English 10-2/10-4
Novel Study

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian
SHERMAN ALEXIE
ART BY ELLEN FORNEY

Name:_________________________
1.2. Anticipation Guide
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian
ABC's of Teenage Life

What are the highs and lows of teenage life? Consider the positives and negatives of friends, family life, the transition from junior high to high school, and from childhood to adulthood.

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Pre-Reading Activities

Directions: Think about how each of the ideas listed below can influence a person’s life.

Read the back page of the Novel.

On the lines provided, predict how you think each might influence Junior in his attempts “to rise above the life everyone expects him to live”

1. Family
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2. Race
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3. Health
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4. Culture
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5. Education
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6. Economics
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7. Community
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8. Relationships
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On the lines below, brainstorm a list of other expectations that might influence a teenager.
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Anticipation and Reaction

Directions: Consider the following statements before you read the novel. Place a check mark in one of the boxes to show whether you agree or disagree with each statement, and provide your reasoning. After you have completed the novel, mark your response again. In the 4th column, provide an explanation for each of your opinions that have changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response before Reading</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Response after Reading</th>
<th>Explanation for change of opinion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td>1. Poverty only teaches you how to be poor.</td>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td>2. A best friend is more important than family.</td>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td>3. There is always time to change your life.</td>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td>4. People should accept their own limitations.</td>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td>5. Running toward something is better than running away.</td>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td>6. A person needs to have hope in order to lead a successful life.</td>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td>7. Cultural differences should not affect the way people treat each other.</td>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td>8. The most important thing in life is to follow your dreams.</td>
<td>_You Agree _You Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian
Chap 1-4 P. 1-31 - The Black-eye-of-the-month-club - Because Geometry is not a Country Somewhere near France

Significant vocabulary: Seizures, outsourced, tribal, poverty, authentic, perseverance, depressed, powwow, alcoholic, brawling, vandalism, disorder, persistent, distressed, isolated

Post Reading Discussion Questions

1. What health problems does Junior have? How would you summarize Junior’s attitude toward these problems?

2. 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.” p. 6

3. What can you infer from the illustration on p. 6 of the novel that shows Junior juggling?

4. Junior states, “We Indians really should be better liars, considering how often we’ve been lied to” (p. 10).

5. Junior relates Oscar’s death as an example of the worst thing about being poor. What is Junior saying is the worst thing about poverty?

6. Examine the following statements: “Junior’s parent dreamed about being something other than poor, but they never got the chance to be anything because nobody paid attention to their dreams.” (p. 11) “Poverty is an ugly circle and there’s nothing you can do about it” (p. 13) Do these statements imply that Junior cannot better himself? Do you feel as though Junior may be over-dramatizing these issues?

Chapter Questions: Answer in Complete Statements.

1. Why is Junior a member of “the black eye of the month club”?

2. Why does Junior draw cartoons? What do the first two cartoons depict? What does this tell us about Junior?

3. What does Junior mean when he says, “I draw because words are too unpredictable”? Are you able to express yourself best by talking, writing, or drawing? Explain

4. Why is Rowdy Mean?
5. Describe Junior and Rowdy’s friendship. Why are they inseparable?
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6. Compare and contrast Junior’s and Rowdy’s love of comics. What do you learn about each boy? What does the illustration on page 23 of the novel tell you about Rowdy?
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7. How is poverty a cycle in Junior’s family?
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8. Use five adjectives to describe Junior’s personality so far.
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9. Describe Mr. P.
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10. Why is Junior so cynical about white teachers?
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11. What angers Junior about his geometry book?
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The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian
Chap 5- 8: Hope Against Hope, GO means Go, Rowdy sings the Blues, How to Fight Monsters

Significant vocabulary: contemplating, culture, romance, sober, addicts, racist, ambitious, pummeled, mutilated, betray, translucent, moral, potential, mute

Post Reading Discussion Questions:

1. Why does Mr. P. forgive Junior for hitting him with the geometry book? Do you think this incident will make Mr. P a better teacher?

2. Why are Junior’s parents supportive of his decision to transfer to Reardan High School?

3. What is the significance of Junior’s statements, “I had to add my hope to somebody else’s hope. I had to multiply hope by hope” (p. 43). and “... we Indians were the worst of times and those Reardan kids were the best of times” (p. 50)

4. Why does Rowdy react the way he does when Junior tells him of his decision to go to Reardan?

5. What does Junior mean when he tells Rowdy that he (Junior) will die if he does not leave the reservation?

Chapter Questions: Answer in Complete Sentences.

1. Why does Junior throw his geometry book? What does it signify?

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2. How does Junior feel about being suspended from school?

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3. What does Mr. P mean when he says, “Every white person on this rev should get smashed in the face, but, let me tell you this. All the Indians should get smashed in the face, too.” (p. 40)

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4. What positive traits does Mr. P recognize in Junior? What does he encourage Junior to do?

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5. Explain the meaning of the chapter title, “GO means GO”.

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____________________________________________________________________
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

6. How are sporting results used to compare the two schools? Why is it significant that Rowdy performed well at most competitions?

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7. Why will the Indians be angry with Junior for leaving the reservation?

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8. What does Rowdy accuse Junior of thinking? Do you agree with Rowdy?

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9. Describe the cartoon on page 57. What does this symbolize about Junior’s insecurities?

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10. How do the students react to Junior at Reardan?

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11. Why doesn’t Junior speak for six days?

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12. Why does Junior think punching Roger may have been the most important moment of his life?

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13. How does the reactions to the fight illustrate the differences in social codes?

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Chapters 9-12: Grandmother gives me some advice, Tears of a clown, Halloween, Slouching toward Thanksgiving

Vocabulary: Alpha, traditional, dramatic, traitor, naive, assaulted, articulate, sacred, nomadic, suffocate, inspired, illiterate, singular, momentum, pathetic

Post Reading Discussion Questions:

1. Do you agree with Junior that much of his self-worth is based on Rowdy protecting him?
2. How does Junior’s opinion about Grandma change? What can you infer from Junior’s changing opinion?
3. Junior says, “... I knew I’d be one of those guys who always fell in love with the unreachable, ungettable, and uninterested” (p. 74)
4. How does being ignored by the Reardan students affect Junior’s self-esteem? How do you think Junior would feel if the other students bullied him instead of ignoring him?
5. According to Junior, what causes Mary to elope and move to Montana?

Comprehension Questions: Answer in complete questions

1. What is Junior’s grandmother’s advice?
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2. Who is Eugene?
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3. What does Eugene think about Junior attending a white school? Why does he think this?
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4. Explain the meaning of the chapter title “Tears of a Clown”.
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5. How does Junior try to establish a connection with Penelope?

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6. What is the difference between Junior’s and Penelope’s Halloween costumes? Why is this significant?

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7. How does the author illustrate Junior’s loneliness?

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8. Who is Mr. Dodge? What makes him angry?

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9. Why does Gordy claim that he stuck up for Junior?

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10. How does Junior become friends with Gordy? What do they have in common? What does Gordy teach Junior that is joyous?

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11. How does Junior feel about Mary following her dreams?

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Symbols:

A symbol is something that stands for itself but also something larger than itself. It may be a person, an animal, an inanimate object, or an action. A person and most writers often use a concrete object to express an abstract idea, a quality, or a belief. A symbol is used to appeal to a person's emotions and can provide a way to express an idea, communicate a message, or clarify meaning.

There are conventional symbols and private symbols.

A conventional symbol is one that is widely accepted. Most people understand the meaning. For example, a nightingale is a symbol for melancholy, a dove for peace, a rose for love and beauty, spring for life, and night for evil.

A private symbol is one that only an individual or group understands. It would have to be explained in order for an “outsider” to understand its meaning. For example, a group of friends may have a certain handshake or greeting, use of a word where the meaning is only understood by the people who created it.

Assignment:

- On the following page fill out the chart. There could be a variety of answers for each object. This are CONVENTIONAL SYMBOLS - where everyone in our society understands their meaning.

- Your Symbol (PRIVATE) - Draw a SYMBOL that represents your life. Don’t focus on just one aspect of yourself. If you had to use ONE thing to describe who you are (personality, what you represent - what would it be?). Be creative. Think big.

- Once you have drawn your symbol you must write a paragraph explaining the meaning of the symbol and how it represents who you are - what you represent.

- Paragraph:

  Topic Sentence - Identify the symbol that represents your life.

  Body Sentences - Explain why that symbol represents you. This is where you reveal who you are - your personality, your thoughts, your beliefs, etc. What do we find out about you through your symbol?

  Concluding Sentence - Rephrase your topic sentence.
What do the following items represent?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Represents</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Represents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Owl" /></td>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Rainbow" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Lightbulb" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Balance Scales" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Apple" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Dove" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Smiley Face" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Female" /> <img src="image" alt="Male" /></td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Tree" /></td>
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Private Symbol

Paragraph: Explain your Private Symbol
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

Chapters 13-16: My sister sends me an E-mail, Thanksgiving, Hunger Pains, Rowdy gives me advice about Love, Dance, Dance, Dance.

Post Reading Discussion Questions

1. What is ironic about Junior’s family celebrating Thanksgiving?
2. Why does Junior compare Penelope to his dad?
3. How does Junior make Penelope cry? Why do you think Penelope is afraid all of the time?
4. Junior titles the book in his cartoon, “The other side of the fence” (p 108). What does this tell you about Junior? How does this compare to Earl’s comments about Junior and Penelope’s relationship?
5. Review the illustrations on page 120 of the novel. Which of Junior’s excuses regarding his poverty do you think would be most effective? Can you think of other excuses?

Chapter 13-16 Vocabulary: monotonous, subtle, destiny, gorges, mutated, defying, smudged, biological, limitations, retroactive, hysterics, revealing, ecstatic, penultimate, sympathy

Comprehension Questions

1. How does Mary feel about living in Montana?

2. How does Junior attempt to fix his friendship with Rowdy?

3. What is Penelope’s illness? How does this apply to the chapter title “Hunger Pains”?

4. What increases Junior’s popularity at school?
5. What dream do Penelope and Junior share?

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6. What is significant about the bird drawn on page 112? What do the name and description mean?

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7. Why does Junior email Rowdy?

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8. How does Junior summarize the winter formal?

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9. Why does Junior place a large order at the restaurant when he knows he cannot pay for the food? What would you have done in his situation?

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**Quote for the following page:**

I draw all the time. . . .
I draw because words are too unpredictable.
I draw because words are too limited.

If you speak and write in English, or Spanish, or Chinese, or any other language. Then only a certain percentage of human beings will get your meaning.

But when you draw a picture, everybody can understand it . . . .
So I draw because I want to talk to the world. And I want the world to pay attention to me. (Alexi, 5-6.)
This novel contains graphic images that contribute to the narrative, and your response will reflect on how those images help the reader to understand the story.

How do Arnold's drawings help us understand the story?
Chapter 17 - 21: Don’t Trust your Computer, My sister sends me a letter, Reindeer games, and a Partridge in a Pear tree, Red Versus White

Post Reading Discussion Questions.

1. How is Rowdy the opposite of the students at Reardan? Whose attitude do you believe is the most positive?

2. 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” (p. 131). Do you think going to an all-white school means Junior is trying to be someone he is not? Why/why not?

3. Gordy says, “well, life is a constant struggle between being an individual and being a member of the community” (p. 132). How does this statement apply to Junior?

4. What is the significance of the chapter “Reindeer Games”?

5. Examine Junior’s observation that “… those white dads can completely disappear without ever leaving the room” (p. 153). Is this a universal issue with families, regardless of race?

Chapter Vocabulary: repressed, primitive, banished, sentimental, humiliation, intimidate, pelted, contempt, taunted, concussion, endeavor, eccentric, binge, tolerant

Comprehension Questions

1. How does Junior react to Rowdy’s email and digital photo?

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2. What advice does Dad give that encourages Junior to try out for the Reardan Basketball team?

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3. How does Junior make the Reardan varsity basketball team? Why is this important to him?

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5. Why does Rowdy act so violently towards Junior during the first basketball game at Wellpinit - taking the head shot?
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6. 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” (p. 148). Do you think Coach is only talking about Junior’s commitment to basketball? To what else is Junior committed?
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7. How is the five dollar bill Junior receives for Christmas “a beautiful and ugly thing” (p. 151)?
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8. According to Junior, what is the best thing about Reardan? What is the best thing about Wellpinit?
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9. According to Junior, what is the reason Indians have become intolerant of others? Why does Grandma still have that “old time spirit” (p. 155)? What does Grandma believe is the whole point of life?
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10. What are Grandma’s last words?
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Life Quote:

Life quotes, are quotations found in a reading that provides meaning to the development of the story as well as connecting to you personally. The quotation must be meaningful enough that you can connect to it and then discuss it on a deeply personal level. You must be able to see how the “quote” is relevant, not just to you but to society and the human condition.

Chose a quotation that is relevant to you (your life, your philosophy, your.... whatever.... so long as it is personal and appropriate). It must contain a whole thought, but it mustn’t be long. A couple of lines will do. You must avoid choosing simplistic, superficial, pointless quotes that have no meaning beyond the plot.

Your quotation must have a PROFOUND link to your life or to “life” (philosophy/history/sport/science...whatever “works”). If it is superficial you will not earn a good grade.

Choose one of the quotes below that you can relate to personally. Pick a quote that you feel that you can discuss either using personal examples or examples from your knowledge of the world - what is going on around you.

• “Junior’s parent dreamed about being something other than poor, but they never got the chance to be anything because nobody paid attention to their dreams.” (p. 11)

• “Poverty is an ugly circle and there’s nothing you can do about it” (p. 13)

• “I had to add my hope to somebody else’s hope. I had to multiply hope by hope” (p. 43).

• “… we Indians were the worst of times and those Reardan kids were the best of times” (p. 50)

• “… I knew I’d be one of those guys who always fell in love with the unreachable, ungettable, and uninterested” (p. 74)

• “If you let people into your life a little bit, they can be pretty damn amazing” (129)?

• “well, life is a constant struggle between being an individual and being a member of the community” ( p. 132).

• “… those white dads can completely disappear without ever leaving the room” ( p. 153).

• If none of these quotes connect to you, find your own quote, but make sure you show it to me before you write your assignment.
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

Chapters 1 - 21 Life Quote:

1. Quotation: ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________ (pg. ___)

2. **PLOT SUMMARY** - Context of the Quotation (Plot of the quote):
What was going on in the story when the quote occurred. (Who says it (can be the
narrator) - to whom - under what circumstance -when, etc, only choose what is relevant
and significant.)

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3. **CRITICAL ANALYSIS** - Relevance to the Story:
Analyze the power/meaning/purpose of the quotation as it relates to the novel.

Why is this quote important to the story? How does it help to develop the story? Why
was it said? Why is it powerful, meaningful, have purpose?

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4. **PERSONAL RESPONSE** - Connection to You and Society:

In a passionate, profound, insightful, fully-engaged personal composition discuss the significance of this quotation as it relates to (your) life, and the world around you. Think about why you chose those words - the quote. Why is it meaningful to you? What is the connection to humanity - our society? Phoney work doesn't resonate; don't just fill space with empty thoughts. You choose the quotation so make it a worthwhile connection.

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Chapter 22 - 24: Wake, Valentine Heart, In Like a Lion

Post Reading Discussion Questions:

1. According to Junior, what is the reason Indians stop harassing him about going to Reardan High School? Can you think of other possible reasons?
2. What does Junior mean when he says, “When it comes to death, Indians know that laughter and tears are pretty much the same thing” (p. 166)?
3. Why does Junior blame himself for Grandma’s and Eugene’s deaths?
4. During the game, Junior not only wants to humiliate Rowdy but the entire Wellpinit team. Why?
5. What effect does Reardan’s victory have on both teams? What effect does it have on Junior specifically?

Vocabulary: Grieve, devastating, mulled, displaced, endure, mocked, spontaneous, expectations, legacy, egomaniac, exposed, intercepted, intentionally, demoralize

Comprehension Questions:

1. We all have to find our own way to say good-bye.” (p.161) How does Junior do this?

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2. How do each of the family members grieve? (Junior, Mother, Father)

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3. What do Junior’s cartoons (p. 170 & 171) reveal about his emotions?

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4. Why does Junior blame himself for Grandma's and Eugene's deaths? Do you think he should feel guilty?

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5. Explain “the power of expectations” (p.180) Does this power only apply to Junior’s basketball ability?

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6. According to Junior, what are “the four hugest words in the world when they’re put together” (p. 189)?

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7. Why does Junior cry tears of shame after winning the basketball game?

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8. Explain the meaning of the chapter title “In like a lion.”

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Additional Activities for Learning: Personal Response and Character

In *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Arnold says, "And I kept trying to find the piece of joy in my life. That's the only way I managed to make it through all of that death and change" (176).

- Make a list or draw the people who give you joy.

- Make a list of songs or jot down lyrics that give you joy.

- Make a list or draw the foods that give you joy.

- Make a list or draw the books and movies that give you joy.
Time to Reflect: Personal Response

Choose one of the following options -

Option 1: Write a letter or an email from Junior to either Mary, his Grandmother, or Eugene. What would Junior say to them. Consider writing about what has happened in Junior’s life since their death. Discuss Junior thoughts about the death of his letter focus. What does he want to reveal that he couldn’t when the person was alive? How did their death affect his life?

Option 2: Before the game Coach motivates Junior. Think about your biggest challenge and write the motivation speech that you would need to hear in order to move passed this challenge.

Option 3: Consider the following quotes from U.S. football coach Vince Lombardi. Explain which you think is most important and why? Complete paragraph response.

* “Once you learn to quit, it becomes a habit.”
* “Perfection is not attainable. But if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence.”
* “We would accomplish many more things if we did not think of them as impossible.”
Chapters 25-29: Rowdy and I have a long and serious discussion about basketball, Because Russian guys are not always geniuses, my final freshman year report card, Remembering, Talking about turtles.

Post Reading Discussion Questions:

1. Explain the meaning of the chapter title “Rowdy and I have a long and serious discussion about basketball.” What is significant about this short chapter?

2. 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” (p. 203)?

3. Why does Junior laugh uncontrollably in his father’s car?

4. Why does Junior go to school rather than mourn with his family? How is he treated at school?

5. What does the illustration on page 213 of the novel tell you about Junior?

6. What is the significance of the story about Junior and Rowdy climbing the tallest tree on the reservation?

7. 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” (p.230). What is significant about Junior included his feelings for Rowdy in the same statement as his feelings for loved ones who have died?

Chapter Vocabulary: Bitter, merit, inspirational, insane, baptized, silty, dormant, maggots, summit, conversationalists

Comprehension Questions

1. “Rowdy and I have a long and serious discussion about basketball”: What is so humorous about this chapter title?

2. How does Mary die? How does Junior react to Mary’s death? Why does he react in this way?
3. Why does Junior feel responsible for Mary’s death?

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5. What realizations does Junior arrive at in the chapter titled “Remembering”?

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6. How and WHY does Rowdy compare Junior to a nomad?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

7. Do you think Rowdy and Junior will remain friends? Explain.

______________________________________________________________________
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**Personal Connection to Text**

Reread page 217. Pay particular attention to the list Arnold makes of his "tribes." Make a list of eight of the "tribes" you belong to and explain what role you play in each "tribe."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe I belong to</th>
<th>The role I play in the tribe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>
Character Activity

Relationships change over time. The friendship between Arnold and Rowdy changes and matures throughout the book. Think back to a long term relationship in your own life.

What was your relationship like...

...when you were in elementary school?
Give two specific examples to support your answer.

What was your relationship like...

...when you were in junior high?
Give two specific examples to support your answer.

What was your relationship like...

...now?
Give two specific examples to support your answer.
Now complete the activity for Arnold and Rowdy's relationship.

What was their relationship like...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>...when Arnold is still going to school on the reservation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give two specific examples to support your answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What was their relationship like...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>...when Arnold goes to the white school off the reservation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give two specific examples to support your answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What was their relationship like...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>...after the final basketball game between the Wellpinit team and the Rearden team?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give two specific examples to support your answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ESSAY Time!!!!!!!