



# No Monkeys, No Chocolate

*Melissa Stewart , Allen Young , Nicole Wong (Illustrator)*

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**No Monkeys, No Chocolate** Melissa Stewart , Allen Young , Nicole Wong (Illustrator)

Everyone loves chocolate, right? But how many people actually know where chocolate comes from? How it's made? Or that monkeys do their part to help this delicious sweet exist?

This delectable dessert comes from cocoa beans, which grow on cocoa trees in tropical rain forests. But those trees couldn't survive without the help of a menagerie of rain forest critters: a pollen-sucking midge, an aphid-munching anole lizard, brain-eating coffin fly maggots—they all pitch in to help the cocoa tree survive. A secondary layer of text delves deeper into statements such as "Cocoa flowers can't bloom without cocoa leaves . . . and maggots," explaining the interdependence of the plants and animals in the tropical rain forests. Two wise-cracking bookworms appear on every page, adding humor and further commentary, making this book accessible to readers of different ages and reading levels.

Back matter includes information about cocoa farming and rain forest preservation, as well as an author's note.

## No Monkeys, No Chocolate Details

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Author : Melissa Stewart , Allen Young , Nicole Wong (Illustrator)

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# **From Reader Review No Monkeys, No Chocolate for online ebook**

## **Joannie Duris says**

Who doesn't love monkeys? And who doesn't love chocolate? The title alone is enough to draw readers in, and to discover the fascinating interconnectedness of nature that does indeed link monkeys and chocolate. This multi-layered book begs for repeat readings. First, to enjoy the building-block main text. Then back again, to read the in-depth text that explains the fragile balances in the rain forest habitat that produce cocoa beans. (Gross-out loving kids will love some of these details – no brain-eating maggots, no chocolate!) A third layer of text has spunky bookworms making pun-filled comments as they hang out on the pages while reading the book. Lush, detailed artwork lets readers discover something new each time they open the book. Fascinating back matter shares the latest research on rain forest cocoa groves, what we can do to help, and the author's journey from idea to book. Monkeys and chocolate are a winning combination!

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## **Tasha says**

A close-up look at the favorite sweet treat of chocolate, this nonfiction picture book explains exactly what it takes to get chocolate. The book quickly moves to the tropical rain forests of Central and South America and the cocoa beans that grow there and how they are treated to get cocoa powder from them. The book then moves to explaining cocoa pods, cocoa flowers, and cocoa leaves, but animals quickly come into the process from the midges that pollinate the cocoa flowers as they lay their eggs to the maggots of the coffin flies that take over the brains of the leaf-cutter ants. Lizards and monkeys play a role too, but the monkeys are tantalizingly left to the end of the book. Told in factual information, the book also offers asides by two funny bookworms who wonder along with the reader what in the world monkeys have to do with chocolate!

This is a fascinating look at the complexities of something that many of us take for granted. Stewart, author of over 150 nonfiction books for children, worked with Allen Young, the world specialist on cocoa tree pollination and growth. The result is a book that is enticing both in its premise and its execution. Turning pages lets you learn more and the entire process is both odd and amazing.

The art by Wong has a wonderful lightness to it that fits the subject particularly well. The clever little bookworms add a whimsical note to the entire book with their ballooned speech bubbles, ballcap, flower and skirt.

A winner of a nonfiction picture book, this is one sweet addition to any library. Appropriate for ages 6-8.

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## **Jeanne Bracken says**

Melissa Stewart has written many engaging science books for young readers. With No Monkeys, No Chocolate, she has shed new light on the cultivation of cocoa trees in the world's diminishing rain forests. She worked with Allen Young, "the world's leading expert on cocoa tree pollination and growth" to create a colorful picture book with solid information provided in an accessible way yet leavened with humor provided by some "bookworm commentators" who have fun with word play. The book is a Junior Library

Guild Selection. Nicole Wong's illustrations portray the people and especially the fauna of Costa Rica and other tropical areas of the world where cocoa is grown. Readers meet not only monkeys (who pick the pods, eat the pulp and spit out the seeds, which grow into new trees) but also midges, lizards, and leaf-cutter ants whose brains are eaten by tiny maggots. EEWWW! Very kid-friendly.

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### **:Donna Marie says**

***NO MONKEYS, NO CHOCOLATE*** Making children aware of what it takes to make our planet "run" is one of the most vital aspects of their education. Truth is---many adults need the same education. This book serves as a superb tool in doing just that.

Beginning with several examples of things made with chocolate--the results of what can come from cocoa beans--the reader is taken on a detailed journey through the life cycle of a cocoa tree. As it is with the life cycle of any living thing on our planet (and elsewhere), it is a complex and dependent system, making all aspects of it vital; when one factor is missing, the cycle falls apart. Ultimately, the book ends with pointing out how rain forests are a critical factor in the life cycle of our planet.

Melissa Stewart, with the help of cocoa tree expert, Allen Young, do an excellent and effective job making such an important subject clear, and hopefully in turn--important to the reader.

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### **Emily W says**

This book was a very entertaining and fast read. I thought it was interesting how the logic and research was presented in fun and very fun way.

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### **Roberta Gibson says**

This title definitely captures the reader's attention with the word "chocolate," and then holds it with an layered approach explaining how midges, flies, lizards and monkeys all are important to the continued survival of the cocoa tree.

The story starts with a birthday party with an amazing amount of chocolate desserts, which draws children in. Then we're off to the tropics to find out where and how chocolate is grown. Once we see the cocoa beans drying in the sun, it is time to find out where the bean come from, then about the flowers that produce the beans, and then about the leaves that feed trees that produce the flowers, etc. Each time we learn about a new part of the system, we learn about a new creature that is critical to make that step happen. Suddenly, cocoa is part of a complex web of life dependent on rain forests for its existence. If you care about chocolate, then it becomes apparent you must also care about the rainforest and the creatures that live there.

Did I mention this book also comes with bookworms? Bookworms, what are those? Stewart came up with the idea of having cartoon characters comment on each page of the book, adding yet another layer of interest and information. You can even find them on either side of the title, commenting on what the title means, as well as on the back cover.

Now come the absolutely best part: Melissa Stewart has created an amazing interactive timeline to go with this book. She goes step-by-step through the lengthy creative process that resulted in *No Monkeys, No Chocolate*. Stewart explains at the SCBWI blog that she wanted to show children that writing takes practice, rewrites, starting over and sticking with it, just like any other field of interest. If you are an educator and/or a writer, the timeline is a treasure.

*No Monkeys, No Chocolate* can be used for units on plants and plant structures, ecology (food webs, ecosystems) and even writing. It will be a must for chocolate lovers, too. Be prepared to discover many new things about something we all take for granted.

Full review with links at [Wrapped In Foil](#)

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### **Margie says**

Using a circle story format readers are able to see how vital each part of the delicate balance in our ecosystems truly is. *No Monkeys, No Chocolate* by Melissa Stewart and Allen Young with illustrations by Nicole Wong is a work of nonfiction rising above other titles for its authenticity in text and pictures. Even after several readings I found myself actively engaged each time, looking for added items in the visuals and marveling at the knowledge I was gleaned from the writing.

My full review: <http://bit.ly/13ss3Y7>

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### **Peacegal says**

3.5 stars--Chocolate doesn't just come from the store...as with all other foods, it has a story behind it. The story of chocolate is an especially multi-faceted one, with a surprising number of plants and animals working together. Adults and kids will be amazed and will learn something, too.

(Although, I will say, I frankly didn't care for the "bookworms" and their silly running commentary at the bottom of each page; I found it more distracting than amusing.)

Chocolate is incredibly popular with human beings, including yours truly. In recent years, awareness has grown about some serious human rights and environmental issues regarding the chocolate industry. To her great credit, the author includes environmental tips at the conclusion of the book, but I do wish a point would have been made about looking for fair-trade and sustainable chocolate products while shopping. Happily, this "friendlier" chocolate is widely available, and can be found in most well-stocked grocery stores.

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### **Samantha says**

There's a big process behind the main ingredient in your favorite candy bar: chocolate. In this book readers learn about the origins of cocoa beans and the many creatures who are essential to the production of them.

Monkeys appear near the end of the book and play one of the most important roles which allows cocoa trees to grow in places they hadn't before.

This book is full of great information and the ink and watercolor illustrations support the text well, clearly showcasing the main facts.

Here's what didn't work for me: the ellipses that carried across pages and the worms offering commentary on the text from the bottom right corner of every two page spread. It felt like these things made the book harder to read, broke up the text, and competed with the information. It made me feel like the author wasn't confident that the information alone would hold the reader's attention.

I recommend this book on content and artwork even though there were issues with the presentation for me. Grades 3-5.

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### **Heidi says**

When I first saw this book, I wasn't sure what to expect. What I got out of it was a lot of useful information! It was interesting to learn how many different animals and creatures make even the smallest contribution in order to help the cocoa beans grow, which in turn makes chocolate. I do wonder if the amount of information presented may be a bit much for some children, which then could become a bit tedious to read. However, this is the type of book that teachers can use to create a cause and effect activity, which could be used to remember these natural contributors.

I must say some of the insights grossed me out, especially when it came to some of the insects. The pictures themselves were not done too graphically, it was the words that I read that disgusted me. On the other hand, sometimes the gross part of nature can be fascinating to many children, so kudos to the authors for sharing all aspects of this natural phenomenon.

The illustrations filled up the pages of the book very nicely. They were not too vibrant, yet it worked with the topic at hand.

Overall, No Monkeys, No Chocolate was a very educational book to read, but the amount of new information means this would be a book to revisit. Due to the amount of text and new information, elementary-aged children would be the ideal audience. Any lower and they'll get confused; any higher and they might lose interest.

<https://bookloverblogs.com/2018/12/31...>

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### **Shelli says**

Who knew the chocolate that is massively produced and consumed all over the world comes from a cocoa-tree that's very existence is hinged on a fragile web of mutualistic relationships between coffin flies, midges, lizards, fungi, and monkeys? Chocolate lovers may want to reconsider chocolate as their drug of choice. If the coffin fly is unable to keep the leaf-cutter ant at bay the coco-plant is doomed! Endangered monkeys and midges are necessary for the reproduction and pollination of these sedentary trees. Chocolate lovers should light a candle and say a silent pray each night that this fragile ecosystem the coco-tree resides in stays balanced.

Melissa Stewart and Allen Young did a fantastic job of making this science lesson on plant pollination and survival interesting and memorable! Absolutely LOVED IT!

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### **Heather says**

"You can't make chocolate with cocoa beans" and "Cocoa beans can't develop without cocoa pods" and "Cocoa pods can't form with cocoa flowers." This modern day House-That-Jack-Built text helps explain the interdependency of all things. Flowers, leaves, fungi and monkeys all make chocolate. I can see multiple uses for this book: as an illustration study, adding humor (the dialoguing bookworms), structure of information text, author's note, and "what you can do to help" section.

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### **Sandy Brehl says**

Melissa Stewart's mastery of picture book non-fiction is undisputed, but this particular title stands out for its excellence and capacity to inform, explain, amuse, and extend understanding of a familiar but complex item- CHOCOLATE!

The commentating, questioning, curious page-peeking critters in each lower right corner are a priceless addition, and the science writing is superbly interesting, accessible, and accurate.

A wonderful selection for mentor writing and for content area reading.

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### **The Styling Librarian says**

No Monkeys, No Chocolate by Melissa Stewart and Allen Young, illustrated by Nicole Wong – how fantastic is this non-fiction picture book? One thing I loved as a child was reading the Cricket magazine with the little insects who dropped in during articles with little comments and conversations in addition to a little comic strip which occurred and continued throughout multiple magazines. I was reminded about this when I read No Monkeys, No Chocolate because there are little book worms who are commenting in various ways through the book with fantastic comic relief. Brilliant book. Packed with well organized facts about how delicate and important multiple organisms are within the ecosystem which impacts the creation of chocolate/cocoa beans. Since I am thoroughly addicted to dark chocolate, I loved learning more through every stage. My son was a little grossed out by the coffin flies laying eggs inside the leaf-cutter ants heads and tiny maggots wriggling out and eating the ant's brains. I can totally see many students just loving this portion! I cannot wait to read it aloud!

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### **Yapha says**

This non-fiction picture book is an excellent example of the interdependence of so many different things in the ecosystem that is necessary for the cocoa trees to grow and produce the chocolate that we all love so much! From the coffin flies who lay their eggs in the heads of the leaf cutter ants to the monkeys who spit the cocoa seeds on the ground, each part is equally essential to a world full of chocolate. A fun read aloud. Recommended for all ages.

