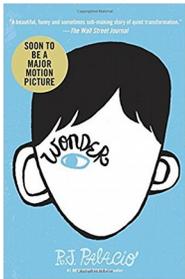


Books by the Stack



Wonder by R. J. Palacio

Ten-year-old Auggie Pullman, who was born with extreme facial abnormalities and was not expected to survive, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school in Manhattan, which entails enduring the taunting and fear of his classmates as he struggles to be seen as just another student.

Why you'll like it: Heart-felt. Realistic. Friendship

About the Author: R. J. Palacio is a graphic designer and book jacket designer. She is the author of *Wonder*, *365 Days of Wonder: Mr. Browne's Book of Precepts*, and *Auggie and Me: Three Wonder Stories*. She lives in Brooklyn, where she is surrounded by magical water towers, with her husband, their two sons, and their two dogs, Bear and Beau.

Questions for Discussion

1. What do you think of the line 'Don't judge a boy by his face' which appears on the back cover of the book? Did this affect how much you wanted to read the story? How much did this line give away about the story you were about to read?
2. Throughout *Wonder*, Auggie describes the way that many people react to seeing his face for the first time: by immediately looking away. Have you ever been in a situation where you have responded like this to seeing someone different? Having now read *Wonder*, how do you feel about this now?
3. Auggie's face is not fully described until quite far into the story, in Via's chapter 'August: Through the Peephole'. How close was this description to your own mental image of Auggie? Did you have a picture of his face in your mind while reading the book? Did this description alter that picture?
4. How would you describe Auggie as a person in the first few chapters of the book? What about the final few chapters? Has he changed significantly? Are there any experiences or episodes during the story that you think had a particular effect on him? If so, how?
5. In the chapter 'Costumes' Auggie describes the astronaut helmet that he wore constantly as a younger child. We later learn that Miranda was the one to give Auggie the helmet, and is proud of the gift, but that it was Auggie's father who threw it away. What do you think the helmet signifies to each of these characters and why do you think they all view it so differently?
6. Star Wars is one of Auggie's passions. Why do you think this is? Do you see any reasons for Auggie to identify with these characters, or to aspire to be like them?
7. Auggie's parents bring Auggie around to the idea of attending school by joking with him about Mr. Tushman's name, and telling him about their old college professor, Bobbie Butt. To what extent is humor used as a tool throughout *Wonder* to diffuse difficult or tense situations, or to convey a part of the story that would otherwise be depressing or sad?

8. What do you think of Via as a character? Did you empathize with her? Why do you think Via was so angry to learn that Auggie cut off his Padawan braid? Do you think Via's own attitude towards her brother changes throughout the story?

9. Look at the emails between Mr. Tushman, Julian's parents and Jack's parents in the chapter 'Letters, Emails, Facebook, Text'. Up to this point in the story we have seen how the children at Auggie's school have reacted to him. Is Mrs. Albans' attitude toward Auggie different? What do you make of her statement that Auggie is handicapped? Do you think she is correct in saying that asking 'ordinary' children, such as Julian, to befriend Auggie places a burden on them?

10. The author has explained that she was inspired to write *Wonder* after an experience at a local ice cream parlor, very similar to the scene described in the chapter 'Carvel', where Jack sees Auggie for the first time. In this scene, Jack's babysitter Veronica chooses to get up and quickly walk Jack and his little brother Jamie away from Auggie, rather than risk Jamie saying something rude or hurtful. What do you think you would have done, if put in the that position?

(Questions provided by publisher)



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