



Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Division

About the Book of the Month: This collection of featured books is from our Recommended Multicultural and Anti-Bias Books for Children. Intended for educators, parents and other caregivers of early childhood and elementary aged children, these books promote respect for diversity, teach about bias and prejudice, encourage social action and reinforce themes addressed in education programs of [A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute](#), ADL's international anti-bias education and diversity training provider. Reading the children's books listed on this site with your children and incorporating them into instruction is an excellent way to talk about these important concepts in your classroom.

Wonder

R.J. Palacio (Author)

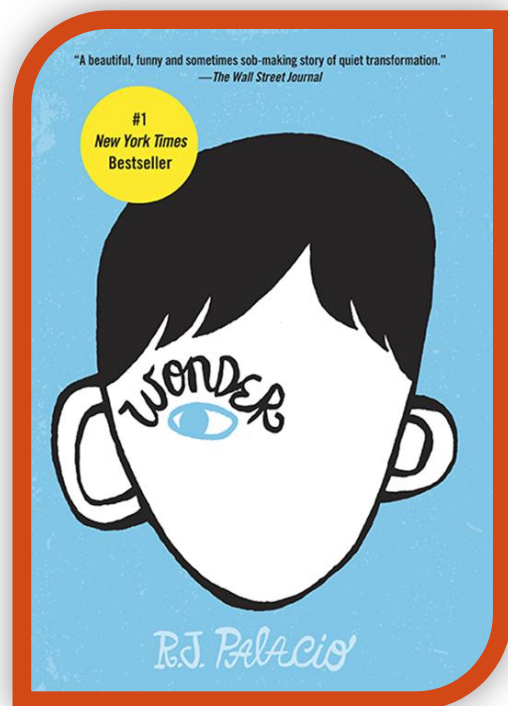
August (Auggie) Pullman was born with a facial deformity that has prevented him from attending a mainstream school—until now. He's about to enter fifth grade at Beecher Prep, and if you've ever been the new kid, then you know how hard that can be. The thing is Auggie's just an ordinary kid, with an extraordinary face. But can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, despite appearance? Using compelling character and story development, this book explores bullying, bias, difference, friendship and empathy.

ISBN: 978-0-375-86902-0

Publisher: Random House

Year Published: 2012

Grade Level: 5–7



Key Words

Discuss and define these words with children prior to reading the book and remind children of their meanings as they come up in the book. See ADL's [Definitions Related to Name-Calling, Bullying and Bias](#).

- ally
- embarrassed
- monumental
- aversion
- empathy
- nervous
- biracial
- hypocrite
- ordinary
- bullying
- inclusion
- phony
- deformity
- lighthearted
- sympathetic

Discussion Questions

If the students read the book in a small group or as a whole class, ask discussion questions throughout their reading in order to check comprehension and engage them on a deeper level. When students have finished the book, use these questions to guide group discussion:

- Review relevant vocabulary about bullying ([Definitions Related to Name-Calling, Bullying and Bias](#)) including the words target, aggressor, bystander, ally and confronter. Engage students in a discussion about different scenes and characters in the book who are involved in bullying situations and the roles that the different characters play. Ask: *Why do you think the person played that role? Is there something else they could have done? Why might it have been difficult or easy for them to play that role? Can you relate to these situations?*
- Why do you think the author wrote the story from different characters' perspectives? How did that add or take away from the story? Describe one person's perspective (who has her or his own chapter in the book) and what you learned from reading that person's point of view that you didn't know before.
- Why did Auggie's parents disagree about him going to school? How would you feel in that situation?
- What were your impressions of Charlotte, Julian and Jack as they showed Auggie around the school? Did those impressions change over time?
- Why do you think Auggie got mad when certain people, like Julian, asked him about his face, but did not get upset when Summer asked? What is the difference in their attitude which impacts how Auggie feels about them asking that question?
- There were several times in the book when a character stood up for another person and played the role of "ally." Can you describe those moments? How did you feel? Have you ever been an ally to someone?
- On Halloween, why do you think Jack pretended that he didn't really like Auggie in front of Julian and his other friends? Have you been in a situation like that?
- How would you describe Auggie's personality throughout the book? What three adjectives best describe his personality? What did you think about him at first? How did Auggie change throughout the book?
- On the overnight trip after the incident with the seventh graders from the other school, Auggie is thinking to himself: "The sky was the same. The movie was the same. Everyone's faces were the same. Mine was the same. But something was different. Something has changed." What do you think was different?
- What was the meaning of Mr. Tushman's graduation speech? What did it mean when he said, "be kinder than is necessary?" How do you relate to that statement?
- Who was your favorite character and why?
- How did you feel when the book ended?

For additional information about the book, read [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about *Wonder* answered by author R. J. Palacio and listen to an [interview](#) with author R. J. Palacio on NPR.

Extension Activities

Below are activities that you can do with children in order to extend the learning from the book.

1. Dramatize a Scene from the Book

Brainstorm a list of scenes from the book that students find interesting and compelling. For each scene, determine how many characters are in the scene, including a narrator. Divide students into groups based on which scene they are most excited about acting out and the number of people needed. First, have the students write a script for their scene based on the dialogue and narrative from the book. They can write new additional dialogue as long as it conveys the same message in that scene. Have them write the script together. Then they should divide up the characters and rehearse their lines several times. They will also need to determine what props, costumes and scenery are needed. Students can perform all of these scenes in front of their class and invite parents to watch. If interest continues, scenes can be performed for other classes in the school and discussed afterwards.

2. Reading Response Essay

Have students write a reading response essay about the book, using one of these three options:

- **Diary Entry:** Choose a character and a pivotal time or moment from the book. Write a diary entry from that character's point of view that is new or different from what you read in the book. The characters can include those who had their own chapters as well as other characters including Auggie's parents, Julian, Mr. Tushman, Charlotte, Eddie, etc.
- **Sequel:** Explain what a sequel is and ask if anyone has ever read a sequel to a book or seen a sequel for a movie. Have students write one chapter as an imaginary sequel to the book. The sequel should begin as Auggie and his friends begin sixth grade and should be written from one character's point of view but can and should include multiple characters. Students should write the first chapter for the sequel and give it a title.
- **Precept:** Have students select a precept from the book and write about it. They can find most of the precepts in the back of the book (starting on page 311) that includes one for each month by Mr. Browne and all of the "postcard precepts" written by students. Have students choose a precept that is meaningful or important to them and in the essay, explain what the precept means, why they chose it and how it relates to the message of the book. Another option is for students to write their own precept that connects with the book in some way.

3. Anti-Bullying Campaign

Have students learn more about bullying in their school and develop a school campaign to improve the situation. Students can conduct an opinion survey, do interviews (with students, staff and adult family members) and/or ask people to write letters about their experiences with bullying. Have students analyze all of the information and then identify actions they can take to do something about bullying. These can include: implement assembly programs about bullying including guest speakers, launch a public awareness and education campaign, develop materials about how to be an ally (use [Be An Ally: Six Simple Ways](#)), share information about cyberbullying and create a school-wide policy on bullying.

ADL Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on bullying and cyberbullying.

- *Curriculum Connections* "[Words that Heal: Using Children's Literature To Address Bullying](#)"
- *Curriculum Connections* "[Cyberbullying: Understanding and Addressing Online Cruelty](#)"
- [Recommended Multicultural and Anti-Bias Books for Children: Bullying and Name-Calling](#)
- [ADL's Bullying/Cyberbullying Programs and Resources](#)
- [Building Respectful School Climates: ADL Webinar Series](#)