

Lesson 1: The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

How Do Our Internal (Inside) Expectations and External Expectations (what others expect of us) Shape Who We Are and Who We Become?

1. Examine the front page of the text: Is this story fact or fiction? What do you see on the cover of the book that affects your decision?
2. What are expectations? Write down an expectation you have for yourself.
3. What people or groups have expectations that affect your daily life? Brainstorm a list on a word web.

4. What are some expectations these groups might have of you? Write down 1 thing for each group identified:

Example: Your teachers might expect you to get good grades and be a good student

5. Can your expectations for yourself come into conflict with other people's expectations for you? Do you have expectations for yourself that are different than other's expectations for you?

Eg. If you want to try out for the softball team and your parents want you to play the piano, you might be in conflict with them.

6. Read Chapter 1: "The Black-Eye of the Month Club". Answer guided questions.

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Guided Questions and Activities: The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

Chapter 1: The Black-Eye-Of-The-Month Club

Predict: For what reason do you think this chapter has this title?

1. The narrator has many physical problems resulting from a birth defect called water on the brain. As you read this chapter, list his physical challenges.

2. Why does he stay at home and draw cartoons?

3. List 3 reasons 3 he likes to draw.

4. Draw a conclusion: The other kids on the “rez” call him a retard because of his physical problems. How do we know he is not this?

Chapter 2: Why Chicken Means So Much To Me

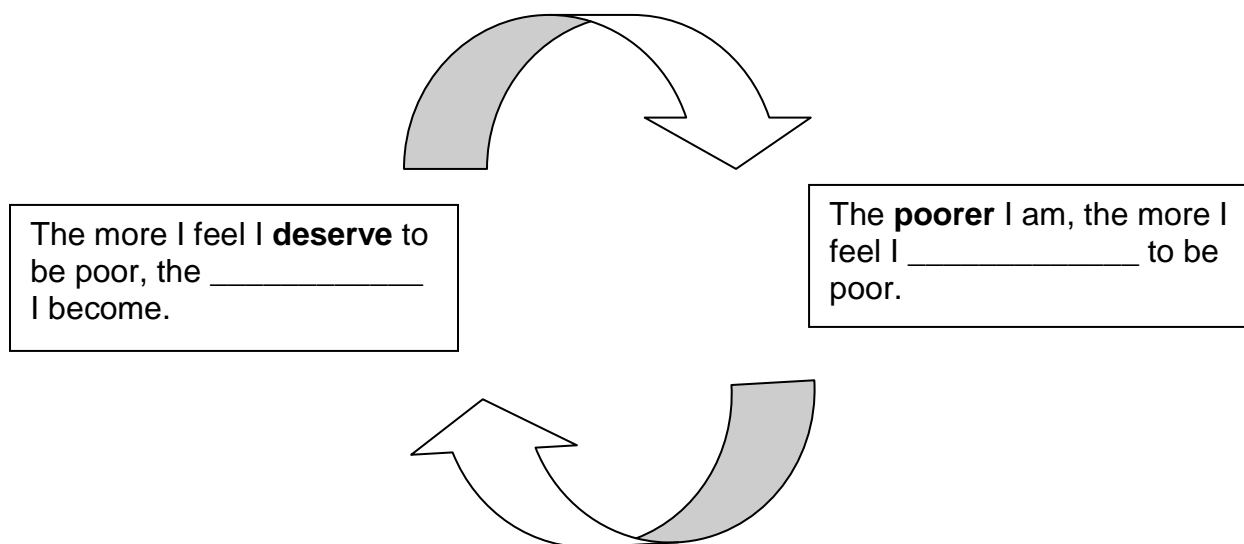
1. Where does the narrator live?

2. According to the narrator, what is the worst thing about being poor?

3. Why doesn't he blame his parents for being poor?

4. What would his parents have been if they had been given a chance?

Chapter 2: Discussion Question: On page 13 of chapter 2, the narrator says being poor is an “ugly circle”. On the chart below, fill in the blanks to understand the cycle of poverty.



When things are a cycle, what does that mean?

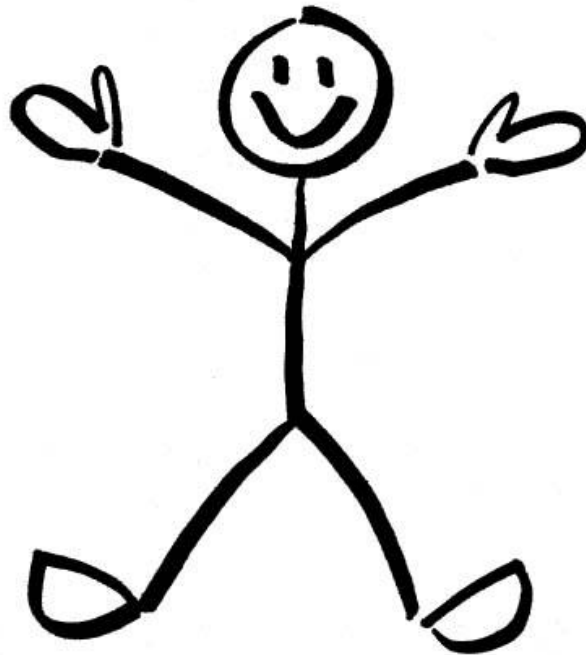
Have you ever heard of the expression, “self-fulfilling prophecy”? What do you think it means?

If you thought that you were **destined** to be poor, would you try to be something different? How could that be a self-fulfilling prophecy?

Chapter 2: Who _____ Would Have Been if Somebody Had Paid Attention to Their Dreams.

Study the cartoon on p. 12: This drawing shows who Junior's parents might have been if somebody had paid attention to their dreams.

Draw a picture that shows who someone might have been if somebody had paid attention to their dreams. Use the stick figure below to create a cartoon—you can use words or captions to express feelings. This does not have to be someone you know. You can pick someone famous. For example, the actor, Dustin Hoffman, said he would have been a jazz musician instead of an actor if anybody would have listened to him. But, people paid attention to his acting.



What does it mean to pay attention to somebody's dreams?

Chapter 3: Revenge Is My Middle Name

Junior describes his best friend Rowdy. Rowdy has many good points and bad points, but Junior describes him as “the most important person in my life.” On the chart below, list the good things and bad things about Rowdy.

Rowdy's good traits	Rowdy's bad traits

Chapter 5: Because Geometry is Not a Country Somewhere Near France

1. What happened to Junior's sister after high school?

2. What class does Mr. P teach?

3. Make an inference: What does Junior do when he realizes that his geometry book is so old and outdated that his mother used it when she was in school? (look at the picture on the bottom of p. 31)

Chapter 6: Hope Against Hope

1. Why does Mr. P apologize to Junior?

2. According to Mr. P, what did Junior's sister want to be?

3. Mr. P tells Junior that he was taught to "kill the Indian to save the child." What was he supposed to make the children give up? (p. 35)

4. What does Mr. P want Junior to do?

5. What does Mr. P say will happen to Rowdy?

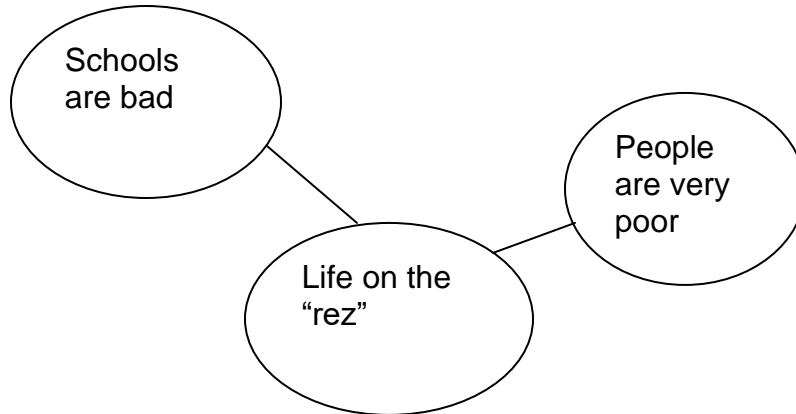
Journal Writing:

Junior has been the victim of a lot of bullying. List below the incidents of bullying from which he has suffered. What is the reason some of this bullying has occurred? (What does Mr. P admit to? p. 41)

Describe an incident of bullying you saw or you experienced. What could have been done to stop the bullying? Can the victim of bullying be the one to stop it? Why or why not?

Life On the “Rez”

Mr. P tells Junior he has to leave the reservation to find hope. But, life on the “Rez” is both good and bad. As you read the novel, add ideas you learn about what life is like in this place to the word web below.



Key Words: Part 1: Chapters 1-7 of The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian : Use the heading above to describe the assignment.

1. *Define* these words in your *English notebook*.
2. *Create* a sentence for each word that shows the meaning of the word.

reservation (noun- as in Indian)

poverty

perseverance

powwow

brawling

compound (noun-as in place)

decrepit

mythical

destined

Reservation Webquest

Each student will be assigned a reservation from the northwestern regions of the U.S. Use selected websites on the internet to look up the following facts about the reservation:

Spokane
Flathead
Nez Perce
Yakima
Blackfeet
Crow

Where is the reservation located? (map)

What tribe or tribes live on the reservation?

When was the reservation established?

What is the current population on the reservation?

What is the percentage of Native Americans living on the reservation who live in poverty?

Two interesting facts about life on the reservation.

Key Words: Part 2, Chapter 7 – 12 of The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian : Use the heading above to describe the assignment. Date the assignment

- *Define* these words in your *English notebook*.
- *Create* a sentence for each word that shows the meaning of the word.

p. 56 translucent

p. 58 hermit

p. 70 impending

p. 72 vintage

p. 79 naïve

p. 84 articulate

p. 89 adhesive

p. 91 delirious

p. 91 confrontation

p. 95 pathetic

Chapter 7: (The Real Chapter 7!) “How to Fight Monsters”

Warning: This chapter has some curse language.

1. What does Junior’s dad say that makes him feel good about his decision to attend Reardan?

2. Why does Junior hit Roger the Giant?

3. How does Roger the Giant respond to the fact that Junior punched him?

Journal Writing: Junior says he lives by certain rules on the reservation. These aren’t actual written rules. These are the unwritten rules of how kids respond to fights. He is confused when Roger the Giant doesn’t play by the same rules.

Are there unwritten rules students live by at our school? If so, can you describe one? Do you feel like your behavior is guided by any unwritten rules?

Chapter 8: "Grandmother Gives Me Some Advice"

1. What advice does Junior get from his grandmother?

2. What else happens that raises Junior's "street credit" at Reardan?

Chapter 9: "Tears of a Clown"

Why do you think Junior includes a chapter about being unable to get the attention of Dawn, a girl he knew on the reservation?

Chapter 10: "Halloween"

1. What happens to bring Junior and Penelope together?

2. What happens to Junior after he collects money for the poor?

3. How does Penelope react to Junior's news?

Chapter 10: "Slouching Toward Thanksgiving"

Warning: This chapter makes a sexual reference

1. What is the biggest problem Junior has at Reardan?

2. What does Junior mean when he says, "... and somewhere on the road to Reardan, I became something less than an Indian."

3. What is one of the good things Junior discovers at Reardan?

4. What happens when Junior corrects his science teacher about how wood becomes petrified rock? Who sticks up for Junior?

5. What has Junior's sister done?

6. Why is this action so upsetting to Junior's parents?

7. How does Junior feel about what Mary has done?

8. What does Junior do as a result of hearing about his sister?

9. What does Gordy teach Junior?

Chapter 12: "My Sister Sends an E-mail"

How does Mary Run Away like life in Montana?

Part 3: ***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*** by Sherman Alexie
Chapter 13: "Thanksgiving"

1. Whose house does Junior visit?

2. What does Rowdy do with Junior's cartoon and why does this give Junior hope?

Chapter 14: "Hunger Pains"

1. What does Junior learn about Penelope?

2. What does Junior say that wins Penelope's heart?

3. How does Junior's life at Reardan change as a result of his relationship with Penelope?

4. What dreams do Penelope and Junior share?

5. Why does Junior draw a bird he calls the "arnelope" to represent these dreams?

Chapter 15 "Rowdy Gives Me Advice About Love"

1. Even though Rowdy is critical of Junior, what is significant about Rowdy's email?

Journal: (5-7 sentences) What advice would you give Junior about how to make a white girl love him? Rowdy and Gordy seem to think he is making too big a deal about the fact that Penelope is white. Do you agree? Why? Can you make someone like you? What is the best way to earn anyone's love?

Chapter 16: "Dance, Dance, Dance"

1. What does Junior lie about at Reardan?

2. On page 119, Junior says, "You can't lie forever. Lies have short shelf lives. Lies rot and stink up the joint." Based on this observation, what do you **predict** will happen to Junior as the result of his lie?

3. On page 122, Junior makes a detailed list of all the dances he and Penelope shared. What does this show about his feelings?

4. Why is Junior nervous about going out to eat after the dance?

5. How does Roger the Giant help Junior? (2 things)

6. What does Junior discover about "letting people into [his] life?"

Journal: Draw a conclusion: How has Junior's life started to change at Reardan? What is he learning about himself and others? Do you think he made the right decision when he decided to leave the "Rez"? Why or why not? (5 sentences)

Chapter 17: "Don't Trust That Computer"

1. What does Junior mean when he says the people on the Rez call him an "apple"?

2. According to Gordy, why do "weird people get banished"?

Chapter 18: "My Sister Sends Me A Letter"

Every 4 or 5 chapters, the author, Sherman Alexie, includes a letter from Junior's sister. Why do you think he shares information about Mary? What does she have in common with Junior? Are things going as well for her as for Junior?

Chapter 19: "Reindeer Games"

1. What song refers to letting someone "join in all the reindeer games"?

2. What does this title show about Junior's chances of making the basketball team at Reardan?

3. What advice does Junior's dad give him about trying out for the team?

4. Draw a conclusion: Why do you think Coach puts Junior on the team? What does Junior show during tryouts?

5. What is the first team Reardan plays?

6. What do the Indians do when Junior enters the gym?

7. Describe what happens to Junior during the game:

8. What does Coach say about Junior?

Journal: The Indians on the Rez are terribly mean to Junior at the basket ball game. What would you do if an entire stadium of people turned their back on you? Could you have continued to play the game as Junior did? Do you think Junior was brave to play? Coach tells Junior to turn his pain into anger. Do you think sometimes it is good to get mad?

Chapter 20: "And a Partridge In a Pear Tree"

1. What does Junior's dad do on Christmas Eve?

2. Why is Junior touched by the fact that his dad gave him a “wrinkled and damp \$5 bill”? What is important about this lousy gift?
