

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	OHS English Department	School:	OHS
Book Title:	The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven	Genre:	fiction, short stories
Author:	Sherman Alexie	Pages:	272
Publisher:	Grove Press	Copyright:	2005

In a brief rationale, please provide the following information relative to the book you would like added to the school's book collection for classroom use. You may attach additional pages as needed.

Book Summary and summary citation: (suggested resources include book flap summaries, review summaries from publisher, book vendors, etc.)

Sherman Alexie's critically celebrated first collection, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* established its author as one of America's most important and provocative voices. Vividly weaving memory, fantasy, and stark reality to paint a portrait of life in and around the Spokane Indian reservation, this book introduces some of Alexie's most beloved characters who inhabit his distinctive landscape. There is Thomas Builds-the-Fire, the storyteller who no one seems to listen to, and his compatriot—and sometimes not-so-great friend—Victor, the basketball hero who turned into a recovering alcoholic. Now with two new stories and an introduction from Alexie, these twenty-four interlinked tales are narrated by characters raised on humiliation and government-issue cheese, and yet filled with passion and affection, myth and charm. Against a backdrop of alcohol, car accidents, laughter, and basketball, Alexie depicts the distances between Indians and whites, reservation Indians and urban Indians, men and women, and most poetically, modern Indians and the traditions of the past.

<http://www.groveatlantic.com/grove/bin/wc.dll?groveproc%7Ebook%7E22>

Provide an instructional rationale for the use of this title, including specific reference to the OLSD curriculum map(s): (Curriculum maps may be referenced by grade/course and indicator number or curriculum maps with indicators highlighted may be attached to this form)

The following key indicators from the 10th grade map will be explored:

Reading 3. Knowledge of Literary and Nonliterary Forms

b. Describe how the choice of form (e.g., film, novel, sculpture) affects the presentation of a work's theme or topic e.g., comparing Fahrenheit 451 to Francois Truffaut's film version)

5. Author's Voice and Method

a. Use organization or structure of text (e.g., comparison/contrast, cause/effect, problem/solution) and writer's techniques (e.g., repetition of ideas, syntax, word choice) to aid comprehension of increasingly challenging texts

h. Identify the author's stated or implied purpose in increasingly challenging texts

Include two professional reviews of this title: (a suggested list of resources for identifying professional reviews is shown below. Reviews may be "cut and pasted" (with citation) into the form or printed reviews may be attached to the form)

Review #1

Known primarily as a poet, Alexie (*Old Shirts and New Skins*), a Spokane/Coeur d'Alene Indian, here offers 22 extremely fine short stories, all set on or around the Spokane reservation in

Washington state. Characters flow from one tale to the next; many involve Victor, who grows from a small child watching relatives fight during a New Year's Eve party ("Every Little Hurricane") to a dissolute man sitting on his broken-down porch with a friend, watching life pass him by ("The Only Traffic Signal on the Reservation Doesn't Flash Red Anymore"). The author depicts with fierce determination all the elements of modern Native American life, from basketball and alcoholism to powwows and the unexplained deaths of insignificant people. Humor and tragedy exist side by side, and stories often jump back and forth in time and space, recounting two narratives that ultimately prove to be skeins of the same tale. Alexie writes with simplicity and forthrightness, allowing the power in his stories to creep up slowly on the reader. He captures the reservation's strong sense of community and attitude of hope tinged with realism as its inhabitants determine to persevere despite the odds. In "Imagining the Reservation" (a title that evokes John Lennon's song "Imagine") he writes, "Survival = Anger Imagination. Imagination is the only weapon on the reservation"--a weapon this author wields with potent authority. First serial to Esquire.

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Review #2

From Library Journal

This work chronicles modern life on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Victor, through whose eyes we view the community, is strongly aware of Native American traditions but wonders whether his ancestors view today's Indians--mired in alcohol, violence, and an almost palpable sense of despair--with sympathy or disgust. In spite of the bleakness of reservation life, the text brims with humor and passion as it juxtaposes ancient customs with such contemporary artifacts as electric guitars and diet Pepsi. The author of two previous poetry collections, Alexie writes with grit and lyricism that perfectly capture the absurdity of a proud, dignified people living in the squalor, struggling to survive in a society they disdain. Highly recommended for all fiction collections. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 5/15/93.

- Dan Bogey, Clearfield Cty. P.L. Federation, Curwensville, Pa.

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What alternate text(s) could also fulfill the instructional requirements?

Title: **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** Author: **Sherman Alexie**

Title: **A Summer Life** Author: **Gary Soto**

Title: **American Born Chinese** Author: **Gene Luen Yang**

Title: **House on Mango Street** Author: **Sandra Cisneros**

Title: Author:

Title: Author:

Document any potentially controversial content:

strong language primarily used in dialog, shows family and cultural environment of the characters

Keeping in mind the age, academic level, and maturity of the intended reader, what is the suggested classroom use: (check all that apply)

Gifted/Accelerated Regular At Risk

GRADE LEVEL(S): 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Reading level of this title (if applicable):

Date Submitted to Department Chair:

Suggested Professional Literary Review Sources:

School Library Journal

Horn Book

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)

Library Journal

Book Links

Publisher's Weekly

Booklist

Kirkus Review

Wilson Library Catalog

English Journal (and other resources of the National Council of Teachers of English)

The Reading Teacher (International Reading Association)

Literature for Today's Young Adults