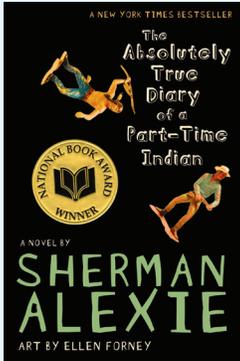


The Absolutely True Story of a Part Time Indian



AUTHOR Sherman Alexie

EDITION 1st

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LA BOOKSHELF JB355

VOICETEXT Yes

LEXILE LEVEL 600L

GRADE EQUIVALENT 3.4

OVERVIEW

Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the "rez" to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings by acclaimed artist Ellen Forney, that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he was destined to live.

SUGGESTED GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

- Venn Diagram
- KWL Chart
- Character Map
- Major Events Summary
- Vocabulary Graphic Organizer

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Winner of the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, the PEN/Malamud Award for Short Fiction, a PEN/Hemingway Citation for Best First Fiction, and the National Book Award for Young People's Literature, Sherman Alexie is a poet, short story writer, novelist, and performer. He has published 24 books including *What I've Stolen*, *What I've Earned*, poetry, from Hanging Loose Press; *Blasphemy: New and Selected Stories*, from Grove Press; and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, a novel from Little, Brown Books for Children.

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

Essays

"American Indian Reservation"

"American Indians"

"Struggle and Survival: Native Ways of Life Today"

VOCABULARY

Reservation (p. 13)

Mutilated (p. 55)

Translucent (p. 56)

Moral (p. 58)

Racist (p. 64)

Revenge (p. 67)

Delirious (p. 91)

Self-Worth (p. 68)

Impending (p. 69)

Alpha (p. 72)

Protest (p. 78)

Naïve (p. 79)

Sacred (p. 86)

Illiterate (p. 92)

WRITING PROMPTS

- How does Junior transform from the beginning of the novel to the end of the story?
- How do the friendships in Junior's life (example: Rowdy, Priscilla, Gordy) affect his life and actions?
- Compare and contrast how white people and Indians are perceived by each other in the novel.
- Why is it important that Junior loves drawing comics? What does this say about his character?

LITERARY DEVICES

Setting

The book features 2 settings: the reservation town of Wellpinit where all the impoverished Native Americans and some impoverished white children live barely struggling to get by. The schools are bad, and teachers are not happy to be there teaching children. The town of Reardan is more of an affluent white community with better schools and children who do not suffer from poverty.

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Symbolism

Fast food (especially KFC chicken) is a symbol of what Junior can't have and what he dreams of as the perfect meal. To him, the idea of a bucket of KFC chicken, which so many people would take for granted, represents comfort and the ability to provide for one's family.

Tone

Even during times of tragedy and suffering, Junior maintains a humorous tone which he captures effectively with words and his cartoon drawings. Somehow, he always seems to be able to laugh at his misfortune, and sees humor, albeit dark humor, to his trials and tribulations.

SUPPORTING MEDIA (graphic novels, movies, video clips)

Video links

Reservation Life Part 1

www.youtube.com/watch?v=mV4QfYWcifM

Reservation Life Part 2

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JskAgxW8SU

Thanksgiving: A Native American View

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ka2MFbemrCs

COMMON CORE BIG IDEAS

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone
- Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

WAYS TO HELP DIVERSE LEARNERS

- Allow students to use audiobook version at home or in class.
- Allow students to draw or use art to describe the multiple comparisons and contrasts in the novel.
- Allow students to use a scribe or Assistive Technology for written assessments.
- Allow students to work in groups where each member of the group works with his or her strengths, and group turns in 1 project.
- Watch the movie *Smoke Signals* also written by Sherman Alexie