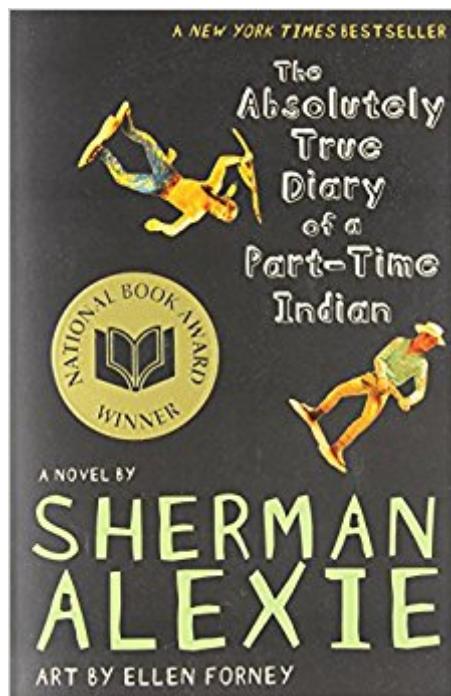


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# The Absolutely True Diary Of A Part-Time Indian



## Synopsis

Bestselling author 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 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. With a foreword by Markus Zusak, interviews with Sherman Alexie and Ellen Forney, and four-color interior art throughout, this edition is perfect for fans and collectors alike.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 600L (What's this?)

Paperback: 229 pages

Publisher: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (April 1, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 9780316013697

ISBN-13: 978-0316013697

ASIN: 0316013692

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 1,742 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #113 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Literature & Fiction > United States > Native American #1 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans #1 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Comics & Graphic Novels

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 7-10 •Exploring Indian identity, both self and tribal, Alexie's first young adult novel is a semiautobiographical chronicle of Arnold Spirit, aka Junior, a Spokane Indian from Wellpinit, WA. The bright 14-year-old was born with water on the brain, is regularly the target of bullies, and loves to draw. He says, "I think the world is a series of broken dams and

floods, and my cartoons are tiny little lifeboats." He expects disaster when he transfers from the reservation school to the rich, white school in Reardan, but soon finds himself making friends with both geeky and popular students and starting on the basketball team. Meeting his old classmates on the court, Junior grapples with questions about what constitutes one's community, identity, and tribe. The daily struggles of reservation life and the tragic deaths of the protagonist's grandmother, dog, and older sister would be all but unbearable without the humor and resilience of spirit with which Junior faces the world. The many characters, on and off the rez, with whom he has dealings are portrayed with compassion and verve, particularly the adults in his extended family. Forney's simple pencil cartoons fit perfectly within the story and reflect the burgeoning artist within Junior. Reluctant readers can even skim the pictures and construct their own story based exclusively on Forney's illustrations. The teen's determination to both improve himself and overcome poverty, despite the handicaps of birth, circumstances, and race, delivers a positive message in a low-key manner. Alexie's tale of self-discovery is a first purchase for all libraries. •Chris Shoemaker, New York Public Library Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Arnold Spirit, a goofy-looking dork with a decent jumpshot, spends his time lamenting life on the "poor-ass" Spokane Indian reservation, drawing cartoons (which accompany, and often provide more insight than, the narrative), and, along with his aptly named pal Rowdy, laughing those laughs over anything and nothing that affix best friends so intricately together. When a teacher pleads with Arnold to want more, to escape the hopelessness of the rez, Arnold switches to a rich white school and immediately becomes as much an outcast in his own community as he is a curiosity in his new one. He weathers the typical teenage indignations and triumphs like a champ but soon faces far more trying ordeals as his home life begins to crumble and decay amidst the suffocating mire of alcoholism on the reservation. Alexie's humor and prose are easygoing and well suited to his young audience, and he doesn't pull many punches as he levels his eye at stereotypes both warranted and inapt. A few of the plotlines fade to gray by the end, but this ultimately affirms the incredible power of best friends to hurt and heal in equal measure. Younger teens looking for the strength to lift themselves out of rough situations would do well to start here. Chipman, Ian --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

I love this book. It is written simply yet contains depth. It is written with the raw honesty of a young man whose life is a struggle, but he does not let that deter him. His Native reality is brutally factual.

He delivers the information in a way that is not a criticism of non-Indians. I have read other books by Sherman Alexie and this is my favorite.

I have a love/ hate relationship with Alexie's books. This one, I really liked. It was a great story and I felt I got to know the characters. Spoiler alert: one of them could be Alexie.

This is a funny, touching thought provoking semi-true story about a young man straddling 2 worlds and beginning to feel like he doesn't fit in either. His innate intelligence will help him get far but each step forward is away from his family. But his grandma seems to understand and be in his corner.

Semi-autobiographical (realistic), poignant, sad, and hilarious at the same time - an excellent story about a young American Indian and his struggles to pull himself out of the cycle of poverty, depression, and alcoholism of life on the reservation. Realistic in it's tough portrayal of racism and cultural bigotry.

I became aware of this book when a woman living in my county in southeastern North Carolina attempted to have it banned from the school libraries and curriculum, charging that it was pornographic, depicted bestiality, and would lead young people reading it into lives of depravity. Instead of her characterizations, I found the book to be very uplifting. It tells the story of a native American teenager living on a reservation (the rez) who looks around at the poverty, alcoholism, and lack of purpose of many members of his tribe, and determines to lift himself out of that morass. He leaves the reservation school to attend a public high school in a nearby, non-native community, where he is initially targeted as a minority, but finds acceptance through his determined attitude and a level of ability in basketball that he did not know he had within himself. In spite of continual setbacks due to his continued ties to the rez, he maintains his resolve. The book also speaks to the importance of family and friends, even when the family members and the friends are flawed. This book has won a National Book Award and many other honors. And while there are brief comments of a sexual nature, things that most teenagers are well aware of, there is certainly no pornography, no explicit depiction of any sexual behavior, and certainly no hint of bestiality. It is a great, short read, and a wonderful addition to juvenile literature.

I read this book because so many of my students read it as kids and really enjoyed it. The book is unflinching in its depiction of social reality--alcoholism and violence on the reservation and racism in

wealthier, white towns surrounding that reservation while at the same time avoiding easy stereotypes. The characters--white and Native American, male and female--are all three-dimensional and believable, especially the teenage narrator. More than that, the novel is fun to read. This sounds odd, given the nature of the subjects covered, but Alexie's wit and insight are riveting. I read it through in one night and look forward to reading it again in a few months.

Even if it is a crappy book (which it isn't), I always like how Sherman Alexie sees the world. I like it because it is a story of overcoming adversity plus it is funny. I also applaud Mr. Alexie's fairness in portraying the white character- the positive and the negative. I must admit that I have my own biases (as a non-white), but like the character in the story, my personal growth was supported and encouraged by some white people too. It is because of this support that one changes.

The book is humorous with an undercurrent of sadness. Junior, a bright Native American with some physical problems, grew up and lives on a reservation but decides to go to a public high school. There he tries to fit in with the white teenagers and teachers. His perceptions of white people and Native Americans are insightful and often funny. I enjoyed reading this book and recommend it.

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