

Grade 6 Argument Writing Standard W.6.1

Grade 6 Argument

W.6.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
- b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

The Reading/Thinking/Writing Task

Students read and studied the novel *Wonder* in class. They were working with the Focusing Question of “Who is the most admirable character in the book *Wonder*, and why is he/ she so admirable?” As a class, they took public notes on various characters in the book, gathering specific evidence for what is particularly admirable about that character (evidence from text), and why (analysis and reasoning). After finishing the text, students engaged in full class guided discussion about which character might be the best choice for the award. This included discussion of counterclaims to address different viewpoints on the question.

This is a writing task that requires inferential thinking and analysis of the text, along with the weighing of evidence to come up with and prove a reasonable claim.

Focus of the Writing Task

“Who is the most admirable character in the book *Wonder*, and why is he/ she so admirable?”

The Writing Task in the Curriculum

How is it embedded in curriculum/content?

- ★ *Class: Core text, 6th grade ELA curriculum*

- ★ *Curriculum unit*
 - students read *Wonder* as a class, looking through the lens of what people do to behave admirably within the context of the novel
 - emphasis on weighing different reasonable possibilities for a claim before actually making the claim, then supporting the claim with evidence and analysis/reasoning

- ★ *Standards*
 - Reading: RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.10
 - Writing: W.6.1, W.6.9, W.6.10

How did students build the knowledge they needed?

- ★ *Texts*
 - students read the text *Wonder*, doing lots of reading, discussing, and group note-taking as they worked

- ★ *Reading and re-reading*
 - teacher read texts aloud while students read along in their heads
 - students re-read texts independently and discussed with a partner
 - as a class, students gathered specific evidence about various characters as they read

What instructional approaches were used to teach writing?

- ★ *Craft lessons*
 - students had already worked with expository structures (Painted Essay® in many forms and more) including such elements as introductions, transitions and conclusions
 - use of counterclaim – students worked with a teacher-created model of a particular character in the text to see how the argument essay would work, including counterclaim and rebuttal
NOTE: the use of counterclaim is beyond the standard for grade 6, but the teacher chose to work with it instructionally

- ★ *Writing approaches*
 - students were reminded of the elements that make up a strong essay in the directions. They then wrote and proofread independently.

What was the timeframe?

Four week unit (total of 16 class periods, including writing)

Standard W.6.1
Grade 6
Proficient

A Wonderful Person

In the book *Wonder* by R J Palaccio, there is a boy named August Pullman. He has a terrible facial deformity. He was homeschooled for most of his life, and finally he is going to a public school. He has been called names and has been mocked for a long time. He has made a few friends. Lots of kids and adults are afraid of him because of his appearance. August is sad and feels humiliated for much of the time when he begins school. He has a bright smile most of the time going through this. He does that by showing courage, kindness, friendship, and character. By showing all of these traits, he is awarded the Henry Ward Beecher Prep award. Although August has all these good qualities, I think August's friend Summer is the most admirable person because she shows friendship and kindness to everyone.

Summer is admirable because she shows kindness to everyone. Summer does this by sitting next to Auggie when he is lonely and sitting by himself in the lunchroom. This shows kindness because nobody would sit next to him because they thought they would catch "the plague." It also shows kindness because she doesn't care what everyone thinks. Summer also shows kindness by smiling at Auggie when everyone is just staring at him. This shows Auggie that Summer is nice. She also did not give into peer pressure. She shows kindness by telling Auggie that he is her friend. This is kind because nobody will accept Auggie at first because of his face, but Summer does. Summer shows kindness to Auggie because she sits next to Auggie, and she doesn't give in to peer pressure. This matters because everyone should be kind. Summer is admirable because she shows kindness to everyone.

Summer is also admirable because she shows courage. She does this by standing up for Auggie when Julian is saying mean things about Auggie. This is courageous because Julian could have hated her or called her names. Summer also shows courage by telling her friends not to be mean to Auggie because it's not nice. This shows courage because she could lose her friends or be called names like they did to Auggie. This matters because everyone should have the courage to do the right thing. Summer is also admirable because she shows courage.

Many people think Jack is more admirable. This is because he shows all of the traits Summer shows. He shows friendship, kindness, courage, and character. While this is true, I

believe that Summer is more admirable because she was not asked to be August's friend like Jack was. This shows that Summer willingly wanted to be friends with Auggie. I believe that Summer deserves the award more than Jack does.

Summer is the most admirable person because she shows friendship and kindness to everyone. All the information that I have shown you proves that Summer deserves the award more than Jack. She shows friendship, kindness, courage, and character. Summer helps us see that even when times are hard, you can still be kind and be yourself, and you don't have to give in to peer pressure. She also showed me that you can't be a bystander – you have to be an upstander.

Standard W.6.1
Grade 6
Approaching

The Admirable Isabel Putnam

In the book *Wonder* by RJ Palacio, there is a boy called August Pullman that likes to be called Auggie. Auggie is a fifth grader who was born with facial deformities which make him an easy target for bullies. Auggie has come across a lot of people that have been afraid of him. Despite his deformities, Auggie is just a normal person. He has a father, mom, sister, and a pet dog. He lives in New York City, so he cannot get away from the many people that look at him and look disgusted. Auggie goes to school for the first time and doesn't like it very much. But at the end of the year he gets the Henry Beecher Prop Award. This award is given to the person that the teachers think is most admirable.

Though Auggie wins this award, there are many other characters in the school who could have won the award. I think that Isabel Putnam, Auggie's mother, is the most admirable person because she shows the most courage and kindness in the book and movie, more than any other character.

Isabel is most admirable person for her courage in the book. She shows this when she gives birth to Auggie, and then the nurse runs out of the room with him. She did this because Auggie had bad facial deformities, and she didn't want Isabel to see him. Isabel could not even see her baby for about a day. She could have just run after the nurse that took the baby, but she stays there in her room. She shows courage by letting the nurse take Auggie. Because of her courage, she trusts the nurse. Another reason she should be recognized for the award is that she has enough courage to send Auggie to school, even when she knows that there was a high chance for him to get bullied. Auggie does not want to go to school at first, but Isabel advises him to go. Even though Auggie is bullied, she still makes the right decision because he is able to make two friends. One friend is named Jack. Jack was asked to be friends with Auggie at first, but when Jack gets used to his face he actually wants to be real friends with Auggie. He also makes another friend who is called Summer. Summer was not asked to be friends with Auggie. The reason she becomes friends with him is that she sees him alone at lunch one day. She does not want to be with people who are making fun of him, so she decides to go sit with him. Isabel is also right to send Auggie to school because he wins the Henry Beecher Prep Award for the

person who showed the most courage, kindness, character, and friendship. It's important to have people like Isabel because they can help others that are getting teased. She is admirable because she shows courage.

Even though there are more ways that she shows courage in the book, Isabel also has the most kindness in the book *Wonder*. Isabel Putnam is the most admirable person in the book because of her kindness to others. She shows kindness to everyone in the book. She has enough kindness to send Auggie to school even though Auggie does not want to go to school. She taught him herself at home until he was going into fifth grade. She taught him math, history, science, and literature. She also taught him so well that he excels in the hardest science class. She also taught Auggie how to teach other people and proper manners. In the book, Auggie [taught] Jack because he did not completely understand what they were learning about. She taught Auggie how to not freak out at people when they were very rude. She also is very kind when Auggie comes home from a nature retreat. Auggie loses his hearing aids when running away from bullies that attack him. He does not notice that he has lost his hearing aids, but in the book it says that "he felt like he was under water." When he finally stops running from the people that attacked him, he notices that his hearing aids are gone. When he comes home, he is so worried that his mom will kill him because she warned him that the hearing aids cost so much money. But when he comes in the house, she hugs him straight away and says that she just cares that he is ok. It's important to have people like Isabel in the world because they can cheer people up with their kindness and make people feel better about themselves. Isabel Putnam shows the most kindness in the book *Wonder*.

Some say that August is more admirable. Auggie shows courage, character, friendship and kindness to everyone at least one time in the book. He shows kindness by making up with Jack even though he was very mad at him for saying that he would kill himself if he was Auggie. Auggie heard that, so he ran out of the room. Even though Auggie shows courage, character, friendship and kindness to everyone at least one time in the book, I still think Isabel deserves the award because she does not freak out at Auggie when he loses his hearing aids. Though Auggie wins the award, I still think that Isabel should have won it.

Isabel Putnam would definitely have been the best person to win the award in the book if they included the parents. This book is important because it gives me a message which is always to choose kindness. This basically means to be as nice as you can be to someone or something. It

also means to do the right thing as much as humanly possible. This author wrote this book because she had her own experience when she walked away from a boy that looked like Auggie. She did that because she did not want her kids to say something rude, but she realized that she probably did something more rude than what her kids could say. She wanted to fix her mistake, so she wrote a book. This book has taught me to always choose kindness and courage just like Isabel Putnam did. Isabel was the most admirable person in the book *Wonder* because of her courage and kindness.

Standard W.6.1
Grade 6
Beginning

Justin vs Mr. Browne

For the last several weeks we have been reading the book *Wonder* by RJ Palacio. In this story there is a young boy named August Pullman (Auggie) who is born with severe facial deformities. He overcomes his difficult school days with help of many people. After we read, the story we carefully discussed the text and took notes. Mr. Browne is more nice than Justin.

Mr. Browne is the most admirable person in the story because he shows friendship and kindness to everyone. Mr. Browne shows friendship by joking around with the students. That shows Mr. Browne is good with kids and is nice. Mr. Browne shows friendship by going with Jack's joke and not getting mad about it. That shows that Mr. Browne is a teacher that you can joke around with and have a good time with. Mr. Browne is nice at picture day because when Auggie steps out of the picture, Mr. Browne moves Auggie back into the photo. And that shows that Mr. Browne cares about Auggie.

Mr. Browne shows kindness when he let everyone call out when there not supposed to call out. Mr. Browne shows kindness by not getting mad when people don't raise their hand and call out. Which means that Mr. Browne likes to do things that other teachers don't usually do. That proves that Mr. Browne deserves the medal more than Justin.

Many people say Justin is more admirable than Mr. Browne. Justin shows kindness by not saying things like "Ooo" when he sees Auggie's face. Justin is an only child and has been raised by a good family in a good house. Because of how has been raised he was prepared for how Auggie looked. People think that Justin is more admirable because when Jack was being bullied Justin stood up for Jack and got the bullies to stop being mean to Jack. Mr. Browne is not as prepared for Auggie, but he still treats Auggie like a normal student. Another thing that Justin does is that he helps Jack and Auggie when they are getting bullied by Julian and his friends. That shows that Justin is a good person, but Mr. Browne is more admirable.

After all the research, I decided that, in my opinion, Mr. Browne is more deserving of the award. Mr. Bowne deserves the medal because he was the kindest person in my opinion, but he is the nicest person to Auggie when he goes to class on that first day of school because he treats Auggie like a regular kid and not a "special" kid and not someone who looks disgusting.

Standard W.6.1
Grade 6
Exceeds

A Character of High Esteem

The book *Wonder* by RJ Palacio is about a boy with “mandibulofacial dystostosis caused by autosomal recessive mutation in the TCOF11 gene, which is located on chromosome 5, complicated by hemifacial microsomia characteristic of OAV spectrum” (p.104). This malfunction of his genes has made August Pullman the subject of many a cruel joke and jibe. When he goes to school, these things increase. However, he also makes new friends, one of whom is Jack Will, who becomes one of his closest friends. These friends help him through the year. At the end of the year, Auggie is awarded the Henry Ward Beecher award at his school on graduation day. This award is very prestigious and is awarded to the most admirable – the one who shows kindness, courage, character, and friendship. However, although Auggie is a very admirable person, I feel he is not as admirable as Jack. Jack shows all of these traits, but his courage and character are in sharper relief.

Jack Will shows a great deal of courage. One example of this is when he is defending Auggie in the woods. There is a trio of extremely unkind kids in the woods, smoking and drinking. When Jack and Auggie chanced upon them, they told Auggie that he was an orc, a freak, Freddy Kreuger, Gollum and an alien. Jack gets really mad at that, and he is very courageous in defending Auggie. Another way that Jack shows courage is he is glad to be friends with Auggie, which most other students do not dare to do. They have invented something called “the Plague,” which means if you touch Auggie you have 30 seconds to wash your hands or you get the Plague yourself. Jack completely ignores this, which was very courageous. People who have courage are very important to our society. They stand up for what they think is right, even in the face of fear. They defend people who ordinarily would not be defended. Jack is admirable because he shows this trait very strongly.

Jack shows courage, but, by the same token, he also shows character. One way he does this is he is friends with Auggie. This shows a great deal of character, as well as courage because it shows that Jack does not care about how Auggie looks on the outside. He realizes that Auggie’s kind ways are what count. This is extremely hard to do, and that proves that Jack has character. Julian had been talking about Auggie and asking Jack why he likes to hang out with

that “freak.” Jack bristles at that, and he punches Julian right in the mouth. While it was the wrong thing to do, it shows that Jack has enough character to see that “Good friends are sometimes worth defending” (p. 161). People who have character are very important. If you display the correct sort of character, it shows that you have integrity, and you have a good Idea of the difference between right and wrong. Jack has a lot of character. He shows this in the way he interacts with Auggie. That is why he is admirable.

While all of this is true, there are others who think that Miranda is more admirable. This view must be taken into account. While this view has some merit to it, I feel it is incorrect. Miranda used to be friends with Via (Auggie’s sister). However, once she goes to camp she begins to lie about who she is and what her life is like. She says that she has this wonderful dog named Daisy and a brother with facial deformities. These lies seem harmless at first, but they began to make her popular. Once she has had a taste of popularity, she completely abandons her previous relationship with Via. She goes in search of popularity. This shows she has very little integrity.

I feel that Jack is the most admirable because of his kindness and character. Through his example we see what the author is trying to tell us - if you are kind and admirable, and, if everyone strives to be that way, the world will be a better place.

Standard W.6.1
Grade 6
Proficient

A Wonderful Person

In the book *Wonder* by R J Palaccio, there is a boy named August Pullman. He has a terrible facial deformity. He was homeschooled for most of his life, and finally he is going to a public school. He has been called names and has been mocked for a long time. He has made a few friends. Lots of kids and adults are afraid of him because of his appearance. August is sad and feels humiliated for much of the time when he begins school. He has a bright smile most of the time going through this. He does that by showing courage, kindness, friendship, and character. By showing all of these traits, he is awarded the Henry Ward Beecher Prep award. Although August has all these good qualities, I think August’s friend Summer is the most admirable person because she shows friendship and kindness to everyone.

Summer is admirable because she shows kindness to everyone. Summer does this by sitting next to Auggie when he is lonely and sitting by himself in the lunchroom. This shows kindness because nobody would sit next to him because they thought they would catch “the plague.” It also shows kindness because she doesn’t care what everyone thinks. Summer also shows kindness by smiling at Auggie when everyone is just staring at him. This shows Auggie that Summer is nice. She also did not give into peer pressure. She shows kindness by telling Auggie that he is her friend. This is kind because nobody will accept Auggie at first because of his face, but Summer does. Summer shows kindness to Auggie because she sits next to Auggie, and she doesn’t give in to peer pressure. This matters because everyone should be kind. Summer is admirable because she shows kindness to everyone.

Introduces the topic clearly: the writer gives appropriate context which summarizes the topic/text for a reader.

Establishes and maintains a reasonably formal style and respectful tone throughout

Introduces the claim: the writer responds directly and appropriately to the Focusing Question.

Organizes reasons and evidence clearly: the writer organizes by character trait (kindness, courage).

Supports claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: the **evidence** is accurate and **relevant**, and shows **understanding of the text**. The writer also explains evidence (*this is kind because*).

Wrap-up statement helps make **organizational** structure and thinking clear

Summer is also admirable because she shows courage. She does this by standing up for Auggie when Julian is saying mean things about Auggie. This is courageous because Julian could have hated her or called her names. Summer also shows courage by telling her friends not to be mean to Auggie because it's not nice. This shows courage because she could lose her friends or be called names like they did to Auggie. This matters because everyone should have the courage to do the right thing. Summer is also admirable because she shows courage.

Uses words, phrases and clauses to clarify the relationships among claims and reasons

Many people think Jack is more admirable. This is because he shows all of the traits Summer shows. He shows friendship, kindness, courage, and character. While this is true, I believe that Summer is more admirable because she was not asked to be August's friend like Jack was. This shows that Summer willingly wanted to be friends with Auggie. I believe that Summer deserves the award more than Jack does.

Supports claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: the **evidence is credible and relevant**, and shows **understanding of the text**. Writer also explains evidence (*this shows courage because*).

Summer is the most admirable person because she shows friendship and kindness to everyone. All the information that I have shown you proves that Summer deserves the award more than Jack. She shows friendship, kindness, courage, and character. Summer helps us see that even when times are hard, you can still be kind and be yourself, and you don't have to give in to peer pressure. She also showed me that you can't be a bystander – you have to be an upstander.

Supports claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: the **evidence is credible and relevant**, and shows **understanding of the text**. Here, the reason and evidence are in the form of a developed **counterclaim**. See end note.

Provides a concluding section that follows from the argument presented: the writer reflects on the overall significance of the text.

Final Thoughts (Gr 6 Argument: Proficient)

Overall, this essay shows solid understanding of the text and its message, the novel *Wonder*. The writer responds to the prompt (“Who is the most admirable character in the book?”) with a clear and specific claim. The writer develops that claim, supplying reasons and accurate, relevant evidence from the text, always using a respectful tone when acknowledging disagreement. In the essay, the writer thoughtfully uses a counterclaim to support her claim (though this is above the standard for this grade level), helping to show her strong understanding of the text).

In addition, the writer explains the importance of the evidence at an appropriate 6th grade level, in terms of both the reason and the claim. All of this thinking is done within a clear structure, including clear transitions, that makes the thinking well-connected and easy for the reader to follow. The writer finishes with a reflective conclusion, which also helps show her strong understanding of the text.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 6 Argument: Proficient)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.

Standard W.6.1
Grade 6
Approaching

The Admirable Isabel Putnam

In the book *Wonder* by RJ Palacio, there is a boy called August Pullman that likes to be called Auggie. Auggie is a fifth grader who was born with facial deformities which make him an easy target for bullies. Auggie has come across a lot of people that have been afraid of him. Despite his deformities, Auggie is just a normal person. He has a father, mom, sister, and a pet dog. He lives in New York City, so he cannot get away from the many people that look at him and look disgusted. Auggie goes to school for the first time and doesn't like it very much. But at the end of the year he gets the Henry Beecher Prep Award. This award is given to the person that the teachers think is most admirable.

Though Auggie wins this award, there are many other characters in the school who could have won the award. I think that Isabel Putnam, Auggie's mother, is the most admirable person because she shows the most courage and kindness in the book and movie, more than any other character.

Isabel is most admirable person for her courage in the book. She shows this when she gives birth to Auggie, and then the nurse runs out of the room with him. She did this because Auggie had bad facial deformities, and she didn't want Isabel to see him. Isabel could not even see her baby for about a day. She could have just run after the nurse that took the baby, but she stays there in her room. She shows courage by letting the nurse take Auggie. Because of her courage, she trusts the nurse. Another reason she should be recognized for the award is that she has enough courage to send Auggie to school, even when she knows that there was a high chance for him to get bullied. Auggie does not want to go to school at first, but Isabel advises him to go. Even though Auggie is bullied, she still makes the right decision because he is able to make two

Introduces the topic clearly: the writer gives appropriate context which summarizes the topic/text for a reader.

Establishes and maintains a formal style and respectful tone throughout

Introduces the claim: the writer responds directly and appropriately to the Focusing Question.

Organizes reasons and evidence clearly: the writer organizes by character trait (courage, kindness).

Attempts to support claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: however, some of the **evidence is relevant** and some evidence is not relevant, showing some misunderstanding of the text.

friends. One friend is named Jack. Jack was asked to be friends with Auggie at first, but when Jack gets used to his face he actually wants to be real friends with Auggie. He also makes another friend who is called Summer. Summer was not asked to be friends with Auggie. The reason she becomes friends with him is that she sees him alone at lunch one day. She does not want to be with people who are making fun of him, so she decides to go sit with him. Isabel is also right to send Auggie to school because he wins the Henry Beecher Prep Award for the person who showed the most courage, kindness, character, and friendship. It's important to have people like Isabel because they can help others that are getting teased. She is admirable because she shows courage.

The writer appears to wander away from his focus here, giving evidence about a different character before returning to evidence about Isabel's courage.

Even though there are more ways that she shows courage in the book, Isabel also has the most kindness in the book *Wonder*. Isabel Putnam is the most admirable person in the book because of her kindness to others. She shows kindness to everyone in the book. She has enough kindness to send Auggie to school even though Auggie does not want to go to school. She taught him herself at home until he was going into fifth grade. She taught him math, history, science, and literature. She also taught him so well that he excels in the hardest science class. She also taught Auggie how to teach other people and proper manners. In the book, Auggie [taught] Jack because he did not completely understand what they were learning about. She taught Auggie how to not freak out at people when they were very rude. She also is very kind when Auggie comes home from a nature retreat. Auggie loses his hearing aids when running away from bullies that attack him. He does not notice that he has lost his hearing aids, but in the book it says that "he felt like he was under water." When he finally stops running from the people that attacked him, he notices that his hearing aids are gone. When he comes home, he is so worried that his mom will kill him because she warned him that the hearing aids cost so much money. But when he comes in the house, she hugs him straight away and says that she just cares that he is ok. It's

Wrap-up statement helps make **organizational** structure and thinking clear

Supports claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: the **evidence here is credible and relevant**, and shows **understanding of the text**. There is a great deal of evidence; the essay would benefit if the writer were more selective with it.

Wrap-up statement helps make **organizational** structure and thinking clear

important to have people like Isabel in the world because they can cheer people up with their kindness and make people feel better about themselves. Isabel Putnam shows the most kindness in the book *Wonder*.

Some say that August is more admirable. Auggie shows courage, character, friendship and kindness to everyone at least one time in the book. He shows kindness by making up with Jack even though he was very mad at him for saying that he would kill himself if he was Auggie. Auggie heard that, so he ran out of the room. Even though Auggie shows courage, character, friendship and kindness to everyone at least one time in the book, I still think Isabel deserves the award because she does not freak out at Auggie when he loses his hearing aids. Though Auggie wins the award, I still think that Isabel should have won it.

Isabel Putnam would definitely have been the best person to win the award in the book if they included the parents. This book is important because it gives me a message which is always to choose kindness. This basically means to be as nice as you can be to someone or something. It also means to do the right thing as much as humanly possible. This author wrote this book because she had her own experience when she walked away from a boy that looked like Auggie. She did that because she did not want her kids to say something rude, but she realized that she probably did something more rude than what her kids could say. She wanted to fix her mistake, so she wrote a book. This book has taught me to always choose kindness and courage just like Isabel Putnam did. Isabel was the most admirable person in the book *Wonder* because of her courage and kindness.

Supports claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: the **evidence is credible and relevant**, and shows **understanding of the text**. Here, the reason and evidence are in the form of a developed **counterclaim**. See end note.

Provides a concluding section that follows from the argument presented: the writer reflects on the overall significance of the text.

Final Thoughts
(Gr 6 Argument: Approaching)

Overall, this essay shows adequate understanding of the text and its message, the novel *Wonder*. The writer responds to the prompt (“Who is the most admirable character in the book?”) with a clear and specific claim. The writer develops that claim, supplying reasons and mostly accurate, relevant evidence from the text. In the essay, the writer appropriately uses a counterclaim to support his claim, with a respectful tone towards those who might disagree (though this is above the standard for this grade level), helping to show his understanding of the text. All of this thinking is done within a clear structure, including clear transitions, that makes the thinking well-connected and easy for the reader to follow. The writer finishes with a reflective conclusion, which also helps show his strong understanding of the text.

Although the writer supplies a lot of evidence, he does not explain its significance. In addition, the essay would benefit if the writer were more selective with his evidence.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 6 Argument: Approaching)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.

Standard W.6.1
Grade 6
Beginning

Justin vs Mr. Browne

For the last several weeks we have been reading the book *Wonder* by RJ Palacio. In this story there is a young boy named August Pullman (Auggie) who is born with severe facial deformities. He overcomes his difficult school days with help of many people. After we read, the story we carefully discussed the text and took notes. Mr. Browne is more nice than Justin.

Mr. Browne is the most admirable person in the story because he shows friendship and kindness to everyone. Mr. Browne shows friendship by joking around with the students. That shows Mr. Browne is good with kids and is nice. Mr. Browne shows friendship by going with Jack's joke and not getting mad about it. That shows that Mr. Browne is a teacher that you can joke around with and have a good time with. Mr. Browne is nice at picture day because when Auggie steps out of the picture, Mr. Browne moves Auggie back into the photo. And that shows that Mr. Browne cares about Auggie.

Mr. Browne shows kindness when he let everyone call out when there not supposed to call out. Mr. Browne shows kindness by not getting mad when people don't raise their hand and call out. Which means that Mr. Browne likes to do things that other teachers don't usually do. That proves that Mr. Browne deserves the medal more than Justin.

Many people say Justin is more admirable than Mr. Browne. Justin shows kindness by not saying things like "Ooo" when he sees Auggie's face. Justin is an only child and has been raised by a good family in a good house. Because of how has been raised he was prepared for how Auggie looked. People think that Justin is more admirable because when Jack was being bullied Justin stood up for Jack and got the bullies to stop being mean to Jack. Mr. Browne is not as prepared for

Attempts to **introduce the topic:** the writer gives some appropriate context to summarize the text, but omits some information (and includes some irrelevant information).

Introduces the claim: the writer responds directly to the Focusing Question, but it is not clear who Justin is.

Organizes reasons and evidence clearly: the writer organizes by character trait (friendship, kindness).

Attempts to **support claim with clear reasons and evidence** from the text: however, most of the evidence is not relevant, and shows misunderstanding of the text. Writer does explain evidence (*this shows...*).

Attempts a **counterclaim** to support the claim: however, the writer supplies only a little evidence to support his claim that Mr. Browne is admirable. In fact, the writer seems to supply more evidence to contradict this, resulting in some confusion for the reader.

Auggie, but he still treats Auggie like a normal student. Another thing that Justin does is that he helps Jack and Auggie when they are getting bullied by Julian and his friends. That shows that Justin is a good person, but Mr. Browne is more admirable.

After all the research, I decided that, in my opinion, Mr. Browne is more deserving of the award. Mr. Bowne deserves the medal because he was the kindest person in my opinion, but he is the nicest person to Auggie when he goes to class on that first day of school because he treats Auggie like a regular kid and not a “special” kid and not someone who looks disgusting.

Attempts to **provide a concluding section that follows from the argument presented:** the writer restates his claim, then appears to repeat a reason he has mentioned earlier.

Final Thoughts (Gr 6 Argument: Beginning)

Overall, this essay shows limited understanding of the text and its message, the novel *Wonder*. The writer responds to the prompt (“Who is the most admirable character in the book?”) with a claim, but it is vague. The writer attempts to develop that claim, supplying reasons and evidence from the text. However, most of the evidence is not relevant to the claim and indicates some misunderstanding of the concept of “admirable.” In the essay, the writer attempts to use a counterclaim to support his claim (though this is above the standard for this grade level); however, the writer seems confused about whom he is discussing, Mr. Browne or Justin.

The writer does use a clear structure, including clear transitions, which makes his thinking easy for the reader to follow. He finishes with a conclusion, in which he restates his claim. However, the conclusion seems to reiterate a specific reason which would have been more effectively used in the body of the essay. This writer might have benefited from more discussion of “admirable” before writing the essay.

A Word About Language and Conventions (Gr 6 Argument: Beginning)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.

Standard W.6.1
Grade 6
Exceeds

A Character of High Esteem

The book *Wonder* by RJ Palacio is about a boy with “mandibulofacial dystostosis caused by autosomal recessive mutation in the TCOF11 gene, which is located on chromosome 5, complicated by hemifacial microsomia characteristic of OAV spectrum” (p.104). This malfunction of his genes has made August Pullman the subject of many a cruel joke and jibe. When he goes to school, these things increase. However, he also makes new friends, one of whom is Jack Will, who becomes one of his closest friends. These friends help him through the year. At the end of the year, Auggie is awarded the Henry Ward Beecher award at his school on graduation day. This award is very prestigious and is awarded to the most admirable – the one who shows kindness, courage, character, and friendship. However, although Auggie is a very admirable person, I feel he is not as admirable as Jack. Jack shows all of these traits, but his courage and character are in sharper relief.

Jack Will shows a great deal of courage. One example of this is when he is defending Auggie in the woods. There is a trio of extremely unkind kids in the woods, smoking and drinking. When Jack and Auggie chanced upon them, they told Auggie that he was an orc, a freak, Freddy Kreuger, Gollum and an alien. Jack gets really mad at that, and he is very courageous in defending Auggie. Another way that Jack shows courage is he is glad to be friends with Auggie, which most other students do not dare to do. They have invented something called “the Plague,” which means if you touch Auggie you have 30 seconds to wash your hands or you get the Plague yourself. Jack completely ignores this, which was very courageous. People who have courage are very important to our society.

Introduces the topic clearly: the writer gives appropriate and specific context which summarizes the topic/text for a reader.

Establishes and maintains a formal style and respectful tone throughout

Introduces the claim: the writer responds directly and appropriately to the Focusing Question. The claim is unusually precise.

Organizes reasons and evidence clearly: the writer organizes by character trait (courage, character).

Supports claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: the **evidence is credible and relevant**, and shows **understanding of the text**. The writer also explains evidence thoughtfully (*they stand up for what they think is right, even in the face of fear*).

They stand up for what they think is right, even in the face of fear. They defend people who ordinarily would not be defended. Jack is admirable because he shows this trait very strongly.

Wrap-up statement helps make **organizational** structure and thinking clear

Jack shows courage, but, by the same token, he also shows character. One way he does this is he is friends with Auggie. This shows a great deal of character, as well as courage because it shows that Jack does not care about how Auggie looks on the outside. He realizes that Auggie’s kind ways are what count. This is extremely hard to do, and that proves that Jack has character. Julian had been talking about Auggie and asking Jack why he likes to hang out with that “freak.” Jack bristles at that, and he punches Julian right in the mouth. While it was the wrong thing to do, it shows that Jack has enough character to see that “Good friends are sometimes worth defending” (p. 161). People who have character are very important. If you display the correct sort of character, it shows that you have integrity, and you have a good Idea of the difference between right and wrong. Jack has a lot of character. He shows this in the way he interacts with Auggie. That is why he is admirable.

Uses words, phrases and clauses to clarify the relationships among claims and reasons

Supports claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: the **evidence is credible and relevant**, and shows **understanding of the text**. The writer also explains evidence thoughtfully (*it shows that you have integrity, and you have a good idea of the difference between right and wrong*).

While all of this is true, there are others who think that Miranda is more admirable. This view must be taken into account. While this view has some merit to it, I feel it is incorrect. Miranda used to be friends with Via (Auggie’s sister). However, once she goes to camp she begins to lie about who she is and what her life is like. She says that she has this wonderful dog named Daisy and a brother with facial deformities. These lies seem harmless at first, but they began to make her popular. Once she has had a taste of popularity, she completely abandons her previous relationship with Via. She goes in search of popularity. This shows she has very little integrity.

Supports claim with clear reasons and evidence from the text: the **evidence is credible and relevant**, and shows **understanding of the text**. Here, the reason and evidence are in the form of a developed **counterclaim**. See end note.

I feel that Jack is the most admirable because of his kindness and character. Through his example we see what the author is trying to tell us - if you are kind and admirable, and, if everyone strives to be that way, the world will be a better place.

Provides a concluding section that follows from the argument presented: the writer reflects on the overall significance of the text.

Final Thoughts
(Gr 6 Argument: Exceeds)

Overall, this essay shows solid understanding of the text and its message, the novel *Wonder*. The writer responds to the prompt (“Who is the most admirable character in the book?”) with a clear and very specific claim. The writer develops that claim, supplying reasons and well-chosen, accurate, relevant evidence from the text. In the essay, the writer thoughtfully uses a counterclaim to support his claim (though this is above the standard for this grade level), helping to show his strong understanding of the text). All of this thinking is done within a clear structure, including clear transitions, that makes the thinking well-connected and easy for the reader to follow. The writer finishes with a reflective conclusion, which also helps show his strong understanding of the text.

In addition, the writer explains the importance of the evidence at a level that is exceptional for 6th grade. The tone is unusually respectful of those who may disagree with his claim.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 6 Argument: Exceeds)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.