

115 學年度國立嘉義高商
應用英語科特色招生英文朗讀試題

The initial months of school were an ordeal for Auggie. He was constantly subjected to lingering stares and muffled whispers, while classmates like Julian relentlessly teased him. Some students even went as far as to purposely avoid him, as if his facial difference were a contagious disease. Auggie frequently questioned whether he would ever truly belong; however, his situation was not entirely bleak. He had already formed genuine bonds with two friends, Jack and Summer. Furthermore, Halloween—his favorite time of year—was approaching. This holiday offered Auggie a rare sense of liberation, as wearing a mask allowed him to blend in and experience life as an ordinary child, free from the burden of being noticed.

That year, Auggie chose a "Bleeding Scream" costume as his disguise. Hidden behind the macabre mask, he navigated the school hallways with newfound confidence, unbothered by the presence of others. Yet, his high spirits were abruptly shattered when he accidentally overheard Jack talking to Julian. "I'm only hanging out with him because the principal specifically asked me to," Jack claimed. Devastated and physically ill from the betrayal, Auggie fled to the safety of his home in tears.

This heartbreaking incident resulted in a month-long silence between the two boys. When Jack eventually realized that Auggie had overheard his cruel remarks, he was consumed by guilt. Although his friendship with Auggie had initially begun as a favor to the principal, Jack had come to sincerely appreciate Auggie's intelligence and humor. Desperate to mend their relationship, Jack offered a sincere apology. This act of reconciliation not only saved their friendship but strengthened it beyond what it had been before.

Gradually, the social atmosphere at school began to shift. Auggie's classmates started to look past his appearance, recognizing his kind and witty nature; eventually, the "taboo" of touching him vanished. The turning point occurred during a three-day class camping trip. The excursion was peaceful until the second night, when several seventh-graders from another school began to harass Auggie, shining flashlights in his face and calling him hurtful names like "alien." In a surprising display of solidarity, Jack and even some of the traditionally "mean" kids from Auggie's own class stepped in to defend him. Although they were outnumbered by the older bullies, they managed to escape the confrontation together.

Upon returning to school, Auggie sensed a profound change in how he was perceived. He was no longer an outcast; instead, he was greeted with casual fist-bumps and friendly nods in the hallways. The fear and hesitation that once defined his interactions had evaporated. At the year-end ceremony, Auggie experienced a moment of quiet realization: no one minded standing close to him anymore. For the first time in his life, he felt comfortable enough to smile for a photograph, finally feeling like a valued member of the community.

—Adapted from *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio