

Spring 2009 RD 115  
Final Discussion Questions  
*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*

**R. A. I. D.**  
**( READ AND INITIATE DISCUSSION )**

1. **Break into Groups:** 6 total minutes per question; 2-3 minutes per person
2. Whoever wants to begin with the first question, take the purple “Talking Stick”
  - When I call “**BEGIN**,” the person with the **Talking Stick** begins to answer Question No. 1
  - When I call “**SWITCH**,” hand the **Talking Stick** to the person *to your left*
  - If that person wants to continue answering the same question, hold onto the **Talking Stick** and go ahead; otherwise, say “*Pass*,” and pass the **Talking Stick to your left**.
3. When I call “**STOP**,” whoever has the **Talking Stick** needs to put it back into the center of the table.
4. Whoever wants to begin with the second question, take the purple “Talking Stick”
  - When I call “**BEGIN**” again, the person with the **Talking Stick** begins to answer Question No. 2
  - When I call “**SWITCH**,” hand the **Talking Stick** to the person *to your left*
  - If that person wants to continue answering the same question, hold onto the **Talking Stick** and go ahead; otherwise, say “*Pass*,” and pass the **Talking Stick to your left**.
5. When I call “**STOP**,” whoever has the **Talking Stick** needs to put it back into the center of the table.
6. Whoever wants to begin with the third question, take the purple “Talking Stick”
  - When I call “**BEGIN**” again, the person with the **Talking Stick** begins to answer Question No. 3, etc.

**RULE #1: EVERYONE MUST TAKE THE PURPLE TALKING STICK**  
**FROM THE CENTER AT LEAST ONCE**

**RULE #2: DO NOT SPEAK UNLESS YOU HAVE THE TALKING STICK!**

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1. Referencing p. 180,
    - a. **Explain why Junior/Arnold became a good basketball player “overnight.”**
      - Give examples & details.
    - b. **Do you think you’ve become a better reader (and maybe even writer) “overnight” (over the course of this term)?**
      - Why?
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2. On p. 183, the local news crew comes out to interview Arnold and asks, “So, Arnold, how does it feel to play against your former teammates?” When Arnold responded, “It’s kind of weird,” the newscaster said, “Listen. I know this is a difficult thing. You’re young. But maybe you could get more specific about your feelings.”
    - a. **What was Arnold finally able to say once he was able to find the words to be “more specific”?**
    - b. Looking back over this term, when I’ve been urging you over and over again to BE SPECIFIC and PROVIDE DETAIL in your essay responses.
      - **Please respond specifically to this question:**  
**When you first started this class, you probably struggled to answer many of the questions about our readings; now, you’re definitely reading at college level. How does that make you feel?**

3. On p. 187, Coach tells the team, “I have to be honest, guys. We can’t beat these guys with our talent. ***We just aren’t good enough. But I think we have bigger hearts.***”
- As Junior/Arnold goes on to explain things over the next couple of pages, **what do you think Coach meant by that – “have bigger hearts”?**
  - Thinking about **how far you’ve come** with your reading and writing ability in this class this term,
    - do you think you’re good enough?**
    - that you have heart?**
    - maybe even both?**
      - Why?**
  - How can you use those four words (YOU CAN DO IT) to describe where you’ve come from and where you are going, as far as being a true college reader?**
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4. On p. 211, Rowdy tells Junior, “It’s all your fault.”
- What is it that Rowdy’s accusing Junior of here?**
  - Considering everything that happened – not just in this chapter, but in the whole book,
    - Why do you think Junior tells us, “The next morning, I went to school. I didn’t know what else to do”?**
    - What are other things he could have done** (what were most of the other Indians doing?)?
    - What do you think it means that he decided to go back to school?**
  - Did you have any crises happen to you this term?**
    - What do you think it is that made you decide to keep coming back to school?**
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5. On p. 217, Junior lists all the tribes he belongs to.
- Briefly explain what you think he means by any six of them** (for example, what does he mean when he says he belongs to the tribe of American immigrants?).
  - List the “tribes” you feel you belong to.**
  - Can you think of **any “new” tribes that you might belong to**, now that this class, this term, this academic year have all come to an end – **compared with those you belonged to when you first started?**