

Wonder



By

R.J. Palacio

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

Wonder

By R.J. Palacio



Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations	3
List of Skills	4
Synopsis / Author Biography	5
Student Checklist	6
Reproducible Student Booklet	7
Answer Key	84

About the author: Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, visit novelstudies.org.

Copyright © 2016 Nat Reed
Revisions Completed in 2025
All rights reserved by author.
Permission to copy for single classroom use only.
Electronic distribution limited to single classroom use only.
Not for public display.

Wonder

By R.J. Palacio



Suggestions and Expectations

This 90 page curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on several chapters of **Wonder** and is comprised of these different activities:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A **portfolio cover** (p.7) as well as a **Checklist** (p.6) are included so that students may track of their completed work.

Every activity need not be completed by all students.

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

Themes and **topics** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include overcoming serious personal challenges, the importance of friends and family, perseverance and personal growth, kindness and courage.

Wonder

By R.J. Palacio

List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Identify *personification*
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Determining alphabetical order
12. Identification of root words
13. Identify/create *similes*
14. Identification of a *cliffhanger*

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Identify the climax of the novel
4. Five W's Chart

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Protagonists/antagonists
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Comparing two Characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Write a letter to a friend
4. Complete an Observation Chart
5. Conduct an interview
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete a KWS Chart

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Design an Information Card

Wonder

By R.J. Palacio



Synopsis

August (Auggie Pullman) was born with a facial difference that prevented him from going to 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 appearances? [The Publisher]

Author Biography

R.J. Palacio

I live in NYC with my husband, two sons, and two dogs. For many years, I was an art director and book jacket designer, designing covers for countless well-known and not so well-known writers in every genre of fiction and nonfiction. I always wanted to write, though. I kept waiting for the perfect time in my life to start writing, but after more than twenty years of designing book jackets for other people, I realized that the perfect time would never really present itself. It's never the perfect time to start writing a book. So I decided to just go for it. *Wonder* is my first novel. And no, I didn't design the cover, but I sure do love it.



Courtesy of the author's website: <http://rjpalacio.com/author.html>

Wonder



By R.J. Palacio

Name: _____

Wonder

By R.J. Palacio

Part I – Ordinary to The Performance Space



Before you read this section:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist of *Wonder* is grade five student, Auggie, a boy who has already *faced* many difficult challenges in his young life. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

intricate	exaggerate	incubator	obnoxious
percussion	anomaly	imitate	hindsight

1. Ralph didn't think it was funny when Jon began to _____ the way he talked.
2. Do you know if the drums are considered a _____ instrument?
3. We watched the chicks hatch in Mrs. Tubman's _____.
4. William was so _____ that he was asked to go home by Hilda's mom.
5. The doctor referred to Auggie's cleft palate as a small _____.
6. The jigsaw puzzle was far too _____ for my little brother to complete.
7. In _____ it probably wasn't a good idea to leave the children alone.
8. Jason has been known to _____ when describing his adventures at camp.

Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the chapter entitled *Paging Mr. Tushman*?

2. Match each name with the proper description:

1	Auggie
2	Mr. Tushman
3	Charlotte
4	Nate Pullman
5	Jack Will
6	Via
7	Julian

A	Big sis.
B	Blond guide with green crocs.
C	A bit of a jerk.
D	Urged Auggie to talk more.
E	The protagonist.
F	Director of the middle school.
G	Dad.

3. What evidence do we find of Auggie's sense of humor in the chapter entitled, *Jack, Will, Julian and Charlotte*?

4. What was there about Auggie's appearance which made it difficult for him to go out in public?

5. If Auggie was a new student in your class, what do you think would be the best way to make him feel welcome?

6. Do you think Auggie's parents should have homeschooled him until he started grade five or should they have enrolled him at Beecher Prep earlier? Give one reason defending their decision and one reason why you think it was a mistake.

Good choice	
Mistake	

7. At least three people that Auggie meets in these chapters drop their eyes immediately after being introduced to Auggie. Why do you think that Auggie notices this behavior? How does Auggie feel about this behavior?

8. Think of four adjectives which you think accurately describes the character and personality of Auggie.

9. What is your impression of the three students that gave Auggie the tour? Do you think Mr. Tushman's choices were wise? Please defend your answer.

Good to Know

Mandibulofacial dysostosis or Treacher-Collins syndrome is a rare disorder characterized by facial deformities such as absent cheekbones, downward-slanting eyes, a small lower jaw, drooping part of the lateral lower eyelids, and malformed or absent ears and hearing loss. Treacher-Collins syndrome is found in about one in 50,000 births.



Language Activities



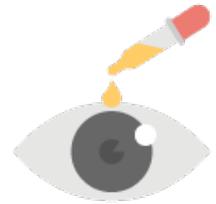
A. Exaggeration

Exaggeration in a literary device defined as *a statement that represents something as better or worse than it really is.* We find an example of this in Part 1: *And then all of a sudden she let out the biggest, loudest, smelliest fart in the history of farts.*

Think of an exaggerated way of describing the following

The <i>caw</i> of a crow.	
A tree blown over in the wind	
Your choice.	

B. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. In this section of the novel the author writes, ... ***Mrs. Garcia's eyes dropped for a second.*** In this sentence Mrs. Garcia's eyes are given human characteristics (her eyes seem to drop of their own accord).



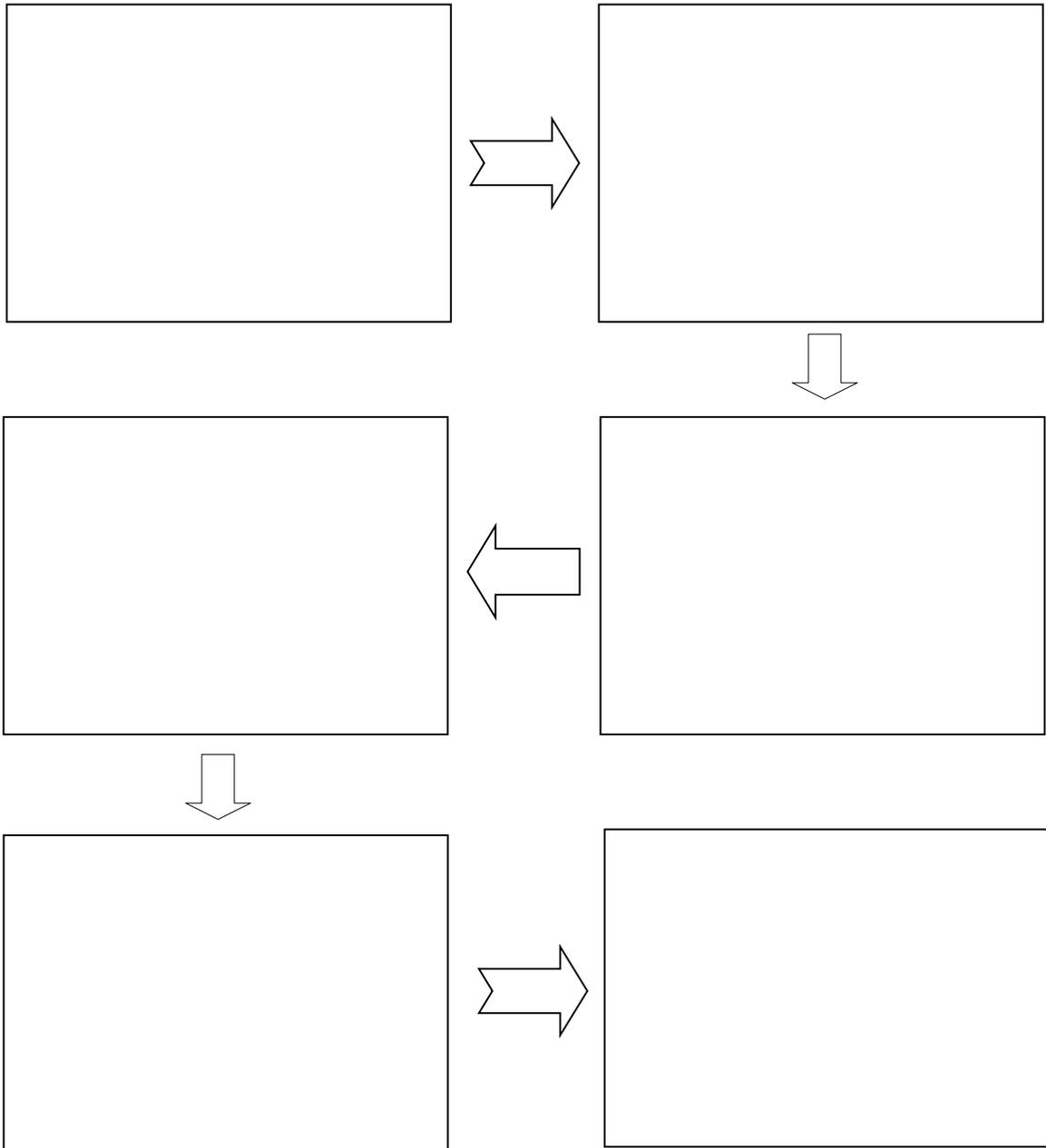
a) Why do you think personification is a literary device used by many authors?

b) Create your own example of personification.

c) Rewrite the above sentence about Mrs. Garcia's eyes without changing the overall meaning so that her eyes are no longer personified.

C. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in this section. In each of the six boxes below list the six events that you have chosen, describing what happened and telling why you consider this to be an essential part of the story.



D. 5 Ws and an H.

Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



WHO?



WHAT?



WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

E. An Acrostic Poem

There are many forms of poetry available to the aspiring poet other than the rhyming poem. An ACROSTIC poem is one example. In an acrostic poem the first letters of each line are aligned vertically to form a word. The word often is the subject of the poem. Here is an example written by the acclaimed poet, Atrocious Halitosis:

The Firefly

Freaky-looking
Itches me when I touch
Restless at night
Early or late
Fearless
Little
Yellowfly



The Acrostic Poem

Now create your own Acrostic Poem on a subject featured in this novel. Your poem must have at least four lines (and doesn't need to rhyme).

Title: _____

Extension Activity



Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene - or the entire novel.



Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first section of *Wonder*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

1	2
3	4
5	6