

How to print this booklet

Open the PDF, choose Print, and set these:

Paper size	US Letter (8.5 × 11 in)
Orientation	Landscape
Print on both sides	On (two-sided / duplex)
Flip on	Short edge
Scale	100% / Actual size — not “Fit to page”
Pages	All

THEN

1. Take the whole stack out of the printer. Keep the sheets in order.
2. Fold the stack in half, so this page is on the outside.
3. Staple twice along the fold.



Make another at didtheyreallyread.com

Reading Journal

My thoughts, chapter by chapter

Reader:

Book Title:

Insignificant events in the life of a cactus

Author:

Dusti Bowling

Date Started:

Date Finished:

Keep reading. Keep wondering.
Created by didtheyreallyread.com

How to Answer

Your answer does not have to be perfect. Just answer in complete thoughts and use details from the chapter.

How to structure your answer

A strong answer usually has a few parts. Try these steps:

- 1. **Answer the question.** Start with one sentence that answers the question directly.
- 2. **Give an example.** Add a detail or moment from the chapter that shows what you mean.
- 3. **Explain why.** Tell why it mattered, or how it made you think or feel.
- 4. **Wrap it up.** Finish with a closing thought, a question, or a prediction.

Chapter 7: Connor has Tourette syndrome, and other kids do not always understand him. What does Aven notice about the way Connor is treated?

Example answer: I think Aven notices that Connor is judged before people really know him. Some kids act like his tics are funny or weird, but Aven understands what it feels like to have people stare. She does not treat Connor like a problem. Instead, she starts to see him as a real person who needs a friend.

Chapter 40

Chapter 40: At the end of the story, what message do you think the author wants readers to remember about differences, friendship, and belonging?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 39

Chapter 39: What scene from the book has been the most meaningful to you so far? Explain why it stands out.

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

How to Answer (continued)

Chapter 19: Zion begins to spend more time with Aven and Connor. How does friendship seem to change him?

Example answer: Friendship seems to help Zion feel less invisible. At first, he seems quiet and unsure of himself, but being included by Aven and Connor gives him more courage. I think he starts to believe that people might like him for who he is. That shows how powerful a kind group of friends can be.

Chapter 34: Aven discovers more about her past. How would you feel if you were in her place, and what questions would you have?

Example answer: If I were Aven, I would feel shocked and confused because learning big things about your past can change how you see yourself. I would also feel curious because I would want to know the whole story, not just small pieces of it. I might ask why people made the choices they made and why no one told me sooner. Even so, I think I would be glad to have my parents and friends beside me.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1: Aven introduces herself with humor, even when people are surprised that she has no arms. How does her sense of humor help you understand what kind of person she is?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 38

Chapter 38: How have Aven, Connor, and Zion helped one another grow since they first met?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 37

Chapter 37: Aven has to decide how to handle what she has learned. What does her choice reveal about her character?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 2

Chapter 2: Aven's family is facing a big change. What details show how Aven feels about leaving her old life behind?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 3

Chapter 3: When Aven first arrives in Arizona, what seems different from her home in Kansas? How does the setting affect her mood?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 36

Chapter 36: Think about a character who made a mistake or poor choice. Do you think that character deserves forgiveness? Why or why not?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 35

Chapter 35: Aven's parents react to difficult information with love and honesty. What does their reaction show about them?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 4

Chapter 4: Stagecoach Pass is an unusual place to live and work. What are your first impressions of it, and why?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 5

Chapter 5: Aven starts over at a new school.
What challenges does she face, and what strengths does she show?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 34

Chapter 34: Aven discovers more about her past.
How would you feel if you were in her place, and what questions would you have?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 33

Chapter 33: Zion shows more confidence than he did earlier. What moment shows his growth, and why is it important?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 6

Chapter 6: Some people stare at Aven or ask awkward questions. What could those people do instead to show kindness and respect?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 7

Chapter 7: Connor has Tourette syndrome, and other kids do not always understand him. What does Aven notice about the way Connor is treated?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 32

Chapter 32: Connor is learning to trust his friends more. How does Aven help him feel accepted?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 31

Chapter 31: The mystery becomes more suspenseful. What details make you want to keep reading?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 8

Chapter 8: Aven and Connor begin to connect. What makes their friendship possible even though they are both nervous in different ways?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 9

Chapter 9: Zion is another student who seems lonely. What do you learn about him, and why might Aven want to include him?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 30

Chapter 30: Sometimes people keep secrets because they are scared, sad, or ashamed. Why might a character choose to keep a secret in this story?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 29

Chapter 29: Family is an important theme in the story. What does this chapter show about what makes a family?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 10

Chapter 10: Think about the lunchroom scenes so far. What do they show about belonging, friendship, and feeling different?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 11

Chapter 11: Aven's parents support her in many ways. How do they help her be independent while still showing they care?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 28

Chapter 28: Compare Aven at the beginning of the book with Aven in this chapter. What has changed in her thoughts or feelings?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 27

Chapter 27: Aven learns information that connects to her own life. How does this affect the way she sees herself?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 12

Chapter 12: The story begins to hint that Stagecoach Pass may have secrets. What clues make you curious, and what do you predict Aven will investigate?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 13

Chapter 13: The desert setting is important in the book. What words or details help you picture the desert, and how does it make the story feel?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 26

Chapter 26: The friends work together to solve problems. What does each person bring to the team that the others need?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 25

Chapter 25: Aven sometimes uses jokes when people make her uncomfortable. When is humor helpful, and when might it hide her true feelings?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 14

Chapter 14: Aven is curious even when something seems strange or creepy. How does curiosity help her in this chapter?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 15

Chapter 15: Aven finds or notices another clue about the mystery at Stagecoach Pass. What does the clue make you wonder?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 24

Chapter 24: Make a prediction: what do you think Aven and her friends will discover next, and what evidence supports your idea?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 23

Chapter 23: Aven learns more about the people connected to Stagecoach Pass. How do the new details change what you think about the mystery?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 16

Chapter 16: Aven likes thinking like a detective. What detective skills does she use, and which one do you think is most important?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 17

Chapter 17: Aven wants people to see her as a regular kid, not only as a girl without arms. How does this chapter develop that theme?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 22

Chapter 22: Aven has questions about the past, but finding answers is not simple. What conflicts or problems get in her way?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 21

Chapter 21: The title includes the word insignificant, which means not important. Why do you think the author might use that word for Aven's life events?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 18

Chapter 18: Connor has strong feelings about his tics and how others react to them. What does his experience teach readers about empathy?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 19

Chapter 19: Zion begins to spend more time with Aven and Connor. How does friendship seem to change him?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 20

Chapter 20: Aven, Connor, and Zion each have something that makes school hard. How are their struggles similar and different?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?
