

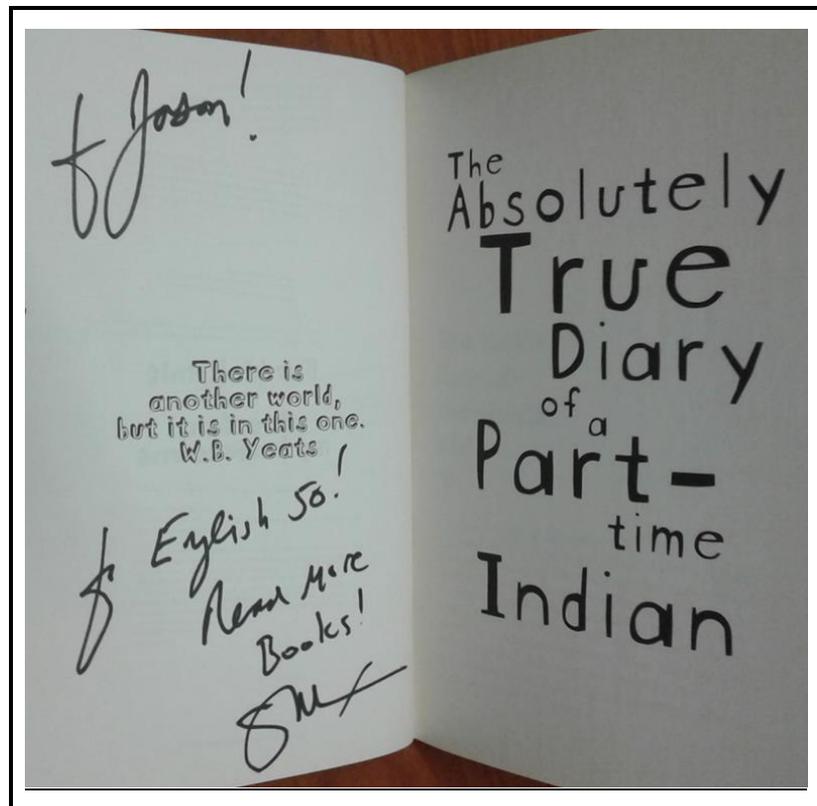
Assignment: Based on what you've read of Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, write a four-page essay in response to this question: **"What does the novel suggest or teach us about dealing with challenges?"**

In short, write about what the book suggests holds one back and moves one forward. To do so, you might imagine a possible thesis along these lines: "Alexie suggests that many people face serious challenges, such as A, B, & C, and that the best way to overcome them is D."

MORE DETAILS:

1. To add more depth and interest to your essay, please include some biographical facts about Alexie and refer to the PBS interview of him, identifying some instances where Arnold Spirit's life mirrors the author's own experiences.
2. Keep in mind that your main focus is on the novel and what it suggests about challenges many people face.

- This means we're thinking about things the novel is teaching about challenges but not necessarily saying directly. This is because fiction is different from non-fiction. Novels tell stories; they don't speak directly like non-fiction does. Novels have messages, but we need to interpret them by thinking about them carefully.
- This also means that your essay will not focus on your personal experiences but on the novel and other sources we are studying (such as the interview with Alexie). Be sure to include quotations, then, as evidence to support the points of your essay.



GENERAL WRITING OBJECTIVES:

- Maintain a clear focus by using good organization strategies. This means signaling key points clearly by presenting your **thesis** and **topic sentences** effectively. It also means having **unified paragraphs** that stay centered on one main idea.
- Use effective transitions to enhance the organization of your essay as it moves from one idea to another. For tips on **transitions**, see pages 34-40 in *Real Skills Interactive (RSI)*.
- Support your main points with developed body paragraphs. Include strong examples and select relevant details. Give added strength to support by including a minimum of three **quotes** from the author. Strategies on how to quote and cite accurately will be discussed in class.
- Make your presentation engaging. Take advantage especially of the spots where engaging your readers matters the most: the title, the opening, and the conclusion. Create interest in the topic and leave readers feeling like the topic matters to them.
- Establish credibility by presenting academic-looking work. Make sure the type font, spacing, and margins are in MLA format, and be sure to carefully proofread your essay. In addition, be sure to include a **works cited page** at the end of your essay. How to do so will be explained in class.

Avoid Plagiarism—don't let another source speak for you and rob you of a chance to express yourself; if you use outside sources, give them credit; acknowledge, quote, and cite them whenever necessary.

Grading Criteria: Papers will be evaluated upon the effectiveness and clarity with which they address the assignment and meet its objectives. See the assignment's grading rubric for more specific details.

Note: If you're interested in approaching this assignment from a different angle, please check with me.

Format: Four complete pages (approx. 1400 words), minimum. A little over four pages is fine. Use MLA style—that means typed, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, and double spaced.

Rough Draft: A rough draft for peer review is due before the final draft. Bring two typed copies of your rough draft. At minimum, drafts need to be three complete pages. Also, students also need to be in class for peer review credit. Not meeting these goals reduces an assignment's final draft score by 3.5 points.

Percentage of Course Grade: 15%

Due Dates: See our class Reading and Assignment Schedule.