

"the absolutely true diary of a part-time indian" by sherman alexie essay sample

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In the novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, the reader is introduced to a Native American high school boy named Arnold who is condemned as a traitor by his people. Despite enduring great tragedies, Arnold attacks life with wit and humor and discovers inner strength that he never knew existed. Arnold makes the most important decision in his life, when he decides if he wants to be like all the other Indians on his reservation- a man with broken dreams with no life in the future or seize the opportunities he has. Arnold chooses to make use of his opportunities by leaving the school on his reservation and attending a school named 'Rearden' in an "all-white" town. When arriving at the school, Arnold has mixed feelings whether or not he made the right decision; after all, he is a dirt poor Indian who is now considered a traitor by the rest of his reservation because he chooses to attend this school. Arnold soon becomes an outcast in his school, and is torn between the difficult choice of returning to his reservation or follow his instincts and go for his "future". Arnold feels tensed and dejected as many of his near and dear ones are no longer around.

Tensions begin to break through when many of the Indian people around him begin to die, such as his grandmother, his older sister, and his dad's best friend. Arnold describes this moment as him being to over 42 funerals in his lifetime, and the most number of funerals his classmates have gone to are 5. Throughout this traumatizing event, Arnold takes refuge and stays focused in his passion of playing basketball. Through sheer dedication Arnold qualifies to the varsity team as a freshman, leading his team to a near perfect season, and beating his reservation's high school basketball team. Soon after, Arnold discovers that if you let people into your life and open up

a little bit, amazing things can happen. At the end of this novel, Arnold re-embraces his friendship with his best friend at the reservation, while playing a pick-up game of basketball.