

Reading Activity for the Book 'August's Lesson – Wonder': The Acceptance of Differences

<p>Description of the educational activity:</p>	<p>Duration: 1 teaching period (45 minutes)</p> <p>Pupils' age: +11</p> <p>Organisation of the class: groups, class as a whole and individual</p> <p>Pupils' tasks:</p> <p>Step 1: Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students.</p> <p>Step 2: Ask groups of students to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Describe physical and psychological traits of the main characters. Identify moments in the book where the characters express basic feelings (anger, sadness, fear, pleasure, love, shame, distress, etc.). Assign skills and abilities to the main characters. <p><i>Note: It can be helpful to write down on the class board three lists before starting this step, one with the most common physical and psychological traits, a second one with the most common basic feelings or emotional reactions and a third one with the most common skills and abilities.</i></p> <p>Step 3: The class as a whole has to put in common the traits, basic feelings/emotional reactions and skills and abilities identified in the main characters by providing arguments.</p> <p>Step 4: The class as a whole has to start a short discussion about the acceptance of differences amongst persons using the following questions: <i>"Do the main characters have various points of view and attitudes about the acceptance of differences?", "Can you give some examples of the different points of view and attitudes?", "Which of the characters is more similar to you?", "Which of the characters is more different to you?"</i></p> <p>Step 5: Individually, let students describe themselves both externally and internally by using the traits, basic feelings/emotional reactions and skills and abilities identified in the main characters. It is up to the teacher to ask each of the students to briefly read their own description or ask only to a few volunteers to do it.</p> <p>Step 6: The class as a whole have discussed about their differences. The workshop leader can pose the following questions to promote the debate:</p>
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	<p><i>"Are there people who are different? In which sense?", "Being different makes them better or worse to others?", "Are you different from others in some way?", "Do you think parents/teachers should consider equally all his children/students?", "Do you think it is a right that all people are considered equal, regardless of their physical constitution, economic level, race, sex, religion, etc.? Why?", "Would you like all to have the same appearance, same tastes, the same hobbies, the same ideas?"</i></p> <p>Effect of the activity on combating bullying: The activity is intended to lead students to reflect about the fact that the persons are different in many ways and, far from being harmful or dangerous, enriches the society and therefore empowers the personal development of its members. The idea is to help students enjoy the acceptance of the differences regardless of its condition (physical, psychological, economical, race, sex, religion, political, etc.).</p>
Book:	<p>This activity has been adapted from the Reader Guide of the book "August's lesson: Wonder" (only available in Spanish). (R. J. Palacio). Editor: Nube de Tinta. © 2013, Random House Mondadori, S.A. Travessera de Gràcia 47-49, 08021, Barcelona Text from Irene de Puig.</p>
Tags:	Causes of Bullying, Bullying based on Disabilities, Acceptance of Differences
Objectives:	<p>This activity intends to enable students to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify physical and psychological traits, basic feelings and skills, and abilities. 2. Understand the differences amongst persons based on the abovementioned characteristics. 3. Describe themselves and identify the differences of persons surrounding them. 4. Know what is the acceptance of the differences and its usefulness to avoid bullying incidents based on any difference or disability.
Material:	Book "August's lesson: Wonder" by R. J. Palacio
Notes for the teacher:	<p>Students may have read the book Wonder before performing the activity.</p> <p>Make sure the groups are formed by children with different profiles and that they are relaxed before starting the activity.</p> <p>The work in groups and the debates of the class as a whole need to be inclusive and participatory: All children must be</p>

	<p>involved in the discussions and will be requested to contribute.</p> <p>For steps 4 and 6, the workshop leader should guide the questions in order to allow children to give detailed answers with arguments and explanations. Try to stress aspects related to personal, social or cultural differences and create a relaxed atmosphere to help children get involved and actively participate.</p>
<p>Recommendations for additional activities:</p>	<p>This activity has been adapted from Chapter 1 “Our differences make us unique and special” of the Reader Guide of the book “Wonder”. The Guide contains 13 chapters proposing activities and questions related to the main aspects addressed in the book that can be selected and adapted by the teachers to be implemented in their classrooms having in mind the needs of the students.</p> <p>For non-Spanish speakers, teachers can select amongst these key issues below to create further debates in the classroom. Teachers will create their own questions to be posed in order to guide the discussion and let the students create their own definition the key issues with their own words, providing examples of personal experiences related to the defined concepts and discuss about the different dimensions of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bullying ○ Human relation: family and friends ○ Fear ○ The important things in life ○ The need to be protected ○ Express feelings ○ Apologise ○ Death and mourning ○ Kindness, respect and consideration ○ Braveness ○ Irony, black humour and sarcasm ○ Happiness ○ Precepts