

Dear students,

in the following, please find Paloma's commented characterization. All in all, it is a successful analysis that adheres to the main rules but also shows room for improvement. I hope it serves well to illustrate some general aspects.

Language mistakes are indicated in red. Further comments on mainly content but also format etc. you find in the commentary section.

Please all read the feedback carefully, compare it to your own result and consider for yourself:

- Did I include all the parts of a character analysis in my piece of work?
- Did I maybe make the same typical language mistakes?
- Are some of the comments in this example true for my characterization as well?

If you like to read further examples of your fellow students' characterizations, check out the respective upload folder. There, all characterizations are available to everybody else.

Characterization – Junior

Junior is the main character in the novel "The absolutely true diary of a part-time Indian" by Sherman Alexie. His full name is Arnold Spirit Jr. and he lives on the Spokane Indian reservation in the state of Washington, USA. Junior can be described as a typical teenage boy, aside from his outer appearance. Due to his brain damage he has many physical problems. For instance, he was born with forty-two teeth, is near-sighted on one eye and farsighted on the other one, is very skinny and has an enormous skull. But besides that Junior is a very smart kid with a big dream. He wants to become a famous cartoonist and leave his reservation. The novel follows Juniors life and shows how he develops in order to purchase his dreams.

Juniors life on the rez is not very pleasant. Because of his physical problems he is considered to be a total retard and gets beat up from time to time. His best friend Rowdy is the toughest kid on the rez and he protects Junior from the others. Because of the fact that he's always picked on, Junior is really insecure and depends on Rowdy. Nevertheless, Junior is also very self-determined. He knows that he wants to have a better life than his parents and all the Indians on the rez. That's also the reason why he decides to transfer to a white school, after Mr. P encouraged him. From then on his life changes completely. The friendship with Rowdy falls apart, because Rowdy assumes that Junior thinks he's better than him or everyone else.

Kommentiert [J11]: reasonable introduction to your analysis stating who is going to be characterized in the first place and where this character originates

Kommentiert [J12]: correct procedure to move from the outer features and characteristics ...

Kommentiert [J13]: ... to the inward nature of a character

Kommentiert [J14]: Either included in the first paragraph or at the beginning of the following one, you need to add the information that the reader gained but which you left out here. Information on Junior's (exact) age, his social background and family for example are missing.

Kommentiert [J15]: In the following main body of your analysis you retrace Junior's life phase portrayed in the novel. You focus on key events and turning points. The way you did it, is still acceptable. But be aware that you don't need to chronologically recall everything your character experiences. Limit yourself to those instances that highlight and support a claim you make about your character's personality or have a relevance for the character's development.

Kommentiert [J16]: What is the underlying problem of the life on the rez? This is missing here, compare lack of information on social background above.

Kommentiert [J17]: Who is Mr. P? Just briefly that he's one of this teachers on the rez, for example.

Kommentiert [J18]: Start a new paragraph here.

The start at the new school doesn't go off that well either. Everyone stares at him because of his skin colour and Juniors very confused as he realizes that the white kids don't fight with each other in order to solve their problems. The next turning point for Junior is when he gets together with the most popular girl, Penelope. Suddenly he's being noticed by everyone and gets really popular. Another high point of Juniors is as he makes it to the basketball team. From then on he gets more confident, because the coach uses him as his secret weapon. But then his grandmother, his fathers best friend and his sister die. All these deaths left Junior devastated. He blamed himself for all these deaths. He thought of them as a punishment for him for leaving the rez and betraying his tribe. But then he managed to get over the depression by making lists of everything that gave him joy and thanks to the support he got from his schoolmates. So in the end he only got stronger than he was before. When the time for the second basketball game against his old school came, Junior was determined to win, so he could embarrass Rowdy. And he did win. But then he realized, that the Indians always were supposed to lose. And as he noticed that he helped beating them, he felt really miserable. At the end of the novel Junior manages to get good grades on his year report and to become friends with Rowdy again. In contrast to the beginning of the novel Junior got more independent and self-confident. He managed to withstand all the difficult situations in his life and came to terms with his decisions.

As we have seen Junior transforms from a really insecure person at the beginning to a confident one in the end. He got through every bad situation in his life and is now able to stand up for his decisions. He now knows that his dream of having a better future outside the reservation can come true if he doesn't let others prevent him from purchasing them.

Paloma did a convincing job here.

Formally speaking, she wrote an analysis that follows the appropriate text structure and presentation of information.

The language of this review is on a very high level already. Now it would be time to give the fine tuning. Use even more linking words, especially to combine your paragraphs, and appropriate / typical phrases.

But watch out that characterizations are written (consistently) in the simple present!

What is unfortunately missing in this review is Junior's struggle of finding his

Kommentiert [J19]: Here you suddenly start writing in the past. Stay with the simple present – the tense which is used in characterizations.

Kommentiert [J110]: This is the key result of Junior's character analysis! Therefore, this passage (and the following paragraph) might deserve an extended description in some parts.

For example, by (once again) stating his character traits (using more adjectives) at the beginning, in the course of and at the end of the novel.

Moreover, "difficult situation" and "his decisions" could be narrowed down further.

Kommentiert [J111]: No need for a new paragraph here. This passage is the continuation of your finding at the end of the last paragraph. So it can be combined here.

identity, his constant split between the red and the white world. This is of course suggested by the different and competing friendships he has on the rez as well as at Reardan but it needs to become clearer. Junior's development is not only triggered by the experiences with his friends but also by his (altering) social and cultural background. Although I agree, these partly go hand in hand.