IN THE COMMUNITY

It’s rare to come across a middle-grade book with writing powerful enough to make both adults and young readers see the world differently. Wonder, by R. J. Palacio is such a book. It has reached over 1 million readers and counting, and every day is adapted by more classrooms, schools, and communities all eager to choose kind and help spread the wonder of wonder.

When reading Wonder, you see what it is like not only to be Auggie, but to be his parent, his sibling, his teacher, his classmate, and finally his friend. Wonder is truly the portrait of and tribute to a community.

After you have gotten to know Wonder, we hope you will consider sharing Auggie’s story and introduce him to the people of your town by setting up a community-wide reading.

Here are some tips on how to set up a community-wide reading of Wonder:

• The American Library Association has created a guide on how to set up a community reads event. Use this document as a guide on how to budget for, plan, fundraise, and advertise a Wonder community read campaign: http://www.ala.org/offices/sites/ala.org/offices/files/content/ppo/programming/promotionalmaterials/community-reads-events-and-distributing-materials.pdf

• R. J. Palacio is part of the Random House Speakers Bureau. If you think your community event would benefit from an author visit, please see http://www.rhspeakers.com/speakers.php?palacio/ to inquire about having Raquel and to find more information on the book.

• Have members of your community sign the pledge to choose kind here: http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/choose-kind/pledge.php

• Visit: http://choosekind.tumblr.com/resources/responses/images that can be shared on social media when marketing your event.

• Public libraries and independent bookstores are a natural and great fit in marketing community reads events and distributing promotional materials. Below please find a list of possible program partners you might approach in your community:

  - Theater Companies
  - Art Galleries
  - Museums
  - Reader’s Theater Ensembles
  - Local Businesses
  - Minority Group Associations
  - City Council
  - Elected officials (i.e., state and U.S. representatives/senators)
  - Media
  - Area business owners
  - Local clergy

HERE IS WHERE WONDER HAS BEEN SPOTTED!

The students at Rossville Consolidated Schools in Rossville, Indiana, had a birthday party for Auggie on October 10. They were instructed to write only their name on a blue affirmation sheet that read “_________ is a wonder because . . . .”

After singing and cake, the classes gave each other standing ovations. Next, the students taped their affirmation sheets on their backs and took turns writing why each of their classmates “is a wonder”.

Read more about the celebration at www.bookclub.wordpress.com/2012/10/26/celebrating-the-wonder-of-wonder-by-sherry-gick

The students at Greenwich Academy in Greenwich, Connecticut, created a “Pit of Wonder” to help their students talk about friendship and kindness! Read more about the project at bit.ly/1gmXi2i

You can’t blend in when you were born to stand out.

R.J. Palacio

PRAISE

“I believe without hesitation that every middle-grade classroom in America should have a copy of R. J. Palacio’s Wonder.”

—Coby Sharp, fourth grade teacher

“(Wonder) will lead to amazing discussions in classrooms about Auggie’s courage, the need for kindness, and the fact that bravery can take many forms.”

—Katherine Sokolowski, fifth grade teacher

“Great discussion starter about love, support, and judging people on their appearance. A well-written, thought-provoking book.”—School Library Journal, Starred

“A memorable story of kindness, courage and wonder.”—Kirkus Reviews, Starred

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Auggie Doggie

IN THE CLASSROOM

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Give the class an overview of Treacher-Collins Syndrome using information from the following website:

www.nichds.nih.gov/health/ndph/HTML052624

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS—Discuss Auggie’s relationship with each of his family members. How does Via react? How does meeting Via’s friend, Summer, change Via? How does her new friend affect her life affected by Auggie’s deformity? She says, “I’m always going to be the sister of a kid with a birth defect.” That’s not the issue. Just don’t always want to be defined that way.” (p. 91) What advice would you give Via by mean of this statement? How could her parents help Via’s life be more remal even though Auggie’s isn’t? What sacrifices does Via have to make in her relationship with her parents? What qualities do Auggie’s parents possess that help them be good parents to Auggie? How do respect and trust play a role in their family dynamics?

FRIENDSHIP—Discuss the characteristics of a good friend. Which of Auggie’s friends demonstrate these qualities? What characteristics of a good friend does Auggie possess? How does Auggie help his friends see him as an ordinary kid? How does Auggie’s ability to be candid with his own skin make it easier for his friends and family to relate to him? Share examples from the book to support your responses.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES—Auggie’s attendance at Beecher Prep creates issues for students, parents, teachers, and the principal. What are some of the challenges that arise? How does each group of individuals overcome the challenges? What role does Auggie play in either helping or hurting the situation? What lessons are learned because of Auggie’s attendance at the school? In Mr. Tushman’s speech at the end of the year, he shares this quote, “Always try to be a little kinder than necessary.” How does being kind help someone overcome challenges?

BULLYING—Kids that are different are almost always bullied in some way. How does Auggie know the first time he meets Julian that he will be a bully? In what subtle ways does Julie bully Auggie? What purpose does Julian have in bullying Jack? What power does Julian have to force the other students to join in his cruelty toward Auggie and Jack? Jack betrays him, a gang of kids try to hurt him. But for every positive, there is a negative: the flip side is that Auggie has the steadfast support of his first friend, Summer, and his best friend, Jack, and his teachers and the principal like him. But for every positive, there is a negative: Jack betrays him, a gang of kids try to hurt him, and some particularly insensitive peers even try to have him removed from the school.

Yet, Auggie shows amazing understanding and compassion. As the school year progresses, Auggie learns that, though there will always be people who want to taunt him and make his life miserable, there are also those who care. Hands down, his greatest strength is his extraordinary unique presence: it’s that people around him amaze themselves when they learn what it is to be kind and to be courageous.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

R. J. PALACIO

lives in NYC with her husband, two sons, and two dogs. For more than twenty years, she was an art director and graphic designer, designing book jackets for other people while waiting for the perfect time in her life to start writing her own novel. But one day several years ago, a chance encounter with an extraordinary child in front of an ice cream stand made R. J. realize that the perfect time was waiting for her. Wonder is her first novel. She did not design the cover, but she sure does love it.
Star Wars

In small groups or with a partner, Mr. Browne’s monthly precept Star Wars

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Jack betrays him, a gang of kids try to hurt

of his first friend, Summer, and his best friend,

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days to be miserable, making references about

to touch him. Julian especially causes Auggie's

does his best to be just an ordinary kid with an

who suffers from a severely deformed face, enters

After being home-schooled for four years, Auggie,

the cover, but she sure does love it.

Try as he might to ignore them, Auggie must

extraordinary face.

does his best to be just an ordinary kid with an

who is kind and courageous.

The above discussion questions correspond to Common Core State Standards Reading Literature:

FAMILY

DISCUSSION

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0002624

CHOOSE KIND


INTEREST RESOURCES

CHOOSE KIND — choosekind.tumblr.com

Inspired by Wonder, this anti-bullying initiative encourages young readers to share their story and pledge to choose kind in their school and community.

BULLYING — WHAT YOU CAN DO

www.stopbullying.gov/kids/what-you-can-do.html

CHILDREN AND PET LOSS

www.eccenmorial/palcare.com/children-pet-loss-article.html

FINER ARTS — in small groups or with a partner, ask students to find a scene in the book that can be portrayed by illustrating the scene, creating a music montage to accompany an oral reading, or writing and performing the scene. Have each student create their own poster to display or present their resulting projects to the class.

COMPLETE THE CLASSROOM STATE STANDARDS WORKBOOK — in all common areas of the school.

Excerpts from Complete the Classroom State Standards Workbook — Text Type and Purpose #1.

VOCABULARY/ USE OF LANGUAGE

To help the reader make connections with Auggie and his life, the author utilizes allusions to Diary of a Wimpy Kid, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Star Wars, and the Augie Doggie cartoons. Ask students working in small groups to brainstorm other allusions that would help convey Auggie’s situation and then write their best allusions on four sentence strips. Have each group swap allusions with another group and have the class discuss the allusions they have found as a whole class.

DIARY OF A WIMPY KID

Students display or present their resulting projects in all common areas of the school.

Excerpts from Complete the Classroom State Standards Workbook — Text Type and Purpose #1.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

LANGUAGE ARTS — Auggie says, “I felt very sad and like I was happy at the exact same time, kind of like that laughing-crying feeling.” (p. 33)

Most everyone has experienced this juxtaposition of emotions. Ask students to select a partner and then to write a poem in two voices: one expressing Auggie’s sadness at various points of the story and the other expressing his happiness. Have students read their poems to the class.

Excerpts from Complete the Classroom State Standards Workbook — Text Type and Purpose #1.

SOCIAL STUDIES — in small groups or with a partner, ask students to think about beliefs that could be applicable to all students in their school to the point that Auggie was a prefect. Ask students to think about their beliefs that could be applicable to all students in their school to the point that Auggie was a prefect. Ask students to think about their beliefs that could be applicable to all students in their school to the point that Auggie was a prefect. Ask students to think about their beliefs that could be applicable to all students in their school to the point that Auggie was a prefect. Ask students to think about their beliefs that could be applicable to all students in their school to the point that Auggie was a prefect. Ask students to think about their beliefs that could be applicable to all students in their school to the point that Auggie was a prefect. 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Ask students to think about their beliefs that could be applicable to all students in their school to the point that Auggie was a prefect.
**THEME:** How does being kind help someone overcome challenges?

**BULLYING:** Kids that are different are always bullied in some way. How does Auggie known the first time he meets Julian that he will be a bully? In what subtle ways does Julian bully Auggie? What purpose does Julian have in bullying Jack? What power does Julian have to be the other students to join in his cruelty toward Auggie and Jack? Is the seventh-grade bullies to harm Auggie? In general, what is Auggie’s response to the bullying?

**BETRAYAL:** Auggie and his best friends are often bullied and overlooked, but they still laugh and speak publicly. What do Auggie’s friends see as an ordinary kid? How do respect and friendship dynamics?

**RELATIONSHIPS:** Discuss Auggie’s relationships.

**FRIENDSHIP:**—discuss the characteristics of a good friend. What do Auggie’s friends do? How do their qualities complement each other?

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** R. J. PALACIO lives in NYC with her husband, two sons, and two dogs. For more than twenty years, she was an art director and graphic designer, designing book jackets for other people while waiting for the perfect time in her life to start writing her own novel. But one day several years ago, a chance encounter with an extraordinary child in front of an ice-cream stand made R. J. realize that the perfect time was waiting for her right in her life. Wonder was her first novel. She did not design the cover, but she sure does love it.

**IN THE CLASSROOM**

**ABOUT THE BOOK:** After being home-schooled for four years, Auggie, who suffers from a sever.deformed face, enters the fifth grade at Beecher Prep School and deals his best to be just an ordinary kid with an extraordinary face.

The first few days of school are more difficult, trying to ignore comments about Auggie’s face and veiled threats to harm him. The flip side is that Auggie has the steadfast support of his first friend, Summer, and his best friend, Jack, and his teachers and the principal like him. But every positive, there is a negative. Jack betrays him, a gang of kids try to hurt him, and some particularly insensitive parents even try to have him removed from the school.

But Auggie proves amazing understanding and compassion. As the school year progresses, Auggie learns that, through there will always be people who want to hurt him and make his life miserable, his friends, his family, and schools are there to be his friends, his family, and his school.

The wonder of Auggie’s extraordinarily unique presence is that the people around him learn what it is to be kind and to be courageous.

**PRE-READING ACTIVITY**

Give the class an overview of Treacher-Collins Syndrome using information from the following websites:


**QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION**

**FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS:**—Discuss Auggie’s relationships with each of his family members. How does Via react to Auggie’s deformity? How is Auggie’s life affected by Auggie’s deformity? She says, “I’m always going to be the sister of a kid with a birth defect; that’s not the issue. I just don’t always want to be defined by that way.” (p. 91) What was her mean by this statement? How could her parents help Via’s life be more normal even though Auggie’s isn’t? What sacrifices do Auggie’s parents make in his relationship with her parents? What qualities do Auggie’s parents possess that help them to be good parents to Auggie? How does respect and trust figure in his family dynamics?

**FRIENDSHIP:** Discuss the characteristics of a good friend. Which of Auggie’s friends demonstrate these characteristics? What are the characteristics of a good friend does Auggie possess? Does Auggie’s ability to be a friend is his son’s ability to earn it. Share examples from the book to support your responses.

**OVERCOMING CHALLENGES:** Auggie’s attendance at Beecher Prep creates issues for students, parents, teachers, and the principal. What are some of the challenges that arise? How does each group of individuals overcome the challenges at Beecher Prep? What role does Auggie play in either helping or hurting the situation? What lessons are learned because of Auggie’s attendance at the school? Mr. Tushman’s speech at the end of the year, he shares this quote, “Always try to be a kinder person than necessary.”

**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

**LANGUAGE ARTS:** Auggie says, “I felt very sad and very happy at the same time, kind of like that laughing-crying feeling.” (p. 33) Most everyone has experienced this juxtaposition of emotions. Ask students to select a partner and then to write a poem in two voices: one voice expressing Auggie’s sadness at various points of the story and the other voice expressing his happiness. Have students read their poems to the class.

**SOCIAL STUDIES:** Mr. Brown’s monthly precept helps students to see outside their world and to think about their beliefs. Mr. Brown’s definition of a precept is anything that helps guide you when making important decisions. Ask students to brainstorm precepts that could be applicable to all students in their school. What is a rule, a moral, a belief? Ask students to work in pairs and then to choose one precept for which they can create a poster illustrating its concept. Post the posters: precepts in all common areas of the school.

**VOCABULARY USE OF LANGUAGE**

To help the reader make connections with Auggie and his life, the author uses allusions to other works. For example, in her two best friends, Miran- and Ella betray Via? What is Via’s response? How do Via and Auggie resolve their individual situations along with allusion to Treacher-Collins Syndrome. Have students read the following allusions to other works.

**INTERNET RESOURCES**

**CHOOSE KIND**

Inspired by Wonder, this anti-bullying initiative encourages young readers to share their story and pledge to choose kind in their school and community.

**BULLYING:** WHAT YOU CAN DO

StopBullying.gov/choosekind/HowDoYouChoosekind.html

**CHILDREN AND PET LOSS**

www.ecenmemorial/palcore/children-pet-loss-article.htm

**FINE ARTS:** In small groups or with a partner, ask students to find a scene in the book that can portray by illustrating the scene, creating a music montage to accompany an oral reading, re-writing and performing the story.

**PRESENTATION DISPLA:** Present their resulting projects to the class.

**CONNECTIONS:** Connect the novel with the Treacher-Collins Syndrome. Have students project to spotlight childhood diseases.

**DIARY OF A WIMPY KID**

Have students present their projects to other classrooms and schools in the district to start open discussion on this and other childhood diseases.

**TYPE AND PURPOSES:** W.5.1

Correlates to Common Core State Standards Writing: Text and Purposes W.5.2

**CONNECTIONS:** Correlates to Common Core State Standards: Text Type and Purposes W.5.1

**SCIENCE:** Give the class an overview of Treacher-Collins Syndrome using information from the following websites:

**CONNECTIONS:** Correlates to Common Core State Standards: Text Type and Purposes W.5.1

**VOCABULARY USE OF LANGUAGE**

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In the community here is where Wonder has been spotted!

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Paris ME Elementary School
Choose Kind Before You Enter!

Letters to author R. J. Palacio

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