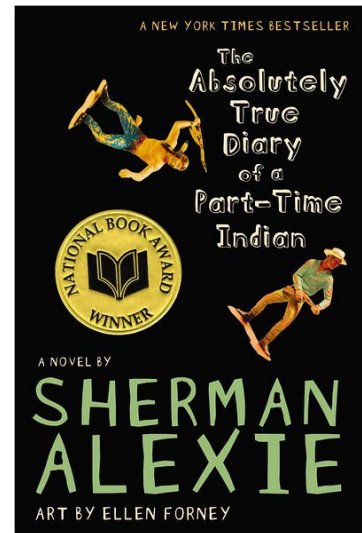


# Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

By Sherman Alexie

**Note to Teachers:** Alexie was accused of sexual harassment in 2018, 11 years after this book was first published; he doesn't deny the charges. Before that, the book was often banned for its mature content. It's a gritty look at the struggles of many youth who grow up on Native American Reservations and includes topics such as alcohol abuse, death, racism, and masturbation. This book stands out for its unique voice in literature, for its brutal honesty -- it's based on Alexie's own experiences -- and for its raw depiction of reservation life. It explores the deep bonds of family, friends, and community and how they help people through even the toughest circumstances. It explores racism and how we break past the limitations placed upon us by a racist world, as well as grief, tolerance, and forgiveness.

**Summary:** In *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, teenager Junior throws a book at the teacher in his reservation school one day and gets suspended. He'd snapped when the teacher handed him a book with his mother's name written inside. Why couldn't their dirt-poor school ever have new books? When Junior's teacher shows up to his house with a broken nose, rather than yell, he proposes a radical idea: that Junior finds a way out. The next day Junior heads to the neighboring farming town of Reardan to attend an all-White school. The move has immediate repercussions. His best friend, Rowdy, and the whole reservation hate him, his sister runs away to Montana to get married, and most of the kids in his new school are wary of him. But as Junior slowly makes friends with a basketball star and the smartest kid in school, he opens up to his strange new world.



**Publisher's recommended age(s):** 14

## Teaching Resources/Ideas:

<https://utah.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/dpla-tg-080/teaching-guide-exploring-the-absolutely-true-diary-of-a-part-time-indian/>

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/the-absolutely-true-diary-of-a-part-time-indian>

**About the Author:** Sherman Joseph Alexie Jr. is a Spokane-Coeur d'Alene-Native American novelist, short story writer, poet, and filmmaker. His writings draw on his experiences as an Indigenous American with ancestry from several tribes. He grew up on the Spokane Indian Reservation and now lives in Seattle, Washington.

[Meet Sherman Alexie](#)

## Read Aloud:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzOvOrwMOOooZnGxKzoSkNA/videos>