive in casting this role as it is tempting to cast an overweight young person and that can be scarring-especially if the child struggles with this issue. Consider casting a thin child and creating the illusion of size via the costume. Either a boy or a girl acting like a boy can play Augustus. Augustus sings "I Eat More!" along with his mother and Phineous Trout. The song is on the difficult side, but does not need to be sung with a polished pretty voice, in fact, the more character the better.

Gender: male

Vocal range top: G5

Vocal range bottom: B3

Ms. Teavee

Ms. Teavee is a take on all television moms of the distant past. Think June Cleaver (*Leave it to Beaver*) or Marion Cunningham (*Happy Days*) or even Carol Brady (*The Brady Bunch*). She's perfectly put together and a bit vacant. She sings "I See It All On TV" but does not require a polished voice.

Gender: female

Vocal range top: F5

Vocal range bottom: B3

Veruca Salt

Veruca is wealthy, class-conscious, and completely spoiled. She is often portrayed with a high British accent that is by no means required (brats come in all nationalities). Veruca's solo number "I Want It Now" is deceptively tricky and comes late in the show, so select a young lady with a strong voice. Veruca should contrast sharply with Violet Beauregarde in terms of look and physical type. Cast a great singer and actor in this role who can make bold choices onstage.

Gender: female

Vocal range top: E5

Vocal range bottom: A3

Matilda

Matilda is also a schoolmate of Charlie's, but she's a bit of bully. Matilda has a few lines and sings the introduction of "The Candy Man" along with James and Charlie.

Gender: female

Vocal range top: B4

Vocal range bottom: C#4

Squirrels

The squirrels are non-speaking, non-singing roles and you can cast as many as necessary. This is a great part for beginning actors.

Gender: any

Mrs. Beauregarde

Mrs. Beauregard is a teacher of geography and has invested a great deal of hard-earned money on therapy for her gum-chewing daughter, with less than stellar results. The role is virtually non-singing. Her accent should match Violet's and the two should make a good pair onstage.

Gender: female

Vocal range top: G4

Vocal range bottom: C4