

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

Arnold is an
American Indian
who lives on a
reservation.



This story is part
book, part comic,
and all heart.
Arnold is funny
and resilient, and
the comics are
wonderful, though
sometimes the
tragedy
overwhelms these
aspects.

 BiblioVermis



When he transfers
to a primarily
white,
off-reservation
school, he feels like
he doesn't fit in
anywhere—and his
family and
community seem to
be falling apart.



SHERMAN ALEXIE
ART BY ELLEN FORNEY

THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART TIME INDIAN FINAL EXAM

Mrs. Hargrave

FINAL EXAM-QUICKWRITE ONE:

- What has been the biggest challenge you've faced in high school?



QUESTION 1:

- Draw a cartoon of you when you started high school (like the one of Junior's parents p.12) and one of you now as a graduating senior. What has changed? What has stayed the same? Draw your clothing, your hair, your favorite things.



WEEK ONE: PAGES 1-31



2. What health problems does Junior have? How would you summarize Juniors attitude toward these problems?
3. What does Junior mean when he says, “I think the world is a series of broken dams and floods, and my cartoons are tiny little lifeboats” (page 6)
4. Why is Kentucky Fried Chicken important to Junior?
5. Junior states, “We Indians really should be better liars, considering how often we’ve been lied to” (pg. 10). To what lies might Junior be referring to?



WEEK ONE: PAGES 1-31 [CONTINUED]



6. Think about this quote: “[Junior’s parents] dreamed about being something other than poor, but they never got the chance to be anything because nobody paid attention to their dreams” (pg. 11) “[Poverty is] an ugly circle and there’s nothing you can do about it” (pg. 13). Do these statements mean that Junior cannot better himself? Do you agree with these statements?
7. Why is Rowdy mean?
8. Describe Junior and Rowdy’s friendship. Why are they inseparable?
9. How is Junior’s sister “good at ruining things?” (pg. 26) Why is she called Mary Runs Away?
10. PREDICTION: What will be the consequences of Junior throwing his book at Mr. P?



WEEK TWO: PAGES 32-81



11. Why does Mr. P forgive Junior for hitting him with the Geometry book?
12. Why is Junior unaware that his sister wanted to write romance novels? Why do you think Mary gave up her dream of writing?
13. Mr. P explains that he and other white people on the reservation deserve to be punished for what they have done to Indians. What does Mr. P mean when he says, “All the Indians should get smashed in the face, too (p.42)”
14. Why are Juniors parents supportive of his decision to transfer to Reardan High School?
15. How does Rowdy react to Junior’s decision to attend school in Reardan? Why does he react this way?

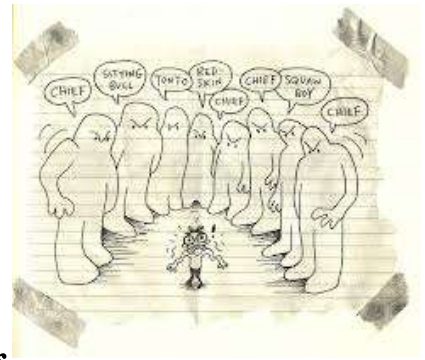


QUICKWRITE TWO

- Write about a time in your life when you felt like you've had to be two different people.
 - Perhaps you had to be a parent and a child to a family member or a student and a teacher to a little brother/sister, etc. Tell me about what it felt like to feel like you were taking on two different roles.



WEEK TWO: PAGES 32-81



16. What causes Junior to feel like he is “slicing [himself] in half, with Junior living on the north side of the Spokane River and Arnold living on the south” (p.61)?
17. Why does Junior think the jocks use name-calling rather than physical abuse to bully him? What does he discover about the jocks bullying?
18. What is important about the illustration on page 63?
19. Do you agree with Junior that much of his self worth is based on Rowdy protecting him? Why or why not?
20. Why does Junior believe that he and Penelope will grow closer? Why don't they grow closer?



QUICKWRITE #3

- What is one place you'd love to travel to after you graduate? Why? Is there a certain age you'd prefer to go there? What has kept you from going there so far? What plans do you have once you get there?



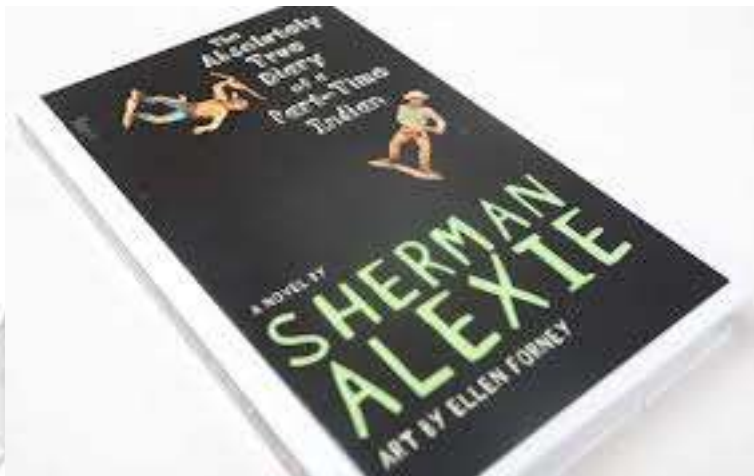
WEEK THREE: FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS (PGS. 82-103)

21. How does being ignored by the Reardan students affect Junior's self esteem (see pg. 83)? How do you think Junior will feel if the other students bullied him instead of ignoring him?
22. According to Junior, what causes Mary to elope and move to Montana?
23. Why is Junior thrilled that Mary left the reservation? Why does he consider both of them warriors?
24. Compare and contrast Junior's friendship with Gordy to his friendship with Rowdy? List at least three differences/similarities.
25. How is Junior's life changing for the better?



WEEK THREE: FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS (PGS. 82-103)

26. Why does Mary love living in Montana?
27. What is ironic about Junior's family celebrating Thanksgiving?
28. How do you think the drawing that Junior gave Rowdy made Rowdy feel?



ACTIVITY ONE: TRAVEL BROCHURE

- Assignment: Gordy teaches Junior that any place, even the small town of Willpinit, can be a place of mystery. Create a travel brochure for a town anywhere in the world that you consider a place of mystery. **DUE TUESDAY, MAY 27TH**
 - Your brochure must have the following:
 - Name of the place
 - Map of the area surrounding that place
 - Places of Interest (places to visit-at least 4)
 - Historical Sites with descriptions(at least 4)
 - Special Events (at least 2 with descriptions)
 - Costs involved/Hotel prices
 - Average Airfare
 - Name 4 hotels with nightly rates
 - What to Bring (list at least 5 things)
 - PICTURES! (at least 4 throughout the brochure)



WEEK THREE: FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS (PGS. 104-132)

29. Why does Junior compare Penelope to his dad?
30. How does Junior make Penelope cry? Why do you think Penelope is afraid all the time?
31. Compare the “shallow” reasons Junior and Penelope are close with the “bigger and better” reasons. Do you think that Junior and Penelope will have a long-term relationship? Why or why not?
32. How does Rowdy’s and Gordy’s advice about dating white girls influence Junior?
33. Were you surprised at Roger’s and Penelope’s reactions after Junior reveals he is poor? Why or why not?



WEEK THREE: FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS (PGS. 104-132)

34. Why does Junior believe that, “If you let people into your life a little bit, they can be pretty damn amazing” (pg. 129)?
35. PREDICTION: Will Junior adjust to living in two worlds, or will he ultimately choose to live in only one?
36. How is Rowdy the opposite of the students at Reardan? Whose attitude do you believe is most positive?
37. Junior says, ...”some Indians think you have to act white to make your life better. Some Indians think you become white if you try to make your life better, if you become successful” (pg. 131). Do you think going to an all-white school means Junior is trying to be someone he’s not? Explain your opinion.
38. Gordy says, “Well, life is a constant struggle between being an individual and being a member of the community” (pg. 132). How does this statement apply to Junior?



FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS: PGS. 133-149

39. Why do you think Mary describes her new home, a small trailer, as “the most gorgeous place in the world” (pg. 134)?
40. How does Junior make the Reardan Varsity Basketball Team? Why is this important to him?
41. What is the importance of the chapter title “Reindeer Games?” Think about a famous reindeer whose song you sing around Christmas time. What do he and Junior have in common and how does this relate to the title?
42. Examine Rowdy’s violence toward Junior during their first basketball game at Wellpinit—specifically his hitting Junior in the head when he is aware of Junior’s precarious condition—and what this implies about the level of emotional suffering Junior’s move to Reardan High School has caused Rowdy.
43. Coach quotes to Junior: “The quality of a man’s life is in direct proportion to his commitment to excellence, regardless of his chosen field of endeavor” (pg.148). Do you think Coach is only talk about Junior’s commitment to basketball? To what else is Junior committed?



FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS: PGS. 150-167

44. What does Junior mean when he says, “Jeez, I’d just won the Silver Medal in the Children of Alcoholics Olympics” (pgs. 151)?
45. How is the five dollar bill Junior receives for Christmas “a beautiful and ugly thing” (pg.151)?
46. What does Junior say is the difference between Indian families and Reardan families? What do you think causes these differences?
47. Examine Junior’s observation that “...those white dads can completely disappear without ever leaving the living room” (pgs. 153). Is this a universal issue with families, regardless of race? What’s the difference between being a parent and being a provider?
48. Why doesn’t grandma drink alcohol? What is ironic about her death?
49. Why do Indians stop harassing Junior about him going to Reardan High School?
50. Why does Junior claim that Indians are “sickened” by “white strangers...telling [them] how much they love them” (pgs.162)?



FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS: PGS. 168-178

51. Why does Bobby shoot Eugene? What is Bobby's reaction?
52. Why does Junior blame himself for Grandma's and Eugene's deaths? Do you think he should feel guilty?
53. What effect does the students protest of Mrs. Jeremy's Actions have on Junior?



ACTIVITY TWO: BIOGRAPHY

- Biography: Research one of the musicians or basketball players from Junior's "joyful" lists (pg. 177-178).
- Write a 1 and 1/2 page (double-spaced) biography telling their story (Three **6-8 sentence** paragraphs). DO NOT copy and paste from the internet, you will be submitting to turnitin.com and any plagiarized/copied biographies will receive a "0" and a referral.
- Please include a small picture of the person you are researching in the top left hand corner next to your name. You need to include in text citations in your biography.
- At the bottom of the biography, include the link(s) to any cited information.
- Biographies are due to www.turnitin.com by 4 p.m. tomorrow.



FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS: PGS. 179-196

54. Explain “the power of expectations” (pg.180). Does this power only apply to Junior’s basketball ability?
55. Junior wonders: “Can an Indian have a legacy in a white town? And should a teenager be worried about his fricking legacy anyway” (pg. 182)? How would you answer Junior’s questions?
56. What does the illustration on page 182 of the novel tell you about Junior?
57. How does Coach motivate Junior before the game? Why might Coach have chosen this method?
58. During the game, Junior not only wants to humiliate Rowdy but the entire Wellpinit team. Why? Examine and discuss Junior’s emotions.
59. What effect does Reardan’s victory have on both teams? What effect does it have on Junior specifically?



FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS: PGS. 197-214

61. What is important about the short chapter, “Rowdy and I have a Long and Serious Discussion about Basketball?”
62. Tolstoy wrote, “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way” (pg. 200). Why doesn’t Junior agree with this statement? Do you agree or disagree with this statement?
63. Why does Junior feel bitter?
64. After Mary dies, Junior worries that his father will have an automobile accident on the way to pick him up from school. What does Junior mean when he says, “Yep how Indian would that be” (pg. 203)?



FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS: PGS. 197-214

65. Why does Junior laugh uncontrollably in his father's car?
66. How does Mother express her grief when she sees Junior? Why does she give him "a grief shower?"
67. Why does Junior go to school rather than mourn with his family? How is he treated at school?
68. What does the illustration on page 213 of the novel tell you about Junior?



FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS: PGS. 215-230

69. What does Junior's father mean when he says, "It's all love and death" (pg. 215)?
70. Junior thinks about the many tribes he belongs to, such as "the tribe of American immigrants" (pg. 217). Why is this a huge realization that lets Junior know he will be okay?
71. What is the significance of the story about Junior and Rowdy climbing the tallest tree on the reservation?
72. Junior says, "I would always love Rowdy. And I would always miss him, too. Just as I would always love and miss my grandmother, my big sister, and Eugene" (pg. 230). What is important about Junior including his feelings for Rowdy in the same statement as his feelings for loved ones who have died?
73. Do you agree that Junior is "an old-time nomad?"
74. Why does Junior hope he can forgive himself for leaving the reservation when he knows he will die if he stays?
75. What are your thoughts on the novel? Would you recommend it to others? Why or why not.

