

Wonder Comprehension

Wonder p. 71-75 The Cheese Touch & Costumes.

Part A

1. Why do you think that dance class is August's least favourite subject?

2. Does August like science? How do you know?

3. On page 71, do you think that the dance teacher was aware what was going on?

4. Why did August's hand touch Tristan's?

5. How do you think the Cheese Touch idea got started at Beecher Prep?

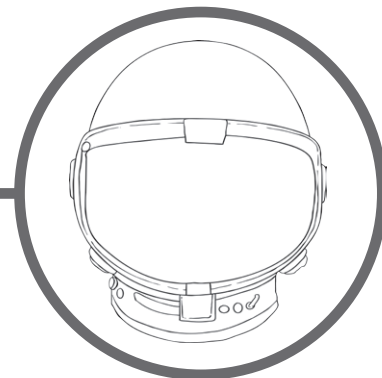
6. What's the difference between Tristan and Julian in the way they treat August?

7. Why does August like Halloween so much?

8. Do you think the astronaut helmet had been put in Gran's attic?

9. Why does August want to be Boba Fett from The Empire Strikes Back?

10. Why do you think Dad thinks Bleeding Scream is a better costume?



Wonder Comprehension

Wonder p. 71-75 The Cheese Touch & Costumes.

Part B

1. On page 71, why didn't the teacher deal with the issue of no-one wanting to dance with August there and then?

2. On page 71, Can Ximena help how she feels about dancing with August? What would you say to her if you were her good friend?

3. Compare Mrs Antanabi's reaction in the dance class with Ms Rubin's. Which do you think is the better reaction to the behaviour of the other children?

4. On page 72, August wants 'to go on record' about Tristan and Nino. Why does he say this?

5. Imagine you were Ms Rubin and you've kept Tristan back after class to speak to him. What would you say?

Wonder Comprehension Answers

Part A

1. Why do you think that dance class is August's least favourite subject?

August is probably embarrassed about other children not wanting to dance with him. He doesn't want to have to deal with it.

2. Does August like science? How do you know?

August clearly likes science because he talks about the lesson in detail and he says it's cool.

3. On page 71, do you think that the dance teacher was aware what was going on?

I think the dance teacher probably was aware what was going on because she changed the lesson so that no one was dancing with anyone else. She probably didn't want to embarrass the children.

4. Why did August's hand touch Tristan's?

August's hand touched Tristan's because he was trying to move his foil from the plates just as Tristan was moving his.

5. How do you think the Cheese Touch idea got started at Beecher Prep?

Example answer: The Cheese Touch idea was probably started by someone like Julian. It's the kind of nasty game that children play. They are being nasty but after a while it just becomes something that everybody does without even thinking about it – the children aren't being deliberately horrible, they've become caught up in the nasty game but that doesn't excuse their behaviour.

6. What's the difference between Tristan and Julian in the way they treat August?

Example answer: Julian is deliberately nasty towards August. He goes out of his way to bully him and set other children against him. Tristan, however, is 'okay-nice' to August but he's not particularly friendly and he is one of those who continues the Cheese Touch 'game'.

7. Why does August like Halloween so much?

August likes Halloween because he gets to wear a mask so that no-one can see his face. He gets to be treated like everyone else.

8. Do you think the astronaut helmet had been put in Gran's attic?

Example answer: I don't think the helmet is in Gran's attic otherwise Mom would have found it by now. I think that Mom got rid of the helmet because August was wearing it so much and it wasn't good for him to keep hiding his face inside the helmet.

9. Why does August want to be Boba Fett from The Empire Strikes Back?

August wants to be the grown-up version of Boba Fett. Since he's started school, he's consistently wanted to be treated like a grown-up.

10. Why do you think Dad thinks Bleeding Scream is a better costume?

I think that Dad thinks Bleeding Scream is more grown up than the Star Wars costume. It's also more appropriate for Halloween.

Part B

1. On page 71, why didn't the teacher deal with the issue of no-one wanting to dance with August there and then?

Example answer: Mrs Antanabi wouldn't have wanted to embarrass August and the other children with bringing up the subject of no-one wanting to dance with him. It's probably happened before in the dance lessons and she'd be aware that it was a problem.

2. On page 71, Can Ximena help how she feels about dancing with August? What would you say to her if you were her good friend?

Example answer: Ximena couldn't help how she felt. She had a panic attack and that's not something you can immediately stop yourself from having. She felt fearful and this is how the fear showed itself. It's still insulting to August and would need to be talked about. If I were her friend, I'd tell her to get to know August and see what he's like so that she'd find out that he was really nice and that his face is just how it is – nothing to be afraid of. I think it would be difficult for her to do this because of people like Julian who would tease her for being friends with August. I'd suggest she talks to her dance teacher about it so that she can help to sort the situation.

3. Compare Mrs Antanabi's reaction in the dance class with Ms Rubin's. Which do you think is the better reaction to the behaviour of the other children?

Example answer: Ms Rubin dealt with the issue of the other children avoiding being close to August there and then. She gave direct instructions to the children to go and stand next to him. She doesn't avoid the situation like Mrs Antanabi does and tackles it head on. Although August says he doesn't like it, I think that this is a better reaction because it's less likely to happen again in future science lessons because the children know that the teacher will deal with it.

4. On page 72, August wants 'to go on record' about Tristan and Nino. Why does he say this?

Example answer: August is about to tell us something horrible that Tristan has done. He doesn't want us to get the wrong idea about him that he's someone like Julian who's deliberately nasty. He's trying to be fair. If you ask me, he's a bit too forgiving of people who treat him like dirt!

5. Imagine you were Ms Rubin and you've kept Tristan back after class to speak to him. What would you say?

Answers written as Ms Rubin which mention Tristan's behaviour, how August feels about it, how the Cheese Touch got started and how she expects Tristan to behave in class in the future. Ms Rubin would probably take the matter further with Mr Tushman.

6. Do you have any thoughts about the costumes August has worn for Halloween in his life?

Example answer: August's costumes match his age and his interests. When he's younger, he wears costumes related to Disney films and stories. His dad wears matching costumes alongside him for a time so that he can accompany him to Halloween parades and parties. He then gets into space and Star Wars when he's a bit older – that matches his age. Finally, he wears the Bleeding Scream mask – a scary one that's suitable for Halloween.

7. Mom spent ages making August's costume. Why doesn't he put it on?

Example answer: August didn't feel like wearing it. It could have been the paint smell or the amount of time it took to put on. It could be that he knew his dad was in a hurry or that he was flustered by Via's meltdown. Or it could be that he subconsciously had a feeling about Julian when he heard about his Jango Fett costume.

8. August gets annoyed with Dad at the end of page 75. Why?

Example answer: August gets annoyed because Dad doesn't know the difference between Boba and Jango Fett. Everyone knows the what difference is for goodness' sake! He's also probably a bit flustered about Via's meltdown and maybe a feeling a little guilty about not wearing Mom's Boba Fett costume.

★ ★
★ Challenge Task ★

Find out who Mr T is and what his catchphrase was, then read the bottom of page 19 again. What is Mr Tushman doing when August asks about Mr T and why has August no idea what he's talking about?

I think the author is wanting us to read on. The section of the book (if you sneakily read on) looks like it's about Via so she's linking this section with the next – it's a cohesive device. We don't know at the moment what the problem is but all through the book we've been hearing about August's problems, we've not heard anything about Via's. She must be going through her own difficulties starting a new school, having August's problems to deal with herself and just being a teenager. We're likely to find out more in the next section.