

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian
9th Grade Reading Comprehension Questions

Due: Monday, May 16th 2022. *Remember to answer in complete sentences or points will be deducted.*

“The Black-Eye-of-the-Month Club” pages 1-6

1. Why is Junior a member of ‘the Black-Eye-of-the-Month Club’?
2. Why does Junior draw cartoons?
3. What do the first two cartoons depict?
4. What does this tell us about Junior?

“Why Chicken Means So Much to Me” pages 7-13

1. What does Junior identify as the worst thing about being poor?
2. Because the family had no money, what did the dad do with the dog because it was so sick?
3. Arnold says, “And hey, in a weird way, being hungry makes food taste better” (Alexie 8). What does this statement show us about Junior?
4. How is poverty a cycle for Junior’s family?

“Revenge Is My Middle Name” pages 15-24

1. Describe Rowdy and Junior’s relationship. What do they do for each other?
2. What is the Spokane Powwow?
3. What does Rowdy do to the Andruss brothers? Why do you think Rowdy does this?
4. What does this demonstrate about Rowdy’s friendship with Junior?

“Because Geometry Is Not a Country Somewhere Near France” pages 25-31

1. Describe Mr. P.
2. Why is Junior so cynical about white teachers?
3. What angers Junior about his geometry book?

“Hope Against Hope” pages 32-43

1. When he realized the age of the book, Junior says, “My hopes and dreams floated up in a mushroom cloud.” What do you think he means by this?
2. Why do you think Mr. P says the following; “Every white person on this rev should get smashed in the face. But, let me tell you this. All the Indians should get smashed in the face, too” (Alexie 40).
3. What is Mr. P’s advice to Junior? Why does he give him this advice?

“Go Means Go” pages 44-47

1. How do Junior’s parents react to his decision to change schools?
2. What does this show about his parents?
3. What warnings do they give Junior about his decision?

“Rowdy Sings the Blues” pages 48-53

1. How are sporting results used to compare the two schools?
2. Why is it significant that Rowdy performed well at most competitions?
3. How does Rowdy react to Junior's decision to move schools?

“How to Fight Monsters” pages 54-66

1. Describe the cartoon on page 57. What does this show about Junior's insecurities?
2. How does the confusion over Junior's names demonstrate his change in culture?
3. How do the students react to Junior at Reardan?
4. How does the fight illustrate the differences in social codes between Reardan and the Rez?

“Grandmother Gives Me Some Advice” pages 67-73

1. Junior says, “I realized how much of my self-worth, my sense of safety, was based on Rowdy's fists” (Alexie 68). What do you think he means by this?
2. How does Junior learn to stand up for himself?
3. What is Junior's grandmother's advice?

“Tears of a Clown” pages 74-76

1. What does Junior's story about Dawn illustrate to the reader?
2. How is Rowdy involved in it?

“Halloween” pages 77-81

1. How does Junior try to establish a connection with Penelope?
2. How does trick or treating remind Junior of Rowdy?
3. Junior hopes the attackers aren't who?

”Slouching Toward Thanksgiving” pages 82-98

1. What is special about Junior speaking up in class?
2. How does Mr. Dodge reply and how does this make Junior feel?
3. What does Mary do?
4. How does Junior become friends with Gordy? What do they have in common?

“My Sister Sends Me an E-mail” pages 99-100

1. Summarize Mary's email in three bullet points.

“Thanksgiving” pages 101-103

1. Why does Junior think of Rowdy at Thanksgiving time?
2. Describe the cartoon Junior draws.
3. Why is Rowdy's respect still so important to Junior?
4. How does Rowdy's father regard the cartoon?

“Hunger Pains” pages 104-113

1. How does Penelope and Junior's friendship develop?

2. How are Penelope and Junior using each other?
3. What advice does Junior give Penelope? Is it good advice?

“Rowdy Gives Me Advice About Love” pages 114-117

1. Why does Junior refer to how ‘white’ Penelope is? What is the effect of this?
2. Gordy claims, “White girls are privileged. They’re damsels in distress” (Alexie 116). What does this mean?

“Dance, Dance, Dance” pages 118-129

1. Why is the novel called *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*?
2. Examine the cartoon on p. 120. Analyze each of the pictures. Why do you think Alexie presents the information in this way?
3. How do Penelope and Roger react to Junior’s admission that he is poor?

“Don’t Trust Your Computer” pages 130-132

1. What does Junior email Rowdy and how does he reply?
2. Why do the people at home call Junior an ‘apple’?
3. What does Gordy say about the role of the tribe? How is this applicable to Junior?

“My Sister Sends Me a Letter” pages 133-134

1. What does Junior think of Mary’s ‘gorgeous new place’?

“Reindeer Games” pages 135-149

1. Why does Junior try out for the basketball team?
2. What happens at try-outs?
3. Why does Junior say “it was like something out of Shakespeare” (Alexie 142) when he discovers their first game is against Wellpinit?
4. What happens when Junior enters the gym?

“And a Partridge in a Pear Tree” pages 150-151

1. Describe Junior’s Christmas.

“Red Versus White” pages 152-158

1. What good things about his culture does Junior realize?
2. Why does Junior describe his grandmother as tolerant?

“Wake” pages 159-168

1. Junior accepts that “We all have to find our own way to say good-bye” (Alexie 161). How does Junior do this?
2. Junior explains, “We lived and died together” (Alexie 166). What does this show about Junior’s community?

“Valentine Heart” pages 169-178

1. How does Junior cope with his grief?
2. What do Junior's cartoons (on pages 170-171) reveal about his emotions?
3. What happens in Mrs. Jeremy's class?

"In Like a Lion" pages 179-196

1. What does the cartoon on page 182 demonstrate about Junior's feelings?
2. How does Sherman Alexie build tension towards the game?
3. What is the Reardan game plan? Is this successful?
4. Why does Junior cry when the game is finished?

"Rowdy and I Have a Long and Serious Discussion about Basketball" pages 197-198

1. Why is the chapter title humorous?

"Because Russian Guys Are Not Always Geniuses" pages 199-213

1. How does Mary die?
2. Why does Junior feel responsible in some way for Mary's death?
3. How do the students at Reardan show they care?

"My Final Freshman Year Report Card" page 214

1. Describe Junior's report card.

"Remembering" pages 215-218

1. What realizations does Junior arrive at?
2. What tribes does Junior belong to?
3. How does this help him feel better?

"Talking About Turtles" pages 219-230

1. Why do Junior and Rowdy climb the tree?
2. How does Rowdy compare Junior to a nomad?
3. Junior reveals, "We didn't keep score" (Alexie 230). What does the final line signify?
4. Do you think Rowdy and Junior will remain friends? Why or why not?