

Wonder by R. J. Palacio  
A review by Lotta van Hoff, year 9

The multi-million copy bestseller “Wonder” by R.J. Palacio tells the story of a ten-year-old boy who has a craniofacial condition which affects the way he looks.

August Pullmann has been homeschooled, but when his mother decides he should visit a private middle school to make social contacts, Auggie at first is very much against that idea.

Later he does change his mind and wants to try to go to a real school.

Throughout the school year, he then finds some friends but there are kids that decide to make Auggie’s life hard and they bully him.

The book is written from the perspective of different characters in the book. Because of that, the story is expanded beyond Auggie’s point of view and is demonstrating how Auggie’s start at the new school not only affects him, but also everyone else in his surroundings, too.

It’s incredible how the reader really gets to feel with the characters and relates to them. Because of the different perspectives it’s easier to understand each and everyone’s actions.

What I love about this book is how it makes you put your prejudice aside and really look at the very person. To be nice can sometimes be hard, because you are not able to overcome your prejudice but this book really makes you think. It teaches you to look at situations from different perspectives.

I think my favourite scene is when Auggie is on a class trip and he and a friend of his are walking through the woods. There, they are getting attacked and bullied by older students because Auggie looks “different”, but just at the right time, some kids from Auggie’s class come by and help them, even though before they treated them rudely. I think that scene really shows what it means to change your mind, be kind and have the courage to stand up for others that are having a hard time.

I think “Wonder” is very educating and has the power to more hearts and change minds which is awesome and something I’m always looking forward to in books. I really loved the book and almost all its characters. I think my favourite character is Via who is Auggie’s older sister. In her point of view in the book, she really shows the reader how it feels to live with a disabled sibling and what that means for her life. She feels neglected by her parents, because they give more of their attention and energy to Auggie for which she shows incredible understanding but it still makes her feel lonely. The only person in her life that she feels like prefers her over her brother is her grandma who then dies. This is of course a big loss that makes her very sad, but she gains back her happiness when she meets her boyfriend who appreciates her a lot and shows her how loved she is.

I think everyone should read the book, because firstly it’s easy to read, and secondly its message is really important in society so that everyone can feel comfortable and good about themselves no matter how they look. Everyone has a place on this planet.

