



2016

Wonder

Abigail Packard

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Book Review

Title: Wonder

Author: R. J. Palacio

Reviewer: Abigail Packard

Publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers

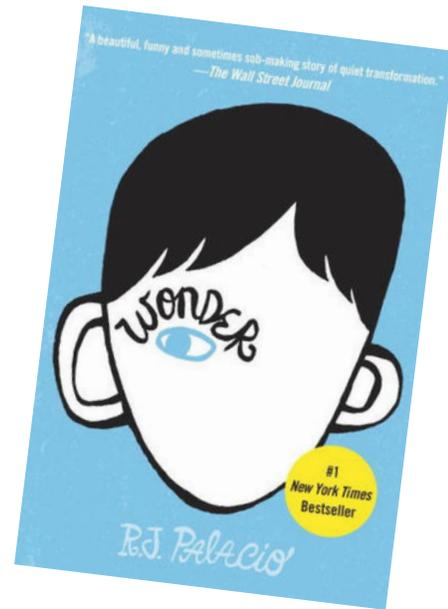
Publication Year: 2012

ISBN: 9780375869020

Number of Pages: 320

Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding



Review

Auggie is your average kid about to begin fifth grade: he likes Star Wars, he likes comics, he's a pretty good student. Only, Auggie has been homeschooled for the last few years of school because he was born with some severe medical conditions. After countless surgeries and therapy and doctors appointments, Auggie is your average kid on the inside, but on the outside he looks different than any other kid you've ever seen. But he's come a long way and no longer needs to be homeschooled in his parents' minds. So they strike a deal with the doubtful Auggie: if he agrees try out Beecher Prep School for the year he can pull out anytime he begins to feel uncomfortable and they'll try something else. Auggie agrees. He meets lots of kids, some nice, some nice but distant, and some not so nice. Auggie does his best to fit in and make friends despite the weird looks people give him because of his extraordinary face. He ends up making some superb friends, learning a lot about courage and kindness, and turning around the whole school's mind about him.

Wonder is a wonder of a book. Palacio takes the reader through a whirlwind of perspectives ranging from Auggie himself to Summer (a friend at school) to Olivia (Auggie's older sister) to Jack (a kid who wants to fit in but also wants to be Auggie's friend) and so many more characters that orbit in and out of Auggie's life. Despite the numerous viewpoints, Palacio masterfully captures all of these different voices with astounding beauty. The story of Auggie's journey is made that much deeper because of the lives that are so interwoven with his own. Wonder is very appropriate for younger readers despite the older voices that Palacio sometimes uses. The language is easy to understand and today's readers will definitely grasp the allusions to other popular works like Diary of a Wimpy Kid and Star Wars. Funny, yet profoundly moving, Wonder is a must-have in any book collection.