

## 2016 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Assignment

The required book this summer is ***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie**. Arnold Spirit, Jr. is not a character you will soon forget! His voice is realistic and sometimes irreverent, and he does not hold back from sharing some tough and sad things about his life. Most importantly, he wrestles with ideas that are essential to understanding ourselves.

In addition to the required reading selection, you are expected to read three additional books from the list of recommended titles for 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Visit the Helen Temple Cook Library website to view the summer reading list:  
<http://library.danahall.org/reading-lists/summer-reading/>

**Here are the activities for *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.** For all of the written activities, please write in complete sentences except where noted. Write neatly on paper or type your work on your iPad in Notability, Pages, or a similar app. You will be asked to show your work in English class during the first week of classes.

### Before you read:

1. Getting a head start on vocabulary: Using a reputable source like *Oxford English Dictionary* (oed.com) or *Encyclopedia Britannica* (eb.com), **look up and provide a definition that is clear to you** of the following words and terms. (Dana Hall has subscriptions to both of these websites!) Some of these are *in* the novel, and others will help you think about and *discuss* the novel.

Spokane Tribe (17)                      Spokane Powwow (19)                      displacement (n)

transcendence (n)                      dichotomy (n)                      apathy (n)

epiphany (n)                      susceptible (adj) (3)                      perseverance (n)(13)

decrepit (adj) (31)                      interrogating (v) (34)

2. Personal connections to literature: dreams. In a short paragraph, **describe something you hope to see, do, or achieve in your life**. You can write about a big dream or a little dream!

In a second short paragraph, describe both the people who do (or could) **encourage** you to realize this dream and the **obstacles** that do (or could) get in the way of your dreams.

**As You Read:****1. Use your active reading skills!**

- Underline or highlight words or passages that are interesting, moving, or surprising to you.
- Write little notes, questions, or symbols (stars, exclamation points) in the margins when you read something that gives you powerful feelings, thoughts, or images.
- Write down your reactions or questions at the end of each chapter.

**2. Respond to each of the following prompts.** These questions ask you to both report on and **interpret** what you have read.

**“Hope Against Hope”**

Record your reactions to Junior’s conversation with Mr. P. What does Mr. P say or do that is surprising, and why? What is the most memorable thing Junior or Mr.P says, and why?

**“How to Fight Monsters”**

Take a closer look at Junior’s cartoon on page 57. What do you think this cartoon reveals about the way he looks at himself and others?

**“My Sister Writes Me an Email” and “My Sister Writes Me a Letter”**

Summarize what you learn about Mary. Then, consider what her letters reveal about her decision to leave home. What is she hoping to find? Has she found it?

**“Like a Lion”**

Summarize the **epiphany** Junior has (on pages 195-196) about the basketball game and what it means for his classmates, his family, and his opponents.

**“Remembering”**

Junior gives us a list of the tribes to which he claims membership. Based on his list, how might he defines the word “tribe”? Make a list of tribes you can claim as yours.

**After You Read:** Think carefully about Junior and Rowdy’s interactions and conversations in the last chapter of the book. Choose a sentence you think is particularly beautiful or important and explain it in a short paragraph so we can understand its importance and beauty.

**Here is the activity for your free choice books.** Write a short paragraph to capture the essentials of this book. In the first sentences, include the title, author, and key characters. Then, describe the *setting* of the book: what world does the author create for you?

**When school starts:** Please bring your paper copy of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* and all of your written work to class on the first day of regular classes. Your written work may be on paper or on your iPad in the Notability or Pages app.