

Reading Club

Name of Book: Wonder

Author: Raquel Jaramillo

Major Characters: August/ Auggie Matthew Pullman
Olivia "Via" Pullman
Julian Albans

Genre: Novel

Awards: New York Times Bestseller; California Young Reader Medal;
Dorothy Canfield Fisher Children's Book Award 2010;
Cybils - Award for Fantasy & Science Fiction- Young Adult
2008; Hal Clement Award 2009

Date of Release: 14 February 2012



Overview:

August or “Auggie” Pullman is a 10-year-old boy who lives with his parents and sister. He has Treacher Collins syndrome. His face looks a bit different from other children, and needs to stay in the hospital for a long period of time. He has been homeschooled for years. At 10, his parents decided to let him experience more by sending him to a Middle School.

On his first day of school, he was already bullied because of his appearance by his classmate, Julian, who has been asked to assist August at school. August has made some friends (Jack and Summer) there, unfortunately, one of his friends, Jack joined in to bully August in a Halloween party. He felt frustrated and kept himself isolated from his classmates as well as his family. His sister, Olivia, was so angry with him, as she thought she was the one who suffered from his “illness” – being ignored by her family for years.

August told Summer what he had overheard in the Halloween party. Jack felt ashamed of his behaviour. After some time, they have become friends again. Unfortunately, the bullying around August never stops. It becomes more serious and even extends to Jack. Even Julian’s mother makes a complaint to school on having such a “strange” student at school, which she considers to be a burden to other students.

At the end of the school year, there is a three-day school trip to a nature reserve. August was hesitant about going. When he discovered Julian was not going to join due to his class suspension, he agreed to join the trip. In this trip, again August was being bullied by students from other forms, but surprisingly, he was saved by Julian’s friends (who bullied him in school). Things changed completely.

At the graduation ceremony, August was awarded the *'Henry Ward Beecher Medal'* for being *'notable or exemplary in certain areas throughout the school year'*. His family is proud of him, and his mother comments that he is “wonder”.

A. Pre-reading

Watch the video below to know more about Treacher Collins syndrome:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lRXGZeo_Dc

After watching the video, discuss the following questions with your classmates.

1. The novel started with the line: “*I know I'm not an **ordinary** ten-year-old kid. I mean, sure, I do ordinary things*”. Discuss with your friends, what does “ordinary” mean?
2. If your friend is bullied by his classmates, what would you do?
3. If you were August who has Treacher Collins syndrome, would you go to school and why?

B. Know how to write a book review

Fill in the charts below with information from the book “*Wonder*”.

Step 1 – Basic Information of the book

Author	
Title	
Place of publication	
Publisher	
Date	
Number of pages	

Step 2 – Introduce the vital information of the book

Genre	
Main characters of the book (How many?) (Who are they?)	
Intended audience	
Purpose of writing (What does the writer try to say?)	
Context/ Theme of the book	

(As a book reviewer, you have to make your own judgment on the information to be included in your review.)

Step 3 – Description of the book

Overview of the book:	
The message of the book: (What does the writer try to say?)	
Quotable quotes (if any):	

Step 4 – Your evaluation of the book

How does the book affect you?	
Your opinion(s) towards the book (E.g. interesting? Educational?)	
Your comments on the book. (E.g. Strengths and weaknesses of the book) Your comments on the author	
Will you recommend the book to others?	

C. Sample of a book review

Below is a book review of “The Fault in Our Stars” written by a student.

Genre

The Fault in Our Stars.

Book review by Tara Jafari Berenji

Overview of the novel

The Fault in Our Stars is a **novel** which tells the story of Hazel Grace Lancaster, a 16-year-old girl who has had cancer for three years, and Augustus 'Gus' Waters, a 17-year-old boy who's now in remission, and he once had a tumour in his leg. The two fall hopelessly in love, even though they know their story will only end in heartbreak.

Hazel hadn't experienced the 'awkwardness' in her teenage life after being diagnosed with cancer when she was thirteen. Forced by her mother, Hazel reluctantly goes to a cancer support group to meet others who supposedly understand what she's going through.

This bland and truly miserable support group is where she meets the charming, charismatic and unremarkably handsome Augustus 'Gus' Waters, an amputee whose optimism towards life interests Hazel. Gus becomes immediately attracted to Hazel and, though the feeling is mutual, Hazel knows that their love is doomed from the start.

However, Gus still charms Hazel. He changes her life by giving her, as she states: 'Forever within the numbered of days' and changing her attitude towards life.

The two travel to Amsterdam to search for the author of their favourite book, 'An Imperial Affliction', where their relationship blossoms and they learn that life, with or without cancer, is hard to face in general, and sometimes those who advise you to make daring and impulsive choices can't always pluck up the courage to make their own.

Their 'little infinity' reminds you that even the most heart-wrenching love story can be poetic, intelligent, humorous and full of positivity, even when you know there's no chance of ever having a 'fairy-tale' ending.

Message/ thesis of the book

John Green (also the author of bestsellers 'Looking For Alaska', 'An Abundance of Katherines' and 'Will Grayson, Will Grayson') breaks your heart in the best possible way, and makes you cry, laugh, and smile throughout. Though he writes in an upbeat and light-hearted manner, you can still sense Hazel’s annoyance at life, which is endearing, as even though Hazel Grace is forced to be mature for her age, you can see she’s still just a grumpy, moody teenager.

Comments towards the author

The Fault in Our Stars is one of those books you can’t stop reading, yet you never want it to end. It’s warm, light-hearted and deals with a sensitive topic like cancer in such an understated and subtle way. You feel it’s just one of life’s many problems and, even though it’s a very serious matter, Hazel and Gus teach you that you can’t let an illness like cancer affect your love for life.

- Comments on the book
- Your recommendation
- How does the book affect you?

This book is precious. It tells you that you can’t give up even when something is trying to stop you from enjoying a happy life. It’s a rare book that’s emotional and full of light.

The Fault in Our Stars is something that will appeal to everyone, as it pulls on your heart strings and makes you giggle. But most importantly, it makes you think about how valuable love is, how short life can be, and how just one person can change your life in the most simple way.

(<http://www.orleanspark.richmond.sch.uk/the-fault-in-our-stars-book-review-by-tara-jafari-berenji/287103.html>)

D. Writing Time

Now, it is your turn to write a book review of “Wonder”.
