R.J. PALACIO’S
WONDER QUESTIONS

Wonder by R. J. Palacio
Reading Questions

In the following questions, you have read and understand the text. The second section(Making Connections Questions) helps you
make a connection between your reading and yourself/your world.

Part 1: First Half of Part 1 August (Chapter 1 – 14 / Pages 3 – 40)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. What made August's birth so funny? Do you think they should have said it? Why/why not?
2. What information does August have about his parents? Why?
3. Describe August's personality with examples for support.
4. How do August's classmates react to him in the first day?

Making Connections Questions
5. August describes how different people react to his face (looking away quickly). Do you react similarly?
6. Have you ever talked to someone who looked different? How did you react? Would you talk to them differently?
7. What makes August's family think the boy supports him? How is the family similar or different?
8. What makes August's family think the boy supports him? How is the family similar or different?

Part 1: Second Half of Part 1 August (Chapter 15 – 31 / Pages 41 – 80)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. What did Jack do? August met the boy at the park. August's sister had just been diagnosed.
2. What did August do? August met the boy at the park. August's sister had just been diagnosed.
3. What did August and Jack talk about?

Making Connections Questions
4. August and Jack are both different. Do you ever feel like you're different?
5. August and Jack both have friends. Is your friend different?
6. What did August and Jack talk about?
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Reading Questions

Complete the following questions after your reading. The first section of questions (Understanding Questions) is to show that you have read and understood the text. The second section (Making Connections Questions) helps you make a connection between your reading and yourself/your world.

Part 1: First Half of Part 1 August (Chapter 1 – 14 / Pages 3 - 40)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. What made Auggie’s birth story so funny?
2. What information do Auggie’s parents keep from him? Do you think they should have lied? Why/why not?
3. Describe Julian’s personality with examples for support.
4. How do Auggie’s classmates react to him on the first day?

Making Connections Questions
5. Auggie describes how different people react to his face (looking away quickly, not making eye contact etc). Have you ever seen someone who looked different? How did you react? Would you react differently now after hearing how Auggie feels?
6. In these chapters, Auggie has his first day of school. Have you ever had a first day at a new school? How did you feel? If you haven’t, how do you think you would feel?
7. What qualities does Auggie’s family have that help support him? How is your family similar or different from Auggie’s?
8. Which of the three students who took Auggie on the school tour would you most like to be friends with? Which would you least like to be friends with? Why?

Part 1: Second Half of Part 1 August (Chapter 15 – 31 / Pages 41 - 80)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. Why does August hate the way he eats?
2. What rules do August and Summer make about their lunch table?
3. What two instances give Auggie the impression that people do not want to touch him?
4. Why does Auggie call home sick?

Making Connections Questions
5. Do you agree with the precept: When given the choice between being right or being kind, choose kind”? Why or why not?
6. Auggie’s mother says “the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree” meaning that Julian and his mother are very similar (Julian is rude to Auggie. His mother is rude for not sending an RSVP to the party). In your family, does the apple fall far from the tree? In other words, are you really similar to your parents, or are you very different? Explain.
7. If you were August, could you forgive Jack for what he said? Why or why not?

Part 2: Via (Chapter 32 – 47 / Pages 82 - 117)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. How is the Pulley family like a galaxy according to Via?
2. How does Via’s relationship change with Miranda and Ella in high school?
3. Why was Mom standing outside of Auggie’s door?
4. How does Via convince Auggie to return to school?
Making Connections Questions
5. If your family was described as a galaxy, who do you think would be the sun that everyone orbits around? Explain your answer.
6. How is your relationship with your sibling(s) similar or different from Auggie and Via’s? If you don’t have siblings, would you like to have Via and Auggie as siblings? Why or why not?

Part 3: Summer (Chapter 48 – 53 / Pages 119 - 132)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. Why does Summer leave Savanna’s Halloween party?
2. Why does Summer get so mad at Auggie at lunch?
3. Describe Summer’s view on the after life.

Making Connections Questions
4. Do you think kids who are popular are happier than kids who are not? In your opinion, what is the difference between friendship and popularity?
5. Since Summer turns out to be a much better friend than with Jack, Charlotte, or Julian do you think Mr. Tushman’s efforts to secure friends for Auggie was a waste of time? If you were new to a school, would you want the principal to find friends for you? Why or why not?

Part 4: Jack (Chapter 54 – 73 / Pages 134 - 185)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. Why was Veronica so upset?
2. How is Jack’s family different than a lot of the other students’ families at Beecher Prep?
3. Why exactly does Jack punch Julian in the mouth?
4. After reading the emails, what do you think is Mr. Tushman’s opinion on the Jack/Julian situation? What is his opinion on Julian’s mother?

Making Connections Questions
5. Have you ever had a fight with a friend? How did you resolve the problem? If you have never fought with a friend, how would you go about resolving it if you did?
6. Are their popular/unpopular kids in your school? What makes someone popular? Would it be better if these groups didn’t exist?
7. Julian and his mother are both cruel to August in their own way. Do you think parents’ opinions have an effect on their children and their opinions? Explain

Part 5: Justin (Chapter 74 – 81 / Pages 187 - 204)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. Why was Via worried that Justin would be freaked out by Auggie’s appearance?
2. How does Justin react to the boys making fun of Jack at the store?
3. Why does Olivia not tell her parents about the play?

Making Connections Questions
4. In the last chapter, Via reveals that she doesn’t want August to come to her play because she want everyone to know about him. Have you ever felt embarrassed by a family member? Explain.
5. Why do you think Palacio decided to not use proper grammar and punctuation in Justin’s section? Do you always use proper writing rules? What about when you are texting? What about on social media?
Part 6: August (Chapter 82 – 92 / Pages 206 - 234)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. How does August react to his mother telling him not to go to the play?
2. Why was Daisy so important to Auggie in particular?

Making Connections Questions
3. Summer thinks that they should report the cruel notes Julian is sending to Mr. Tushman, but August and Jack think that is snitching. Who do you think is right? Why?

4. August says, “Funny how sometimes you worry a lot about something and it turns out to be nothing.” Do you think this is true? Explain with examples from your own life.

Part 7: Miranda (Chapter 93 – 98 / Pages 236 - 248)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. Why does Miranda lie about having a brother who is deformed?
2. Why does Miranda not go on opening night of Our Town?

Making Connections Questions
3. Miranda says that Ella is an easier friend to have compared to Via because “Ella never really asked me about things”, while Via “would have asked me about my parents, about camp” (238). Who do you think is a better friend? Why? Which character would you rather be friends with?

Part 8: August (Chapter 99 – 123 / Pages 250 - 310)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. Why is August so nervous about going on the nature retreat?
2. How does the relationship between August and the rest of the boys change immediately after the incident in the woods?
3. Why does August’s father throw out the astronaut mask? Why doesn’t he want August’s mother to know?

Making Connections Questions
4. August’s mother says that “there are more good people on this earth than bad people, and the good people watch out of each other and take care of each other” (279). Do you think this is true? Why or why not?
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ANSWER KEY

Complete the following questions after your reading. The first section of questions (Basic Comprehension Questions) is to show that you have read and understood the text. The second section (Making Connections Questions) helps you make a connection between your reading and yourself/your world.

Part 1: First Half of Part 1 August (Chapter 1 – 14 / Pages 3 - 40)

Basic Comprehension Questions

1. What made Auggie’s birth story so funny? Although Auggie’s birth was a serious matter, his mother tells him the story in a funny way. She tells him that she had a nurse that could not stop farting. She also says that the doctor fainted when he was born and the smell of the nurse’s fart woke him up.

2. What information do Auggie’s parents keep from him? Auggie’s parents lie to him about applying for admission to Beecher Prep. They had someone come into the house to test Auggie, but lied to him saying it was an IQ test. They had also secretly met with the principal of the school to discuss the possibility of Auggie attending.

3. Describe Julian’s personality with examples for support. At first, the reader would assume that Julian is a nice person because he was selected by Mr. Tushman to show Auggie around. Soon, the reader learns that this isn’t the case. Julian makes rude comments during the tour that show his true colors. In fact, he even asks Auggie if his face was like that because he was in a fire. Charlotte and Jack stick up for Auggie telling Julian that his comments were rude. Auggie’s mother says it best when she describes him as “the kind of hid who’s one way in front of grown-ups and another in front of kids” (34).

4. How do Auggie’s classmates react to him on the first day? When Auggie arrives on the first day, he makes his way to his homeroom and sits at the back hoping no one will notice him. Julian ignores him, Charlotte says hello, and Jack sits next to him. Auggie realizes that no one wants to sit next to him on the other side. When the teacher asks Henry to move to the seat next to Auggie, Henry clearly does not want to sit there. When Auggie goes up to get his lock, he can feel “eyes burning into [his] back”. When he walks back to his desk, the students look down and avoid his gaze.

Part 1: Second Half of Part 1 August (Chapter 15 – 31 / Pages 41 - 80)

Basic Comprehension Questions

1. Why does August hate the way he eats? Auggie hates the way he eats because he knows “how weird it looks” (50). Because of his condition, he has to eat food at the front of his mouth. At a birthday party when he was young, someone wouldn’t sit next to him because he was messy. As a result, he watched himself eat in front of a mirror, and he says that he eats “like a tortoise” (50).
2. What rules do August and Summer make about their lunch table?
August and Summer make a rule that only people with names that are associated with summer can sit with them. Summer also says that if someone is nice, but doesn’t have a summer name, they can sit there too.

3. What two instances give Auggie the impression that people do not want to touch him?
The first instance that Auggie realizes people do not want to touch him is in dance class when he is paired up to dance with Ximena. Ximena has a panic attack and makes an excuse not to dance with him. The second instance occurs when Auggie accidentally bumps his hand against Tristan’s in science class. Tristan “jerked away so fast he dropped his foil on the floor” (72).

4. Why does Auggie call home sick?
Auggie calls home sick because he is devastated by the cruel comment made by Jack in class when he didn’t know Auggie was there. Although he isn’t really sick, Auggie was crying so hard and felt like he’d “been kicked in the gut” (79).

**Part 2: Via (Chapter 32 – 47 / Pages 82 - 117)**

**Basic Comprehension Questions**

1. How is the Pulley family like a galaxy according to Via?
Via sees her family as a galaxy with August as the sun and she and her parents as planets orbiting around him. Via sees August as the celestial constant at the center of the universe with everyone else focused on him.

2. How does Via’s relationship change with Miranda and Ella in high school?
Although Via, Miranda, and Ella were close friends in middle school, Via started noticing a change in their relationship in high school. She first is confused when Miranda doesn’t call when she returns from summer camp. When they arrive at school on the first day, Via is shocked by how different they look (new hair cut and clothes). She also learns that Miranda and Ella spent time without her in the summer.

3. Why was Mom standing outside of Auggie’s door?
Although it is not stated directly, it can be inferred that Mom is standing outside of Auggie’s door at night because she is worried about him with the new transition to school.

4. How does Via convince Auggie to return to school?
Via tells Auggie that everyone hates school sometimes and that if he wants to be treated normally, then he has to go to school because going to school is normal. She tells him not to let the jerks get to him. She also threatens to tell Mom and Dad about the incident with Jack which Auggie knows will lead to an apology and “everyone will treat [him] like a kid who should be going to a school for kids with special needs” (116). She tells him to return to school as if nothing happened.
Part 3: Summer (Chapter 48 – 53 / Pages 119 - 132)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. Why does Summer leave Savanna’s Halloween party?
Summer leaves the party because she was being interrogated about why she hung out with Auggie. The people at the party call him names, and Savanna tells Summer she would be more popular if she stopped hanging out with Auggie. She also tells her that Julian likes her, but that if she wants to go out with him, she has to stop hanging out with Auggie. Summer calls her mother and quietly slips out of the party.

2. Why does Summer get so mad at Auggie at lunch?
Summer gets mad at Auggie when he accuses her of only hanging out with him by order of Mr. Tushman. Summer knows this is not true and says, “No he didn’t!! I swear on my life” (126). Auggie apologizes to her when he realizes she is telling the truth.

3. Describe Summer’s view on the after life.
Summer thinks that after someone dies, they go to heaven for a little while to catch up with old friends, but then they are “born again as a brand-new babies in the world” (128). She thinks that they get a second chance at life to do it better the second time around.

Part 4: Jack (Chapter 54 – 73 / Pages 134 - 185)

Basic Comprehension Questions
1. Why was Veronica so upset?
Veronica was so upset because she felt that Jack and Jamie had a very rude reaction to August’s face. She was also upset because she felt that it was rude the way she quickly pulled the boys away from the situation. She says, “It was bad how we did that…Just getting up like that, like we’d just seen the devil” (137). She feared what the boys might say, but she realized that leaving the way they did probably hurt them as well.

2. How is Jack’s family different than a lot of the other students’ families at Beecher Prep?
Jack’s family is not rich like many of the other students’ families at Beecher Prep. Jack’s mother is a social worker and his father is a teacher, but they sacrifice so that their children will have a good education.

3. Why exactly does Jack punch Julian in the mouth?
Firstly, Jack has just figured out why August is mad at him. The reason Jack was so cruel to August on Halloween was because he “knew Julian and everybody thought [he] was weird for hanging out with August all the time, and [he] felt stupid” (152). Then, when Jack and August are paired up in science, Julian tries to get him out of it and calls August a freak. Jack’s guilt over feeling that he betrayed August, paired with his anger over Julian’s comment, leads him to punch Julian.
4. After reading the emails, what do you think is Mr. Tushman’s opinion on the Jack/Julian situation? What is his opinion on Julian’s mother?

The emails reveal a great deal about Mr. Tushman’s stance on the situation. Mr. Tushman realizes that Jack’s actions were out of character and were triggered by something that Julian said about August. He does think his violence was wrong, but knows that “Jack Will is extremely sorry for his actions” (162). The emails suggest that Mr. Tushman is protective of August and does not agree with Melissa’s arguments against him. The tone of his emails also suggests that he finds her opinions to be ridiculous. For instance, he says that he did not think asking Julian to welcome August to the school “would place any extra ‘burdens or hardships’ on them, [but would]…teach them a thing or two about empathy, and friendship, and loyalty” (163). He further supports Jack at the end of the email saying that Jack didn’t “need to learn any of these virtues – he already had them in abundance” (163).

**Part 5: Justin (Chapter 74 – 81 / Pages 187 - 204)**

**Basic Comprehension Questions**
1. Why was Via worried that Justin would be freaked out by Auggie’s appearance?
   Via was worried that Justin would be freaked out by Auggie’s appearance because throughout her life she has had to deal with people who could not handle Auggie’s condition. She says, “there were lots of kids who never came back for a second playdate” (188). She also notes that there were people who wouldn’t come to her birthday parties because they didn’t know how to deal with August. She really likes Justin, and was worried he would also have trouble with it.

2. How does Justin react to the boys making fun of Jack at the store?
   At first, Justin asks Jack questions about why these boys are bothering him. He soon realizes it is because Jack is a friend with August. He tells Jack to hang in there before Jack gets on the bus, but once he sees the boys again still snickering about what they had done, he decides to intervene. Justin goes over to them, and meanly tells them not to mess with Jack, then “tap[s his] fiddle case for effect” (199) insinuating that he has a gun.

3. Why does Olivia not tell her parents about the play?
   Olivia doesn’t tell her parents about the play because she fears that they will attend and bring August. This is the first time in her life that everyone does not associate her with her brother and his birth defect. She says, “it’s just been so nice being in a new school where nobody knows about him, you know? nobody’s whispering about it behind my back” (203). Via fears that if he comes, everyone will know about it and she will, once again, be defined by her brother’s appearance.

**Part 6: August (Chapter 82 – 92 / Pages 206 - 234)**

**Basic Comprehension Questions**
1. How does August react to his mother telling him not to go to the play?
   August is very angry when he realizes why Via does not want him to attend her play. He first accuses his mother of lying to him and then he says, “Stop treating me like a baby! I’m not retarded! I know what’s going on!” (218). He storms down the hallway, goes in his room, and slams the door as hard as he can. Once he is in his room, he feels a great deal of sadness that Via didn’t want him at her school. He waits in his room for someone to come in to comfort him, but no one comes.
2. Why was Daisy so important to Auggie in particular?
Daisy is particularly important to August because she has no discrimination towards him at all. She loves him unconditionally. August says after her death, “I wondered how it would feel to be in heaven someday and not have my face matter anymore. Just like it never, ever mattered to Daisy” (227).

**Part 7: Miranda (Chapter 93 – 98 / Pages 236 - 248)**

**Basic Comprehension Questions**
1. Why does Miranda lie about having a brother who is deformed?
Miranda blurts out this lie at camp and after she tells the lie she says, “I have absolutely no idea why I said this” (237). She had already been lying about her family, and she thought this lie made her seem interesting. Although she immediately regretted it, she kept the lie going. She did this because she had known Auggie for so long and felt she was entitled. The lie also made her more popular which was something she wasn’t used to.

2. Why does Miranda not go on opening night of Our Town?
Miranda looks around the auditorium and sees that there was no one where to watch her perform. Her mother had a work thing, her father was ‘on call’ since his new wife was about to have a baby, and Zach had a volleyball game. She looked out into the crowd and saw Auggie. This triggers her to tell Mr. Davenport that she cannot go on. The reader can infer that Miranda is doing this because she knows that Via has people in the audience cheering her on.

**Part 8: August (Chapter 99 – 123 / Pages 250 - 310)**

**Basic Comprehension Questions**
1. Why is August so nervous about going on the nature retreat?
August is nervous because he has never been away from home for a night. He says that because he had so many medical issues as a child, it was easier to just keep him at home. He almost had a sleepover at Christopher’s house once, but when it was time to go to bed he “started crying that [he] wanted to go home” (251), so his parents came to get him.

2. How does the relationship between August and the rest of the boys change immediately after the incident in the woods?
After the incident in the woods, the boys become August’s protectors. August notices this because he says, “I did notice as I walked that Amos had stayed right next to me. And Jack close to the other side of me. And Miles was in front of us and Henry was in back of us” (272). He felt like he had his own set of guards.

3. Why does August’s father throw out the astronaut mask? Why doesn’t he want August’s mother to know?
August’s father says that the reason he threw out the astronaut’s helmet was that he “missed seeing [August’s] face” (291). He also didn’t think it was good for him to be wearing it all the time. He did not tell his wife because he says she would have been really angry with him. August’s mother searched everywhere for the helmet because she knew it made August feel comfortable, so he never told her it was him who threw it out.