

To: Incoming Freshmen
From: Mr. Geron Spray
Re: Summer Reading

Greetings, NMSA Freshmen:

Welcome to New Mexico School for the Arts. My name is Geron Spray, and I'll be your 9th grade English teacher. I am excited to get to know each and every one of you, and to help you begin your time at this amazing school. I am sure we will have a good year.

I believe that summer is a time for fun and relaxation, but we still need to squeeze a little bit of work in. So, this summer, your assignment is to read *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, by Sherman Alexie.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian is a very popular book, and you can easily find copies at the public library, or at online retailers like Amazon. If you do not wish to purchase a copy of the novel, several copies will be available, in the front office, to loan to students. Contact the front office about a good time to come pick up a copy.

In elementary and middle school, you hopefully learned about *theme*. Remember that a theme is an author's truth, lesson, or statement about a big idea; it is universal in scope. Therefore, as you read *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, please keep your eye out for the following themes:

1. Hope and dreams
2. Bullying
3. Race
4. Drinking

I suggest you get four different colors of highlighters, and assign one color to each theme. When you see evidence of the "hope and dreams" theme, for example, highlight it in yellow, or when you see evidence of the "bullying" theme, highlight it in blue. If you have a book that does not belong to you or you do not wish to highlight, use loose-leaf paper to create a separate note page for each theme, and write a quick note when and where you identify that theme. Keeping track of the themes will make writing about them and discussing them much easier.

Please make sure you read the novel. If you don't, you will start the year already behind.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at gspray@nmschoolforthearts.org.

Sincerely,

Geron J. Spray