



[Home](#) > Fuzzy Mud

Fuzzy Mud

Books Reviewed:

[Fuzzy Mud](#) [1]

Issue:

[214](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Stuart Dyer](#) [3]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Louis Sachar's new novel is a wonderful and moving story about bullying, bravery and mud. It is the story of Tamaya and Marshall, who attend the illustrious Woodbridge Academy, and who are both trying their best to fit in to its often baffling social network.

Tamaya and Marshall want nothing more than to do their best at school and have fun with their friends and, until recently, have been successful on both fronts. But now there are the laws of teenage cliques for Tamara to abide by, and Marshall has, somehow, drawn the attention of the troubled bully, Chad, who seems set on making Marshall's life a misery.

Alongside this sensitive and empathic school drama, Sachar gradually and ingeniously reveals the presence of a disturbing ecological development in the nearby woods. The two stories collide with a splat when Tamaya discovers a curious puddle of 'fuzzy mud'.

Tamaya soon finds that even a 'goody-two-shoes' can find herself sucked into deep trouble, even when they are only trying to help, and this resembles the experiences of the hapless Stanley Yelnats in Sachar's multi-award winning classic, [Holes](#) [4].

Sachar understands perfectly the devastating effects that bullying and getting into trouble can have upon children's feelings and the different journeys that Tamaya, Marshall and Chad must travel in order to confront these themes are described with beautiful simplicity and gentle humour. *Fuzzy Mud* also has a powerful ecological message, containing thought-provoking dilemmas that highlight the issues of global energy shortage and animal rights.

The real genius of **Fuzzy Mud** is the way that so many prevalent and stimulating themes are contained within such an uncomplicated, coherent story. It is simultaneously a brilliant discussion text for any classroom and a perfect page-turner for avid, young readers: another stirring and unique Louis Sachar novel.

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[2] <http://savfkn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/214>

[3] <http://savfkn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/stuart-dyer>

[4] <http://savfkn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/120/childrens-books/reviews/holes>