

**Title:** *Wonderstruck*

**Author:** Brian Selznick

**Perspectives Category: Different Abilities**

**Reviewer Name and Grade:** Yaseen V., Grade 10

**Date Reviewed:** 7/30/21

*1. What is the main plot of this book?*

The main plot of this book follows two characters named Ben and Rose, who secretly wish their lives were different. Ben, on one hand, longs for a father he has never known, while Rose dreams of a mysterious actress. Both characters' stories are set fifty years apart, but their respective plotlines weave back and forth with amazing symmetry.

*2. Which character did you most identify with and why?*

While I read this book, I found myself relating to Ben, who spent much of his childhood going to museums like the Museum of Natural History. I found it interesting how he had a fascination with the wolf display because I am also fond of such displays. Overall, I found Ben's character to be very relatable, despite there being differences between us.

*3. What do you believe is the main message of this book?*

I believe the main message of this book is to show the experiences of children who are deaf by displaying multiple perspectives. For example, this book introduces how a child navigates the world while being deaf by starting in the 1920s to a child today.

*4. Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too "preachy"?*

No, this book was not too "preachy". In fact, I believe the author crafted this book fantastically. I love how the book weaves in two stories of children who lived years apart because it showed the readers the similarities and differences they experienced as deaf children.

*5. If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?*

This book contained two main characters and their stories from different time periods. I think out of the two perspectives that were shown throughout the book, I would choose Ben's perspective because I found his story to be very relatable and I really enjoyed watching him develop as the plot unfolded.

*6. In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?*

This book introduced to me how deaf children examine and experience the world around them. This was a very eye-opening experience because these topics are not often given mainstream

attention. My views on the importance of catering to this community was reaffirmed after reading this book.

*7. What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*

I do not think this book was missing any perspective. I believe the author did a nuanced job at articulating his views and showing the obstacles his characters faced throughout the story.

*8. Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?*

Yes, this book encouraged me to pursue further research into the topic of being deaf and how this affects a person and the way they develop or see the world. This topic is one that should be discussed more and this book did a good job at giving it a platform.

*9. What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?*

I would recommend this book to readers who like stories where there are two main characters. I specifically like books like these because it keeps my interest in how the characters' stories are entwined with each other.

*10. What other book(s) have you read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?*

Another good addition to this book list would be The Invention of Hugo Cabret, a book written by the same author. This book takes place in France and follows a boy who is trying to find his purpose in life.

**Reviewer Name and Grade: Tatjana T., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**Date Reviewed: April 10, 2023**

1. The main plot of "Wonderstruck" revolves around two separate storylines, one set in 1977 and the other in 1927. In 1977, a young boy named Ben, who is deaf, embarks on a journey to New York City to find his father. In 1927, a young girl named Rose, who is also deaf, navigates the bustling city in search of her idol, an actress named Lillian Mayhew.

2. I most identified with Ben, the young boy who is deaf, as I also grew up as a special needs child with speech delay. I could relate to Ben's struggles with communication, his sense of isolation, and his determination to overcome obstacles in his journey to find his father.

3. The main message of "Wonderstruck" is about the power of connection, resilience, and finding one's place in the world, despite challenges and differences. It emphasizes the importance of communication, understanding, and empathy in building relationships and navigating life's complexities.

4. I believe the main message of "Wonderstruck" was effectively integrated into the story, without coming off as too preachy. The book beautifully weaves together the two storylines of

Ben and Rose, showcasing their individual journeys and their shared experiences as deaf individuals. The author uses illustrations and text in a unique way, allowing readers to visually experience Ben and Rose's perspectives, without relying solely on words, which adds depth and authenticity to the storytelling.

5. Two perspectives on an important topic that are explored in "Wonderstruck" are the challenges and experiences of being deaf, as well as the importance of connection and community. As a reader who grew up as a special needs child with speech delay, I identified with the perspective of Ben and Rose, and their struggles with communication and finding their place in the world. I also appreciated the emphasis on the significance of human connection and the support of a caring community.

6. Reading "Wonderstruck" reaffirmed my belief in the importance of empathy, understanding, and inclusivity towards individuals with disabilities. It deepened my appreciation for the challenges faced by those who are deaf or hard of hearing, and reinforced my belief in the power of communication and human connection to overcome barriers and build meaningful relationships.

7. While "Wonderstruck" does a commendable job in portraying the perspectives of Ben and Rose, characters who are deaf, it would have been enriching to have more diverse representation of characters with disabilities and their experiences. For example, exploring the perspectives of characters from different cultural backgrounds, races, or with different types of disabilities could have added more depth and breadth to the narrative.

8. "Wonderstruck" encouraged me to further pursue reading and research about the experiences of individuals with disabilities, particularly those who are deaf or hard of hearing. It inspired me to learn more about deaf culture, sign language, and the challenges faced by individuals with hearing impairments in different contexts, such as education, employment, and social interactions.

9. I would suggest "Wonderstruck" to readers who are interested in stories about resilience, diversity, and the power of human connection. This book would be particularly relevant to readers who have personal experiences with disabilities or those who are interested in gaining insights into the perspectives of individuals with disabilities, specifically those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

10. "Out of My Mind" by Sharon M. Draper would make a good addition to this category of Perspectives biography. It is a story about a young girl with cerebral palsy who cannot speak or move, but has a brilliant mind. The book delves into her struggles, triumphs, and the importance of empathy and understanding towards individuals with disabilities.