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Deconstructing Native American Stereotypes Through the Reading of Contemporary Multicultural Literature

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This project will look specifically at the novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. Some of the questions to be addressed throughout the project include: what does it mean to be the “Other,” how can minority multicultural literature be used to help students deconstruct racial stereotypes, and what are the systems in place that have formed the division between “us” and the “other?” I will begin with a historical account of interactions with Native Americans within the United States, beginning with initial encounters and moving up to modern times. Providing this historical information will help to outline and contextualize the current situation of Native Americans as invisible and forgotten within the United States in the present time, a country that originally belonged solely to them. Through an in-depth textual analysis of several scenes and defining features within the novel, I will demonstrate the importance of covering literature of this nature. Specifically, as a piece of Native American literature, which is a topic that students are often unknowledgeable about, the textual analysis of this novel will explore and break down some of the racial stereotypes that currently surround Native Americans. Rather than advocating for the broad inclusion of contemporary multicultural literature, this project will demonstrate the importance of talking about the minority cultures within the genre of multicultural literature.