

Kristie Ennis

Why is Wonder Important? 55 min

Objective:

Students will consider various perspectives on wonder and develop their own views on the importance of wonder at all ages.

Big Idea:

All too often, students lose their sense of wonder as they progress toward adulthood. In this lesson, students will consider why wonder is important at all ages, decide what they think about this topic, and share their conclusions.

1. Warm Up / Anticipatory 15 min

Begin by asking students to consider these questions and respond individually in their writer's notebooks. Then, if you are able, ask students to post about their thoughts on social media, tagging Wonderopolis. Take a moment to share their thoughts on this and the teacher should share his or hers.

- Where do you think Wonderland is? And, for that matter, where is Wonderopolis? Are they one and the same? Or are they separate places? Are they both part of Earth? Or do they exist in another dimension of time and space? Share your thoughts with us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#). We'd love to know where you think Wonderland — and Wonderopolis — are!

2. Investigation and New Learning 30 min

Give students access to the [Wonder of the Day, #793](#), and provide 5 minutes for students to read through the information, clicking on links for further investigation if technology is available. Of there is only teacher technology, this could be done by randomly selecting a student to explore links on the page in front of the class and doing a talk-aloud about their discovery process -- encourage them to make their thinking audible for their peers.

Then, in small groups, ask students to determine what this article says to them about the importance of wonder. How did it enrich their original thoughts in the opening writing they did in their notebooks? They should discuss this in small groups and elect a spokesperson to share with the class.

Once this sharing is completed, ask students to complete this statement individually, "Wonder is (or is not) important at all ages because _____." Students should use sticky notes for this to limit their word count (choose one color for all students).

Then, distribute multiple examples of viewpoints on wonder. Provide time for them to consider the articles individually at first, and then with their small groups, determining the importance (or not) of wonder. Some samples are:

- ["Why Wonder?"](#)
- ["The Importance of Wonder and Awe"](#)
- ["The Power of Awe"](#)

Once each student has read one of these articles, show a couple of images that inspire awe, or a film clip from a movie that encourages wonder, like "Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium", "Alice in Wonderland" (the newest version), "Charlie & the Chocolate Factory", etc. Ask students to take notes about the sense of wonder.

3. Review & Check for Understanding 30 min

To end the lesson, ask students to complete the same statement as earlier, but with fresh eyes, taking into account all the viewpoints and representations they have encountered in the lesson today. "Wonder is (or is not) important at all ages because _____." The new statement should go on a new sticky note in a different color.

Note: The importance of revision, of considering viewpoints, sources, and research before coming to conclusions, can all be illuminated as the class ends for the day. This could easily translate into a longer writing assignment that is focused on evidence-based argument.