

Earwood

18 September 2019

discuss literature
in present-tense
(it's always living)

Part Time Indian: Marked for Greatness

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a Spokane Indian who left his reservation to attend an all-white school. Everyone on the reservation besides his family saw him as a traitor. Even his best friend hated him. He wasn't accepted at his new school either, so his house was the only safe place. Throughout his journey, Junior had setbacks and flaws, but these made him special, so he was ready to take on whatever

came at him. This presents examples of marks for greatness from *How to Read Literature Like A Professor*. Junior may have had flaws, but they gave him strength to fit in at his new school.

great intro

[Junior's marks set him up for greatness.] First, he had extra teeth. He said "the typical human has thirty-two, right? But I had forty-two" (2). He had all these extra teeth and got only half the pain killer when they were removed, so it toughened him up. It symbolized how he would only get half the opportunities, but he would still succeed. He also had messed up vision.

redundant

explains,

good

"My brain damage left me nearsighted in one eye and farsighted in the other, so my glasses were all lopsided because my eyes were so lopsided" (3). He had terrible vision, and he could only get an ugly pair of glasses, which were provoking bullying. He had to deal with this throughout his early childhood, so by the time he was older and in high school, he was used to it. It truly

brought out the best in him. Between these two flaws, he had plenty of experience with difficulty, and it helped him be strong when he was made fun of for being an Indian at an all-white school.

lead-in

How?
be specific

OK

Junior had a lot to go through during his transition of schools, and it was very difficult. But with the amount of times he had been made fun of early on, he was bound to overcome and succeed at some point. And this happened towards the end of the novel. He ended the year with good grades, a starter on the basketball team, and had many friends. At the very end of the story, his old best friend forgives him too.

Tie back into Foster's chapter

Ms. Earwood

19 September 2019

Life on the Rez is a Quest

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, by Sherman Alexie, is a wholesomely sad story about a character resembling the author's early life. Alexie tells about Arnold Spirit's struggle on the reservation and his adventure in persevering through Reardan. "Every Trip is a Quest" in *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, by Thomas C. Foster, is represented by Alexie's novel through Arnold's longing for a better life and his realization of how much potential he has.

Arnold has lived his life bullied and tormented for being physically and mentally different. He always wanted to be smart and to make his future brighter: "You're going to find more and more hope the farther and farther you walk away from this sad, sad, sad reservation," (43). Mr. P, Arnold's teacher, sees that Arnold is wasting his time at Wellpinit. He tells Arnold that the only way to improve his life is to run away from the rez because it is filled with people who have given up on life. Arnold takes his steps to improve his education, but he knew he wouldn't be able to do it alone. He befriends a smart, "weird" kid at Reardon named Gordy and says, "And so we became friends. Not the best of friends... No, we studied together. Gordy taught me how to study" (94). No one can accomplish everything they want to do alone. Befriending someone and having a companion to put trust into pushes Arnold towards his

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Remember to tie back to how companions are a part of the quest

success. Quests can be tough, but pursuing forward and finding help along the way makes them much easier and worthwhile.

As Arnold's quest continues, he realizes his true potential. In Reardon, his intelligence is constantly challenged by tough questions every day: "In geology class, the teacher, Mr. Dodge, was talking about the petrified wood forests near George... 'Well,' I said, 'Petrified wood isn't actual wood,'" (84). The teacher was teaching about a subject incorrectly so Arnold corrected him, saying that it isn't even wood at all. He realizes that he is actually much smarter than most everyone at Reardon. When basketball tryouts opened, Arnold decided he wanted to try out for the team, knowing he would probably not make the team. As the tryouts continue, he realizes that if he pushes hard for a bit longer, he can outlast the rest of the guys: "I didn't mind. After all, that meant only twelve more guys had to be cut. I only had to be better than twelve other guys," (139). Arnold comes to the realization that he is capable of accomplishing so much if he puts in the effort. Arnold's potential has a lot of impact on his future, and the realization of his potential was key for his success.

Quests show up in almost all stories in literature. They capture a character's development of their personality and allow for a way for many readers to connect to that character. Arnold and his peers have many hardships and realizations of themselves throughout the story that represent "Every Trip is a Quest," in *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*.

In conclusion - revisit
key points of quest
through your essay