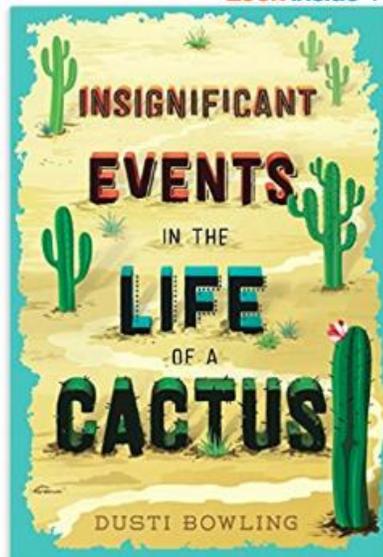


## Summer Reading Assignment for Those Entering 7th Grade

1. All students in Gardner Middle School will be reading the novel *Insignificant Events In the Life of a Cactus* by Dusti Bowling. Every student will be given a copy of the book courtesy of several grants! This book will be tied to two summer check-in events (see the flyer) and will be celebrated as a school in the fall during a special night. Come prepared with a general understanding of the novel so that you can participate appropriately.



2. In addition to reading *Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus*, students will choose one book from the list below to read. Come prepared so you can demonstrate your understanding of **character, setting, conflict, resolution, and theme**.

### When Friendship Followed me Home by Paul Griffin

Ben Coffin has never been one for making friends. As a former foster kid, he knows people can up and leave without so much as a goodbye. Ben prefers to spend his time with the characters in his favorite sci-fi books...until he rescues an abandoned mutt from the alley next-door to the Coney Island Library. Scruffy little Flip leads Ben to befriend a fellow book-lover named Halley—yes, like the comet—a girl unlike anyone he has ever met. Ben begins thinking of her as “Rainbow Girl” because of her crazy-colored clothes and her laugh, pure magic, the kind that makes you smile away the stormiest day. Rainbow Girl convinces Ben to write a novel with her. But as their story unfolds Ben’s life begins to unravel, and Ben must discover for himself the truth about friendship and the meaning of home.

The Crossover by Kwame Alexander

"With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . .The court is *SIZZLING*. My sweat is *DRIZZLING*. Stop all that quivering. Cuz tonight I'm delivering," announces dread-locked, 12-year old Josh Bell. He and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse, in this fast and furious middle grade novel of family and brotherhood from Kwame Alexander.

Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family.

Out of my Mind by Sharon M. Draper

From multiple award-winning author Sharon Draper comes a story that will forever change how we all look at anyone with a disability, perfect for fans of RJ Palacio's *Wonder*.

Eleven-year-old Melody is not like most people. She can't walk. She can't talk. She can't write. All because she has cerebral palsy. But she also has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She's the smartest kid in her whole school, but NO ONE knows it. Most people—her teachers, her doctors, her classmates—dismiss her as mentally challenged because she can't tell them otherwise. But Melody refuses to be defined by her disability. And she's determined to let everyone know it...somehow.

**Happy Reading!**

*Mrs. Beauvais and Ms. Robison*