

# Wonder Comprehension

Wonder p. 54-60 Comparing Mom, Dad and August

## Part A

Reread p. 54-56. Compare August and his mum's reactions to his first day at school. You should discuss your ideas in your group before you write anything down.

If you wish, you can answer these questions to help you write your answer:

1. Why does Mom ask August how he feels on a scale of 1-10?

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2. Why do you think she did the same now?

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3. Why do you think August's answer surprised her?

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4. Mom offers to carry August's backpack. Why?

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5. She calls him 'sweetness'. What do you think of that?

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6. She's asking him lots of questions on p. 55. What do you think she is thinking?

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7. How do you think August might feel at his mum hugging him in front of everyone?

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8. How long are August's answers to Mom's questions on p. 55? Why?

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9. Why do you think August kicks the rock down the street?

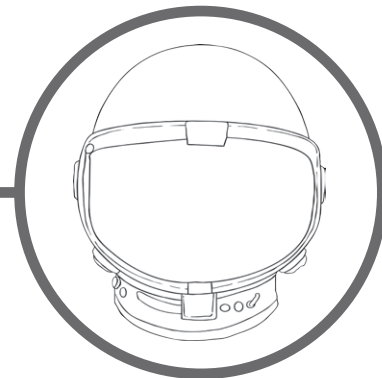
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# Wonder Comprehension

Wonder p. 54-60 Comparing Mom, Dad and August

## Part B

Reread p. 57-60. Compare August's mum and dad's reactions to his first day at school. If you wish, it might help to use the bullet points to structure your comparison.

1. Explain how his dad treats August on these pages, using evidence in the text.  
(Aim for 2 points with evidence.)

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2. Explain how August's mum treats him on these pages, using evidence in the text.  
(Aim for 2 points with evidence.)

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3. Do you think his parents have spoken to one another before Dad comes into August's room?

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4. What do their reactions tell you about their different relationships with August?  
(Aim for 2-3 points.)

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## ★ Challenge Task ★

Reread the section on p. 57 when Dad comes into August's room, then watch one of the **Augie Doggie and Doggie Daddy** episodes on the Internet. Think about how this cartoon and the characters are used by August and his dad in their relationship.

Consider and reflect on the following:

1. When August's dad first saw the cartoons.

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2. When and where August himself first saw the cartoons.

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3. What their different reactions would have been when August first saw the cartoons.

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4. What Dad's sense of humour is like and how much August shares and appreciates the humour.

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Challenge Task

5. Their love and care for one another.

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6. How their relationship is beginning to change now that August has started school.

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7. Why Dad is referring to Augie Doggie at this point and how this relates to how August's mum is treating him in the chapter.

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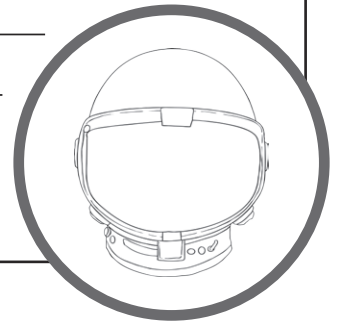
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# Wonder Comprehension Answers

## Part A

1. Why does Mom ask August how he feels on a scale of 1-10?

*Mom asks how August feels on the scale because it's something she's always done during his hospital treatments to show her how much pain he was in.*

2. Why do you think she did the same now?

*Mom's doing the same now because she's treating the first day at school like a trip to the hospital – something that's going to be painful for August and something that she's going to have to nurse him through, just like she's done countless times before through his childhood.*

3. Why do you think August's answer surprised her?

*His answer would have surprised her because she was expecting him to have a tough time at school – she would have thought he would have been bullied or had bad reactions to his face and that he would have been upset by it.*

4. Mom offers to carry August's backpack. Why?

*Mom offers to carry August's backpack because she wants to look after him. She's treating him like a child – the way you'd treat a five-year-old or someone who couldn't look after themselves.*

5. She calls him 'sweetness'. What do you think of that?

*Mom calling him 'sweetness' is another example of treating him like a child. She's patronising him – but because she just wants to look after him and make it better if he's upset.*

6. She's asking him lots of questions on p. 55. What do you think she is thinking?

*She's asking him lots of questions partly because she wants to know what's happened, partly because she's nervous and partly because she's only getting short answers from August. She probably spots that he's upset because of his short answers – he's avoiding – and she wants to get to the bottom of what's happened.*

7. How do you think August might feel at his mum hugging him in front of everyone?

*I think August would feel embarrassed at his mum hugging him here. He's already had a challenging day he doesn't want the other kids to see him being treated like a young kid (as he'd see it) by his mum.*

8. How long are August's answers to Mom's questions on p. 55? Why?

*August's answers are short, probably because he doesn't want to think about school now it's over. He can't really answer in detail about what's happened because his day has been so complicated and emotional and Mom's questions are coming one after the other. He might be aware that if he did answer properly, he might cry.*

9. Why do you think August kicks the rock down the street?

*August kicks the rock down the street because he wants to get away from the situation and Mom's questioning. He just wants to have some down time and not think about school and how challenging and emotional it's been.*

## Part B

Children may choose to answer the question in any way they wish. If they choose to answer the structured questions, example answers are given below. All answers should cover: Dad treating August as both a child and teenager; Mom being nervous and then comforting him (also Mom's treating him in a 'babyish' way earlier in the chapter); and a comparison summary of the two parents' reactions.

1. Explain how his dad treats August on these pages, using evidence in the text.

*Dad is still tucking August into bed and kissing him on the forehead, calling him Augie (a pet name), referring to the Augie Doggie with 'good night, my son, my son' and making jokes ('it's always something with you kids, isn't it?'). A parent is more likely to treat a younger child like that. However, he's also talking to him seriously as you would a teenager ('that was the deal', 'can I ask you something', 'I'm as much to blame').*

2. Explain how August's mum treats him on these pages, using evidence in the text.

*August's mum acts nervously towards him when she first comes into the room (she peeked her head into the room and 'looked kind of shy'). At the end of the chapter, she comforts him when he's upset (she wraps her arms around him, offers him 'soft words' and kisses him on the face).*

3. Do you think his mum and dad have spoken to one another before Dad comes into August's room?

*I think they have spoken to one another beforehand. Mom knocks on the door straight after Dad and August have talked about her and Dad conveniently has work to do that will allow Mom to spend time with August. They've been shown as loving parents prior to this – and that's what good parents would do.*

4. What do their reactions tell you about their different relationships with August?

*Dad seems to allow August to open up, with a combination of his humour and direct talk. Once he's opened up and begun to react to his true feelings, his mum gives him support and comforts him emotionally. It's like they're August's support tag-team with different roles.*

★ Challenge Task ★

1. When August's dad first saw the cartoons.

*Dad probably saw the cartoons in the 1970s or 80s, when he was a boy. They'll remind him of when he was a child and of his relationship with his own dad.*

2. When and where August himself first saw the cartoons.

*The book says that August first saw the cartoons in hospital when he was four.*

3. What their different reactions would have been when August first saw the cartoons.

*August, as a four-year-old would have just found them funny. He wouldn't have been able to understand some of the humour in them because it's aimed at adults or older children, but he'd have liked the silliness, the animals and the relationship of Augie Doggie and his dad. Dad would have wanted to share the cartoons with his son because he'd have enjoyed them when he was a boy. August would have been in pain in hospital, so the funny cartoons would have been good to show him to take his mind off the pain. Dad tends to use humour to connect with August – he uses it to distract August from demanding situations.*

4. What Dad's sense of humour is like and how much August shares and appreciates the humour.

*Dad's a bit of a joker. He's got a kid's sense of humour and he likes making people, especially August, laugh (for example, the jokes about Mr Tushman in the car). August laughs at his dad's jokes and likes the shared references they have (Augie Doggie) and joins in with them – 'dear ol' Dad'.*

5. Their love and care for one another.

*They clearly get along. Dad seems to know just when to be silly with August and when to speak to him seriously: when they're talking in August's room, he asks him if he's annoyed with Mom then soon after picks up his hand and waves it at Mom, to lighten the mood.*

6. How their relationship is beginning to change now that August has started school.

*Dad is still tucking August into bed and kissing him on the forehead, calling him Augie (a pet name), referring to the Augie Doggie with 'good night, my son, my son' and making jokes ('it's always something with you kids, isn't it?'). A parent is more likely to treat a younger child like that. However, he's also talking to him seriously as you would a teenager. August is opening up to his dad and beginning to tell him how he really feels. He trusts his dad and responds to him. He knows being put to be is 'babyish', as he says, but he accepts it for the moment.*

7. Why Dad is referring to Augie Doggie at this point and how this relates to how August's mum is treating him in the chapter.

*Dad refers to Augie Doggie because he's trying to lighten the mood a little. He knows that August is upset and perhaps annoyed with his mum – they'll have spoken about it before he goes into August's room. Mum comforts him with hugs, kisses and kind words towards the end of the chapter, when August cries. Both care for him and treat him with love and – to some extent – treat him younger than his years.*