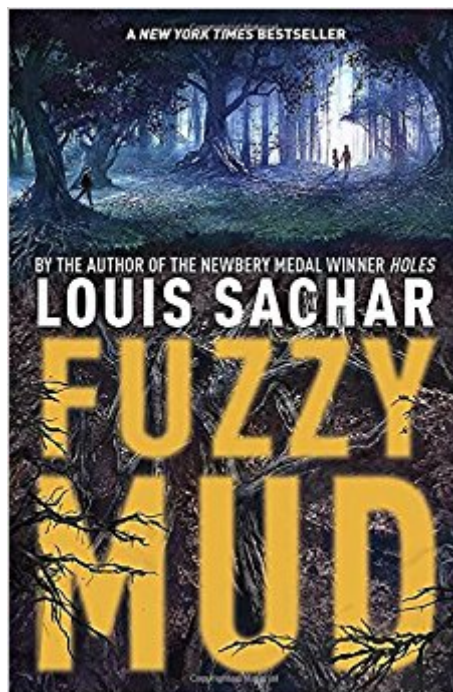


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# Fuzzy Mud



## Synopsis

From Louis Sachar, the multi-award-winning author of *Holes*, comes the New York Times bestseller that's been nominated for 13 state awards and counting! *They Got Lost*. The world got scared. And the mud got fuzzy. Fifth grader Tamaya Dhilwaddi and seventh grader Marshall Walsh have been walking to and from Woodridge Academy together since elementary school. But their routine is disrupted when bully Chad Hilligas challenges Marshall to a fight. To avoid the conflict, Marshall takes a shortcut home through the off-limits woods. Tamaya, unaware of the reason for the detour, reluctantly follows. They soon get lost. And then they find trouble. Bigger trouble than anyone could ever have imagined. What they uncover might affect the future of the world. *FUZZY MUD* is an imaginative and suspenseful story of the great lengths we'll go to for friendship and family, the mishaps and breakthroughs that are made in the name of science, and the wonders of mud . . . fuzzy mud.

**A JUNIOR LIBRARY GUILD SELECTION**

**FINANCIAL TIMES BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR**

"The children are well-realized characters and agents within their immediate social worlds . . . [and] the very fate of the world is at stake."

• The New York Times "Holds as much suspense as fuel for discussion."

• Booklist, Starred

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0700 (What's this?)

Paperback: 208 pages

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Language: English

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ISBN-13: 978-0385370226

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.5 x 7.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 135 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #4,506 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Environment #22 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Bullies #34 in Books > Children's Books > Mysteries & Detectives

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 3-5 • Newbery Award-winning author Sachar takes on science and the government in this engaging eco-cautionary tale. Middle schoolers Tamaya, Marshall, and Chad meet in the woods near their school, but it's not to party. Tamaya follows Marshall into the woods because she thinks they're taking a shortcut home. Marshall hopes the detour will help them avoid a beating from bully Chad, who finds the pair anyway. Tamaya stops the boys' fight by throwing some strange-looking mud in Chad's face and inadvertently unleashes an environmental disaster lurking in the woods. The mud is composed of ergonyms, a microscopic life form never seen on Earth before, created by a nearby research facility to produce a safe, inexpensive biofuel. The bad news? Contact with the mud is dangerous for most other life forms already on Earth, starting with Tamaya and Chad. Sachar confidently juxtaposes three time lines, one of which takes place several months after the initial events, revealing some of the devastation to come, which serves to increase readers' apprehension about the characters' fate. Another time line recaps Senate hearings into the biofuel's risks and benefits. Sachar is at his best in these chapters, wryly skewing government power and questioning science's ability to control life and save us from ourselves. A witness at the hearings delivers the author's warning: "Unless we do something to control world population, nothing will help us." Clever petri dish design elements and multiplication equations sprinkled throughout the text help readers grasp the simple math that challenges science's claims of control. VERDICT Featuring a plot that moves as fast as the ergonyms replicate, this issue-driven novel will captivate readers while giving them plenty to think about. • Marybeth Kozikowski, Sachem Public Library, Holbrook, NY --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A New York Times Best Seller Winner of the Georgia Children's Award and the Buckeye Children's Teen Book Award (Ohio) "Grounded in well-rounded central characters, this compelling novel holds as much suspense as fuel for discussion." • Booklist, Starred "Fast-paced. An exciting story of school life, and bullies that becomes a quick meditation on the promise and dangers of modern science." • Kirkus Reviews "This engaging eco-cautionary tale... will captivate readers while giving them plenty to think about." • School Library Journal "... vintage Sachar for the way it brings big ideas to everyday drama." • The Horn Book "Sachar blends elements of mystery, suspense, and school-day life into a taut environmental cautionary tale." • Publishers Weekly "An engrossing plot... a most entertaining ride... Readers will devour this delightful book just as they did with HOLES. A unique story that keeps readers on their toes." • VOYA "Sachar is a master at compact and unintimidating plotting; the

school story unfolds with swift authenticity in its own right and then becomes tautly suspenseful." —•The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books". . .lively narrative . . . snappy dialogue and plenty of action." —•Shelf Awareness

I originally ordered this book because, as a middle school language arts teacher, I know my students have an affinity for Louis Sachar's novel Holes. Sachar is good at engaging young readers--male and female--with characters that feel real and situations that are interesting and unpredictable. I expected the story to be decent. I wasn't merely entertained, though; I was enthralled. The story has three central characters--a "goody goody" named Tamaya, a bully named Chad, and the bullied Marshall. But this is not a story strictly about bullying, and it doesn't hit readers over the head with messages about being good and doing the right thing. The themes are there, though, blended with questions about science and morality that make this very short novel a very engaging read. I read the book in one sitting, as Sachar does a brilliant job of building suspense and feeding the readers clues about "fuzzy mud" as the story progresses. The story is told by a third person narrator, but the voice is almost prophetic, asking readers to ponder the impacts of population growth, capitalism, science and morality without making judgments about the characters in the story. Sachar doesn't force his ideas on readers, but does an excellent job of encouraging inquiry into contemporary issues. I know that this is a book my middle school students will enjoy. I'm planning a re-read to see if I can figure out how I might be able to incorporate it into my classroom, particularly as there are strong STEM connections to the story. My views as an ELA teacher aside, I strongly recommend this book to both young and more mature readers. It's an awesome read.

I love this book it is amazing and my daughter thought it was absolutely awesome and she couldn't wait to keep reading

Great book, 5th grade kids loved the story line

This is such a great book... It had a sort of slow beginning but was so amazing. I suggest this to anyone! This book was so cool and hopeful

I purchased this book for my girls. My older daughter who is 11 hates reading! She loved this book so much that she finished it in 4 days. She skipped, TV, ipad and videogames on the weekend to read the book. I would definitely recommend for kids ages 10-12 .

When I read this book, I was frightened of the organism coming real in our world. The three main characters had great emotions. Chad's characteristic changed a lot in the book too, which made the story even more fun. The book had a great happy ending with the three characters.

-I like this book because it was really fun and exiting I liked the end of the book because chad was nicer to Marshall and tamaya

This book was one of the six books on my summer homework assignment for english. when I chose this book I was not sure that I would like it but it is won of my favorites. I would consider on reading it

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