

## 8TH GRADE SUMMER READING GUIDE

### *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander

1. How are Josh and Jordan alike? How are they different?
2. What is the bet Josh and Jordan make during the game?
3. What is Josh's nickname? Why doesn't Josh like the nickname at first? What makes him come to appreciate it more?
4. Why does Josh feel miles away from his family on the ride home from the hospital even though he is only a few feet from them?
5. There were signs that their dad was sick. Do you think anyone in his family could have prevented his death? Why or why not?
6. What life lessons do you think Josh and Jordan learned after their father died?
7. Theme is the central idea of a literary work. It is a truth about life or human nature that the author is exploring. One of the themes of *The Crossover* is that becoming an adult can be difficult. Explain how each event was a step in Josh's coming of age and why it was difficult.

~JB and Alexis become boyfriend and girlfriend.

~Josh is suspended from the team for intentionally trying to hurt his brother.

~Mom asks Josh to help her keep Dad away from "bad" foods.

~Josh's dad dies.

### *Ground Zero* by Alan Gratz

1. Why does Brandon accompany his father to work? What do you learn about Brandon's character in the first chapter? How do you learn what day and year it is?
2. What do you learn about Reshmina when she first appears, including where and when her story takes place? How is her life like her brother's and how is it different?

3. How does Brandon become separated from his father? In what ways does he come close to being trapped in the building after the plane hits? Who are the people who assist Brandon in his escape? How does he form his bond with Richard?
4. What was the difference between Brandon's first and second phone call with his father? What has changed? What does his father want him to promise when he knows they can't be together?
5. Compare Brandon's experience in the underground mall to Reshmina leading the village people to the caves for safety. How do Brandon and Reshmina lead their people to safety from underground?
6. At what point did you realize the connection between Brandon's story in 2001 and Reshmina's story in 2019?