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# Remember Dippy



## Synopsis

Johnny's plans fly out the window when he finds out his single mother is leaving town for the summer. She has a breakthrough job in upstate New York. He can live with his Aunt Collette but only on the condition that he "help out with" his autistic older cousin, Remember. Yup, you heard it right: Remember Dippy. That's his cousin's name—and Remember is a gawky awkward kid with some pretty strange habits, like repeating back almost everything Johnny says and spending hours glued to the weather channel. Johnny's premonitions of disaster appear at first to come to cringeworthy fruition, but when the two boys save a bully from drowning, salvage the pizzeria guy's romance, and share girl troubles, Johnny ends up having the summer of his life. Winner of the Dolly Gray Children's Literature Award & 2014 Skipping Stones Honor Award Shirley Reva Vernick's debut novel *The Blood Lie* was named on the 2012 Best Fiction for Young Adults list from the American Library Association. It also received the Simon Wiesenthal Once Upon a World Children's Award and Sydney Taylor Honor Book Award. Shirley lives with her husband, two daughters, and two frisky dogs in western Massachusetts. In addition to running a popular storytelling website—[storybee.org](http://storybee.org)—Shirley has written for *Cosmopolitan*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, national newspapers, and the publications of Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and Boston universities.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 700L (What's this?)

Paperback: 176 pages

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Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.8 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #153,326 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #111 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Marriage & Divorce #212 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Special Needs #2824 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship

Age Range: 11 - 15 years

Grade Level: 5 - 10

## Customer Reviews

Remember Dippy is a cute, middle grade/young adult coming-of-age novel about the lovable and smart-alecky Johnny whose mother plucks him from his home and plops him at his aunt and cousin's during summer vacation. This is the ultimate injustice to the modern teenager--especially since Johnny has suddenly assumed the role of Remember, his autistic cousin's, caretaker--but soon, his own self-discoveries in tandem with his time with Mem and the things that happen around him, make it clear that this is one summer that Johnny will never forget. 14-year-old Johnny is good-natured and likable. He's such an honest, smart, and self-conscious character who captures teen spirit--and angst--accurately. I loved him as a narrator! Remember, our other protagonist, isn't explored as deeply because we never gain his perspective, but I warmed up to him immediately. He's definitely not perfect, and his lack of awareness and social direction sometimes get Johnny in trouble, but he's affectionate, and he's pure; with all these edgy books about forbidden romances and gangs and communist regimes and love triangles flooding the YA scene these days, a book like Remember Dippy is refreshing and enlightening because it actually has a message--a moral that everyone should take to heart. This is the summer when Johnny grows up, gets real, and figures himself out. This is the summer when Remember shows Johnny what true friendship is about, as he becomes as much a friend to Johnny as Johnny is to Mem; the entire wholesome, heartfelt journey will stick with readers of all ages. Pros: Lovable and real narrator // Sentimental // Demonstrates value of friendship and family // Parent- and child-friendly // Lots of plot action--never gets boring Cons: Nothing phenomenal... overall everything--from the plot, characterization, style, and structure--is good, but not great Verdict: Shirley Reva Vernick's Remember Dippy is a slow journey of embracing family, friends, and identity--exactly the type of book parents will want their kids (ages 9-13) to read. With beautifully crafted sentiments, heart-wrenching twists and turns, and an emotional, triumphant finish, young readers will be glued to this one, and guaranteed to be cheering by the last page. Rating: 7 out of 10 hearts (4 stars): Not perfect, but overall enjoyable. Source: Complimentary copy provided by publisher in exchange for an honest and unbiased review for the Books Complete Me virtual book tour (thank you, Cinco Puntos Press!).

As the father of a child on the spectrum, I enjoyed Remember Dippy. One of my biggest fears is that my son will be bullied by others because of his inability to express himself. This was refreshing to

see the journey of Remember's cousin from outsider, to understanding, to acceptance. This book could be a lesson to our children in how to be more accepting of special needs children.

Thirteen year old Johnny has an unwanted summer job, helping his aunt care for his autistic cousin, Remember Dippy (and that is his real name thanks to weird parent). During the course of the summer, fifteen-year-old Remember or Mem as Johnny calls him, joins in with the other neighborhood kids for fun and adventure and the mystery that is girls. Johnny narrates the story, and through his eyes we see how life with his cousin Mem changes both boys. Mem shows that being autistic is no barrier to being a real friend. He saves an old man's romance, a girl from being sent away, his cousin from a bully, and the bully from drowning. There is even the possibility of romance, for both boys. This is a good book for anyone with an autistic family member. It would also be useful in classrooms to spark discussions on autism and what it means to be "normal." It's a true feel good book, and I hated to see it end. In a world where empathy is lacking and cruelty is growing, witnessed by the recent anonymous hate later telling a family they should euthanize their autistic son for the good of the neighborhood, more books like this that show the person inside the autistic brain are needed. I read a copy supplied by the publisher as part of my investigation of books featuring protagonists on the autism spectrum done for YALSA (Young Adult Library Service Association) at TheHub reader blog. You can catch the entire post and booklist at[...]

an inspiring voice of a young teen who narrated how he spent his entire summer with his fellow young teen cousin, Mem, who has autism. He had engrained in his mind that it would be grim and burdensome. He described how he dealt with Mem's uniqueness, and also pictured how her single-parent aunt's relentless love, strength, and positive outlook in caring for Mem.

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