

# Reading Questions: Prompt Sheet

## Wonder by R J Palacio

### Reading Questions and Answers on p. 31–36 The Deal, Home, First-Day Jitters

p. 31. Why does August feel uncomfortable about his mum talking about the chicks?

- He's embarrassed in front of his friends that his mum is treating him like a baby.

p. 32. Why does August give the signal to his mum to leave?

- He doesn't want to go around the school again to see the art room – he's probably had enough of the ordeal of meeting the other children. He's also still embarrassed and he might sense that Julian would tease him if they went off again without adults.

p. 33. Why do you think August feels 'very sad and a tiny bit happy'?

- August has had a difficult experience, particularly with Julian's bullying at the new school. He's also about to start a new part of his life and he'll be growing up; he probably feels mixed about that, sad, scared and excited at the same time. He's at home and feels safe, so all the feelings he's been keeping in can now come out.

p. 34. August lies to his mum on this page. Find where, and explain why he does so.

- He says that Julian didn't ask whether he'd been in a fire in a mean way – he did. He's seen that his mum is shocked and he wants to make her feel better. He's not considered how she feels about his experience before now and he wants to shield her from hurt.

p. 34. Why does the author have August say that he wasn't lying at the end of the chapter?

- The author is contrasting August's statement that he wants to go to school with his earlier lie that Julian wasn't mean. She wants the reader to be clear that August does genuinely want to go to school, not just that he's still trying to make his mum feel better.

p. 35. What do you think has made August's mum and dad change sides about his attending school?

- Mum has seen almost at first-hand some of what August will be going through. The reality of it has shocked her and she's not sure she wants to put August through it.

Dad has focused on how August handled himself, his desire to go to school and that his own previous prediction of 'a lamb to the slaughter' didn't happen as he'd thought it might.

p. 35–36. How does August feel on his block? Why?

- August feels comfortable and loved. He knows everyone and they know him. The adults he mentions treat him well (he knows Mrs Grimaldi by name, so it's likely she talks to him; the waitresses call him 'honey' and give him sweets).

p. 35. How does the author contrast August's block with the front of school?

- The author describes August's block as a familiar place, where people treat him kindly and he doesn't have to be self-conscious about the way he looks. In this new situation, he doesn't know anyone, there are hundreds of people – many of whom seem to know one another ('talking to each other') – he's aware of people looking at his face and he becomes self-conscious about it ('I kept my head way down', 'girls whispering').

## Deeper Reading

p. 31. What do you think Mrs Garcia's 'shiny smile' looks like? It's also mentioned on p. 17 and 18. What can you deduce about the smile?

- It's likely to be an exaggerated smile, showing lots of teeth and kept quite fixed. It's probably not a 'genuine' smile but that doesn't mean that Mrs Garcia isn't a genuine person. Her job is the principal's assistant, so she has to greet people cheerfully, even if she doesn't always feel that way. On p. 18, August likes Mrs Garcia when she's not wearing her 'shiny smile'.

p. 31 Why do you think Mom talks about the chicks?

- August's mum is treating him as if he's a young child. She's nervous about him starting a new school and is used to treating him as younger than his age at home – he's the youngest and with all his operations, she's probably had to care for him in the same way she would a small child for a long time.