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EASY MARKING™ ANSWER KEY

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

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Sherman Alexie

Born October 7, 1966, award-winning author Sherman Alexie grew up in Wellpinit, Washington near the Spokane Indian Reservation. His parents were Salish peoples, his father Coeur d'Alene and his mother Spokane. Alexie was born with congenital hydrocephalus and had corrective surgery for the condition at just six months old. While his ability to learn was unaffected, Sherman did suffer from many symptoms of his condition, including seizures. Unable to take part in physically demanding sports, Alexie became a voracious reader as a youth. When he was a teenager, Alexie left the reservation to attend an all-white high school, eventually becoming an honors student and class president. While things were going well academically, Alexie also had to deal with constant taunts at school. At home Alexie's family struggled with financial instability and alcoholism.



Alexie's mother worked several jobs to support him and his five siblings and, with his efforts in high school, Alexie was awarded a scholarship to attend Gonzaga University. In 1985, Alexie enrolled in the university's pre-med program, eyeing a future career as a doctor. Over two years at the university, Alexie realized his squeamishness would not serve him well as a doctor and he switched majors to law. This also didn't suit the future author. During this time Alexie began to drink to combat anxiety. In 1991, he graduated from Washington State University (WSU) with a Bachelor of Arts degree. The author would later point to a poetry course he took at WSU as a critical step in finding his creative voice. By 1992 Alexie published a book of poetry titled *I Would Steal Horses*. Not long after, the author gave up alcohol.

Alexie followed *I Would Steal Horses* with two more books of poetry in 1993—*First Indian on the Moon* and *Old Shirts & New Skins*. That same year he published *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, a collection of interwoven stories. The book won the PEN/Hemingway Award for the best first book of fiction. Alexie's first novel, *Reservation Blues* followed in 1995. Alexie proved to be a prolific writer, penning several more books of poetry, novels, and short stories in the following years, including *The Toughest Indian in the World*, for which he won the PEN/Malamud Award for excellence in short-story writing. One of the author's well-known works is *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* published in 2007, which offers a semi-autobiographical look at his teenage years. The novel won a National Book Award for Young People's Literature.

Did You Know?

- Author Sherman Alexie wrote the screenplay for the film *Smoke Signals* based on one of his stories.
- Alexie's 2009 collection of short stories and poems titled *War Dances* won the 2010 PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction.
- In 2010 Alexie received the Native Writers' Circle of the Americas Lifetime Achievement Award.



Chapters One to Three

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. Based on the cover art, what sort of themes might be presented in the book?

2. What sort of feelings might the title of the book evoke?

Vocabulary

Choose a word from the list that means the same or nearly the same as the underlined word.

harshes respectful	gross cried	fatigue expressive	cold predisposed
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1. I was born with too much grease inside my skull and it got all thick and muddy and disgusting.
2. It seems more serious and poetic and accurate to say, "I was born with water on the brain."
3. I haven't had a seizure in seven years, but the doctors tell me that I am susceptible to seizure activity.
4. At first, I thought he just had heat exhaustion or something.
5. He whimpered in pain.
6. It's a big deal when Rowdy is polite.
7. But I was getting hypothermic, too.
8. The Andrusses—John, Jim, and Joe—are the cruellest triplets in the history of the world.



Chapters Seven to Nine

1. Fill in each blank with the correct word from these Chapters.

- a) So, feeling _____ and stupid, I just waited.
- b) And pretty soon, a janitor opened the front door and all of the other kids _____ inside.
- c) I could go live in the woods like a _____.
- d) And I don't mean "kill" as in "_____".
- e) Yeah, maybe it was just a stupid and _____ school yard fight.

2. Circle T if the statement is TRUE or F if it is FALSE.

- T F a) Junior scored nine points in each basketball game against Reardan last season.
- T F b) Junior thinks his black eye looked like fine art.
- T F c) The white kids stared at Junior like he was Bigfoot or a UFO.
- T F d) Junior's list has 11 rules.
- T F e) Junior strikes a judo pose.
- T F f) Junior thinks Rowdy fighting Roger would be like King Kong fighting Godzilla.



Chapters Nineteen to Twenty-One

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. What does Mary title her life story?

2. What does Junior's drawing of Mary's new home tell you about his feelings toward it?

3. Why does Junior almost not try out for the basketball team?

4. What convinces Junior to try out for the basketball team?

5. How does Junior feel on the day of his first game against Wellpinit High School?

6. Why wasn't Junior able to finish the game against Wellpinit?

Journaling Prompt

On Christmas Eve, Junior's father leaves when he can't face the fact that there won't be enough money for presents. Instead, he takes what money the family does have and gets drunk. What does this say about Junior's father's state of mind? Can you sympathize with him? What does it say that he saved the last five dollars for Junior? If you were in Junior's position, how would these events make you feel?



Chapter 15

Addictions

While Junior is familiar with alcohol addiction, he encounters a new type of addiction when he finds Penelope throwing up in the bathroom at school. Penelope explains to Junior that she is bulimic. Do a bit of research on this condition. What is it? Why might someone develop this condition?

In response to finding out this information, Junior contemplates addiction. He says, "There are all kinds of addicts, I guess. We all have pain. And we all look for ways to make the pain go away. Penelope gorges on her pain and then flushes it away. My dad drinks his pain away."

In a few paragraphs, discuss what Junior is saying with this comment. What does this statement indicate about the nature of addiction? Why might Junior know so many people facing addiction? How are the addictions Junior discusses in this Chapter different? How are they similar?



Chapters 17 to 24

Truth

Since coming to Reardan, Junior tried not to let on that he and his family had any financial hardship compared to the other students. However, after the Winter Formal, Junior is forced to come clean and tell Penelope that his family is poor.

When Junior is ultimately forced to tell Penelope that he walks to and from school much of the time and that his father isn't really coming to pick him up, she begins to cry. Penelope compels Junior to get a ride home with Roger rather than walk in the snow.

How does Junior's relationship with the other students at Reardan change after this point? How does it stay the same? Why do you believe Junior lied in the first place? How might things have been different for Junior if he hadn't lied from the beginning?



Word Search Puzzle

Find the following words from the story. The words are written horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and some are written backwards.

arrogance	egomaniac	jealous	seizures
ashamed	fancy	lame	subtle
cerebral	farsighted	legacy	tolerant
cruel	goofy	legendary	translucent
delirious	gorgeous	petrified	vanish
depths	handily	primates	vowed
drill	hormonal	puffed	
eccentric	hustle	secede	

F	G	V	G	I	V	I	V	A	I	O	P	D	R	I	L	A	N	O	M	R	O	H	
S	A	Y	E	L	T	B	U	S	K	G	U	Y	X	O	E	J	U	J	V	N	V	K	
G	U	R	S	P	G	Z	P	X	E	X	F	A	R	E	L	B	K	D	U	R	C	Q	
L	O	E	S	E	D	M	C	Y	L	N	F	X	Q	V	T	Q	M	Z	E	M	A	P	S
A	I	R	O	I	R	W	Z	V	T	S	E	C	F	D	E	K	O	C	H	F	Y	R	I
N	Q	A	G	W	G	U	T	R	S	M	D	V	H	A	E	H	X	S	H	T	P	E	D
E	B	J	F	E	T	H	Z	C	U	F	T	F	D	P	Y	P	U	F	S	Y	L	G	O
H	M	C	K	Z	O	W	T	I	H	I	N	H	D	E	T	O	W	R	A	W	G	N	Y
S	H	B	O	L	H	U	K	E	E	C	B	P	E	T	I	D	E	T	T	N	F	J	F
I	L	E	P	F	T	X	S	C	D	S	B	S	L	R	O	J	V	L	K	A	C	K	O
N	W	C	A	I	N	A	M	O	G	E	S	T	I	I	S	N	L	E	M	L	N	Y	O
A	X	C	G	A	R	Y	X	L	F	T	Z	L	R	F	L	U	P	U	E	V	Q	P	G
V	Q	E	J	D	O	R	J	I	N	L	E	W	X	I	B	L	A	R	B	E	R	E	C
D	V	N	E	M	A	L	H	E	W	D	I	L	E	E	O	N	N	C	E	E	C	U	Y
T	P	T	Y	G	M	C	R	D	A	H	K	E	D	L	C	B	W	N	M	B	W	R	
N	Z	R	I	M	N	U	F	E	L	S	Y	I	W	G	Y	J	H	Z	D	S	X	A	
A	S	I	Q	Z	L	U	W	O	P	H	F	V	Q	B	A	J	L	G	C	V	A	T	D
R	G	C	U	S	A	O	S	L	R	A	M	G	D	Q	T	C	J	I	J	S	K	L	N
E	K	L	N	S	V	K	P	C	Z	M	N	E	Z	R	E	S	Y	O	D	A	S	I	E
L	J	A	R	R	O	G	A	N	C	E	O	U	N	R	Z	U	R	P	H	N	N	V	G
O	R	D	R	I	T	C	Q	S	X	D	B	J	E	A	L	O	U	S	D	L	A	Y	E
T	S	B	H	V	A	R	I	N	P	S	P	R	I	M	A	T	E	S	F	I	W	H	L



Comprehension Quiz

- What does Junior have to say about the nature of addictions? 2
- How does Junior feel about traveling between Wellpinit and Reardan? 3
- Why doesn't Junior initially want to try out for basketball? To what does he attribute his increased skill? 2
- What does Junior believe is the worst thing a parent can do to their child? How does this relate to his parents? 2
- How does Junior feel after losing his grandmother and Eugene in the span of a few months? 3
- What event makes Junior feel so ashamed that he throws up? Why does he feel this way? 3

SUBTOTAL: /15

Comparing Traits

In *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, author Sherman Alexie presents two towns. Wellpinit is a small town on a reservation. Reardan is a small, mostly white town. While the towns are just twenty-two miles apart, there is a stark contrast in the characters presented in each town. Use this organizer to discuss some of the differences and similarities in the characters.

Wellpinit

Reardan

Mondovi

Hite

Spokane River

Wellpinit

Reardan

Mondovi

Hite

Spokane River

NAME: _____

After You Read 



Chapters One to Three

Answer each question with a complete sentence or short paragraph.

1. Why does Junior mostly hang out alone in his bedroom?

2. Why does Junior prefer to draw rather than write?

3. What does Junior say about the dreams of those living on the reservation?

4. What does living with poverty teach according to Junior?

5. Why did Junior's father shoot Oscar?

6. Why does Junior think Rowdy is the most important person in his life?



Journaling Prompt
Discuss what you know about Junior so far. What is his home life like? Who are the important people in his life? What are his hobbies? What are his likes and dislikes? How does he feel about his life? How does Junior's life compare to yours? In a few paragraphs, discuss how you might feel if you were in Junior's place.

1.
Junior mostly spends time alone in his bedroom because when he goes outside, he is beaten up and harassed by bullies.

2.
Junior says words are too unpredictable and are too limited. When you draw a picture, everyone can understand it. Junior's drawings are his connection to the world and he feels they might be his only chance at escaping the reservation.

3.
Junior says those living on the reservation don't get to realize their dreams. They don't get the chance. They're just poor and begin to feel like they deserve to be poor because of who they are.

4.
Poverty doesn't teach perseverance; it only teaches poverty.

5.
Junior's father shot Oscar because the family couldn't afford to take the dog to the vet.

6.
Junior says he spends more time with Rowdy than with anyone else—an average of eight hours per day for the last 14 years. They are inseparable.



1.
Answers will vary.

2.
Answers will vary.

Vocabulary

1. A

2. H

3. B

4. J

5. C

6. I

7. F

8. D

9. E

10. G

14

1.

a) **T**

b) **T**

c) **F**

d) **T**

e) **F**

f) **T**

2.

a) 6

b) 4

c) 1

d) 5

e) 2

f) 3

15

1.
He says his sister just froze after high school—didn't get a job and didn't go to college. But she is also beautiful and strong and funny.

2.
Junior feels that he'll be a benchwarmer on the C team while Rowdy succeeds playing varsity basketball.

3.
The students generally like Mr. P because he doesn't assign too much work or expect too much from students. He also doesn't seem to fall within the typical political spectrum as the other teachers.

4.
Junior is upset because it means the book is at least 30 years old and shows just how poor his community is.

5.
Junior felt ashamed. He'd never been in trouble before and hadn't meant to hit anyone with the book.

6.
Reardan is a wealthier town with a better school and more opportunities. Junior decides Reardan is his best chance to eventually be able to leave the reservation and find hope.

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EASY MARKING ANSWER KEY

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

- **RSL.9-10.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RSL.9-10.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RSL.9-10.3** Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- **RSL.9-10.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- **RSL.9-10.7** Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.
- **RSL.9-10.10** By the end of grade 9 read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **RSL.11-12.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **RSL.11-12.2** Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RSL.11-12.3** Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.
- **RSL.11-12.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.
- **RSL.11-12.7** Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem, evaluating how each version interprets the source text.
- **RSL.11-12.10** By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **WS.9-10.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- **WS.9-10.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- **WS.9-10.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences..
- **WS.9-10.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **WS.9-10.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **WS.9-10.8** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- **WS.9-10.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
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- **WS.11-12.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.



Chapters Seven to Nine

1. Fill in each blank with the correct word from these Chapters.

- a) So, feeling _____ and stupid, I just waited.
- b) And pretty soon, a janitor opened the front door and all of the other kids _____ inside.
- c) I could go live in the woods like a _____.
- d) And I don't mean "kill" as in "_____."
- e) Yeah, maybe it was just a stupid and _____ school yard fight.

2. Circle **T** if the statement is TRUE or **F** if it is FALSE.

- T F** a) Junior scored nine points in each basketball game against Reardan last season.
- T F** b) Junior thinks his black eye looked like fine art.
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Chapter 15

Addictions

While Junior is familiar with alcohol addiction, he encounters a new type of addiction when he finds Penelope throwing up in the bathroom at school. Penelope explains to Junior that she is bulimic. Do a bit of research on this condition. What is it? Why might someone develop this condition?

In response to finding out this information, Junior contemplates addiction. He says, "There are all kinds of addicts, I guess. We all have pain. And we all look for ways to make the pain go away. Penelope gorges on her pain and then flushes it away. My dad drinks his pain away."

In a few paragraphs, discuss what Junior is saying with this comment. What does this statement indicate about the nature of addiction? Why might Junior know so many people facing addiction? How are the addictions Junior discusses in this Chapter different? How are they similar?



Chapters 17 to 24

Truth

Since coming to Reardan, Junior tried not to let on that he and his family had any financial hardship compared to the other students. However, after the Winter Formal, Junior is forced to come clean and tell Penelope that his family is poor.

When Junior is ultimately forced to tell Penelope that he walks to and from school much of the time and that his father isn't really coming to pick him up, she begins to cry. Penelope compels Junior to get a ride home with Roger rather than walk in the snow.

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Wellpinit

Reardan

Little Falls

Long Lake

Mondovi

Hite

Spokane River

231

291

21

23

2