

Massachusetts Letters About Literature 2016
Massachusetts Center for the Book
www.massbook.org

Level II Honors Award

Dear R.J. Palacio,

Your book *Wonder* put an explosive stick of reality in my mind and blew it up, and then reconstructed my brain with a different perspective about life. This book opened my eyes to the world and its problems. It showed me that when someone has a birth defect they will most likely be judged by what they look like, not by what is inside. This book truly is a wonder.

Before I read *Wonder*, I was really interested in other types of fiction but not realistic as much. It got to the point where I needed new books and badly. I couldn't think of which book I hadn't read in my room. But as usual my dad saved me. Every time there's a book sale, he buys at least five books. He showed me which books he had bought for me. The books were *Wonder* and a few others. I decided to read some of the others first. *Wonder* just didn't seem that interesting at first glance, and boy was I wrong. When I got to *Wonder*, from the beginning, I knew I would connect with August a.k.a Auggie. I knew this because he had birth deformations and I might not have something quite as bad as him, but I had something: minor and partial epilepsy.

This connection made me enjoy and understand the book even more than it would have if I had nothing in common with the character. My experience was really something minor compared to his, but mine was unexpected. When I first learned that I had epilepsy, I was afraid because I didn't know what it was at that time. I thought (which was typical of me) of the worst case scenario. But then I found out that it was minor. When I read *Wonder*, that changed my perspective completely. I learned that my epilepsy paled completely compared to his problems. I learned while you have to deal with your self-confidence, you also have to worry about how other people think about you.

The part that really impacted me was when Julien and the two other kids are giving August a tour of the school and Julien says "So were you in a fire?". The other two kids defend him. That made me ask myself, do I really have friends who would stick up for me? I realized that I do, and they continue to be my friends, and then I realized those are the type of friends that always stay with you.

This book affected the way I looked at the world and myself. It changed the way I looked at myself because I realized that there are people out there that have more severe problems than me. This made me realize that my own struggles were minor compared to some other problems. It made me realize something about myself, that my problem is just another drop in the ocean. That my problem was not unusual, it is in fact something that runs in my mom's side of the family. This book opened up my eyes to the other fish in the ocean. Thank you R.J. Palacio.

"Everyone in the world should get a standing ovation at least once in their life because we all overcometh the world. – Auggie".

Sincerely,

Emilia

Your good friend Emilio
Cambridge
Grade 7