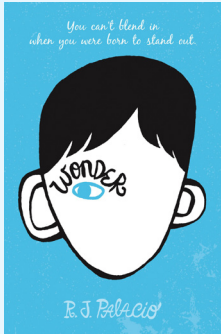# Wonder

AUTHOR R.J. Palacio

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LA BOOKSHELF KM286

VOICETEXT Yes

LEXILE LEVEL 790L

GRADE EQUIVALENT 4.8

OVERVIEW

I won't describe what I look like. Whatever you're thinking, it's probably worse.

August Pullman was born with a facial deformity that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid—but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. *Wonder*, now a *New York Times* bestseller, begins from Auggie's point of view, but soon switches to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives converge in a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance.

In a world where bullying among young people is an epidemic, this is a refreshing new narrative full of heart and hope. R.J. Palacio has called her debut novel "a meditation on kindness" — indeed, every reader will come away with a greater appreciation for the simple courage of friendship. Auggie is a hero to root for, a diamond in the rough who proves that you can't blend in when you were born to stand out.

SUGGESTED GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

• Character Map

• Vocabulary Graphic Organizer

• Character Traits Worksheet

AUTHOR INFORMATION

R.J. Palacio resides in New York City with her family, including her two sons and two dogs. A former art director and book jacket designer for over twenty years, *Wonder* is Palacio's first novel. Check out some of R.J. Palacio's newest additions to the *Wonder* series including *Pluto*, *The Julian Chapter* and *365 Days of Wonder*.

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

• Information on Bullying and Bullying Prevention

  › "Teaching *Wonder*" by Trudy Ludwig w/ information on bullying

  › StopBullying.Gov – Bullying prevention and resources for schools

  › PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center

• Information Craniofacial Syndromes

  › Children's Craniofacial Association

WRITING PROMPTS

• What are your perceptions of August as he tells his story? Why?

• What are the perceptions of August through Via and other characters' eyes?

• How do the different narrators in each chapter help shape the story?

• What are some examples of kindness in the story? Examples of unkindness?

• What character from the story do you most identify with? Why?

LITERARY DEVICES

Point of View

Narrated in first-person point of view by differing characters

Symbolism

• Astronaut helmet – Auggie's need to hide

• Padawan braid – Auggie cutting off his braid symbolized him "coming of age"

• Eyes – August's mom says that is his best feature, August makes several references to peoples' eyes throughout the story.

• Daisy – unconditional love

Wonder

Metaphor

Via's perception of her family and August's as "center of the universe"

Simile

Like a lamb to the slaughter

SUPPORTING MEDIA (graphic novels, movies, video clips)

- Natalie Merchant, Song, "Wonder" — YouTube
- Choose Kind campaign http://choosekind.tumblr.com/
- Book trailer video

COMMON CORE BIG IDEAS

- Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.
- Determine the theme of the story, using explicit examples and inferences.
- Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story.

WAYS TO HELP DIVERSE LEARNERS

- Allow students to use audiobook version at home or in class
- Verbally read chapters of the book aloud while students follow along
- Allow students to use a scribe or Assistive Technology for written assessments
- Provide picture cues for big ideas, vocabulary, lesson objectives, directions
- Change modality of assessment from written work to an approach most successful for student (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic)