

**West Los Angeles College**  
**English 20A**  
**Spring 2015 Section: 0929**

**Mark Wallach**

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**Meetings:** General Classroom Building, Room 230

**Time:** TTh, 1-2:25 p.m.

**Office hours:** Tues. 2:25-2:40 p.m.; Thurs. 2:25-2:45 p.m.

**Required texts:**

Alexie, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2009.

Green, John. *The Fault in Our Stars*. United States: Penguin Books, 2012.

Langan, John. *Ten Steps to Building College Reading Skills*. Fifth edition. Townsend Press, 2011.

**Student Learning Outcome:**

At the end of the course, the successful student will be able to utilize his or her own knowledge and experience to write meaningfully about texts.

**Goals:**

- Students will learn specific reading comprehension strategies, including predicting, using prior knowledge, questioning, relating text to yourself/other texts/ the world, determining what's important, visualizing, inferring, monitoring, and synthesizing information.
- Students will learn to identify main ideas and supporting details.
- Students will increase their vocabulary and learn to infer the meanings of vocabulary words from context.
- Students will learn to critically evaluate texts.
- Students will learn skills in using a dictionary.

- Students will nurture their ability to enjoy and appreciate reading.
- Students will learn to write clearly about texts, writing paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting details.
- Students will make connections between different parts of the reading.
- Students will learn how to use library resources.

### **Requirements:**

- Reading assignments
- Writing assignments on readings and from The Skilled Reader (generally five to ten points)
- Quizzes on readings (10 points)
- Library assignment (20)
- Midterm on *Part-Time Indian* (100 points)
- Final exam on *The Fault in Our Stars* (100 points)
- Participation (50 points)

Note: I reserve the right to make small changes in the point totals and activities.

### **Grading:**

A: 90% and higher

B: 80-89%

C: 70-79%

D: 50-69%

F: less than 50%

### **Course Policies:**

1. You will receive points for doing homework assignments. Generally, these assignments will be from *Ten Steps* or about the readings. Students who regularly do not do the homework (50% or more of the assignments) risk being dropped from the class.
2. Attending class regularly is important. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be counted as absent. If you are absent more than five times, you risk being dropped from the class. If you are not

- present during the first day of class when the roll is called, you may be dropped from the class. If you are absent three times in the first three weeks, you may be dropped from the class. You will receive no more than three excused absences and missed homework must be submitted upon return from the excused absence.
3. Being on time and staying for the entire class is important. Leaving more than fifteen minutes early or being out of the room for fifteen minutes or more during class will also count as an absence. Students who are chronically late or who make a habit of leaving early may be suspended from class.
  4. Assignments will be accepted no more than one meeting late. Late assignments will receive a penalty.
  5. You must let me know **prior** to an exam or quiz about any true emergencies or illnesses. If possible, bring an authorized note regarding your illness or emergency. If I do not receive prior notice about your absence for the midterm, I will deduct twenty-five points from your make-up midterm exam. It is your responsibility to notify me upon your return. Make ups will not be given more than two meetings after the original exam. A final exam cannot be made up without prior notification.
  6. If you have a medical or religious reason for missing class, please bring me an authorized excuse.
  7. Keep your pagers and cell phones silent while in class, and please do not text during class. If I see you texting or using a cellphone (including a ringing cell phone), you may be asked to leave the class meeting for that day and/or have points deducted from your grade. You may also have points deducted from your grade if you show up to class without *Ten Steps* and the book we are currently reading.
  8. Type assignments if possible. If you cannot type the assignments, please write neatly.
  9. I generally prefer not to receive emailed assignments. If you must email an assignment, please make special arrangements with me. Emailed assignments may be penalized.
  10. I encourage you to exchange email addresses with at least one other student to find out about classes you have missed.
  11. Communicate with me about any problems you are having.
  12. Visit the writing lab in the HLRC.
  13. You may only attempt to take a class in LACCD three times (including Ws). Check the Schedule of Classes for deadlines about

withdrawing from the class and other deadlines. If you decide to drop the class, it is your responsibility to do so.

**Keys to Success:**

- Be diligent about doing the readings.
- Be prepared for quizzes.
- Do the homework,
- Participate in class discussions.

**Academic Integrity Policy:**

The college has a strict policy against plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism is when you “borrow” another person’s work and present it as your own or when another person writes all or part of your paper. You will receive a zero for any assignment for which you have cheated on an exam or plagiarized a paper. Also, students who copy (or share) homework assignments with other students will receive a zero for the assignments. Repeat violators may be referred to the Dean of Student Services for disciplinary action.

**Student Code of Conduct:**

You are expected to conduct yourself as an adult and abide by the “Standards of Student Conduct” listed in the Schedule of Classes. I will speak to individual students who disrupt the class and may ask you to change seats. If disruptions continue, I may also deduct points from your grade, and you may be excused for the class meeting. I am also authorized to suspend you for up to two class meetings.

**Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities who need any assistance or accommodations should contact me. The Disabled Students Programs and Services is located in the Student Services Building, Room 320. Tel.: (310) 287-4450. Email: [dsps@wla.edu](mailto:dsps@wla.edu).

## **Writing Lab:**

Information on West's Writing Lab is available at [http://www.wlac.edu/library/info/lab\\_writing.html](http://www.wlac.edu/library/info/lab_writing.html)

The link to West's online writing lab is

<http://www.wlac.edu/online/owl.asp>

## **Learning Skills Center, HLRC, first floor:**

The Learning Skills Center is a valuable resource for those needing additional help with developing their reading skills.

Sue de Bord, director. Tel: (310) 287-4508

## **Major Class Activities:**

Note: I may change the order in which the activities are presented based on how the class proceeds. Also note that once you have learned a reading comprehension skill, you will practice those skills in subsequent weeks.

Week One: Course and Student introductions. *Ten Steps*: Introduction. Additional reading skills: SQ3R, prior knowledge.

Week Two: Read and discuss *Part-Time Indian*. *Ten Steps*: Introduction, an Introduction to Active Reading. Additional reading comp. skills: SQ3R, prior knowledge, relating text to self.

Week Three: Read and discuss *Part-Time Indian*. *Ten Steps*: Inferences. Additional reading comp. skills: Text to text, text to self, text to world.

Week Four: Read and discuss *Part-Time Indian*. *Ten Steps*: Dictionary Use. Additional reading comp. skills. Word parts,

inferences.

Week Five: Read and discuss *Part-Time Indian*. *Ten Steps*:  
Vocabulary in context. Additional reading comprehension skills:  
Asking questions, predicting.

Week Six: Read and discuss *Part-Time Indian*. *Ten Steps*:  
Main Ideas. Additional reading comp. skills: Visualizing, understanding  
graphics.

Week Seven: Read and discuss *Part-Time Indian*. *Ten Steps*:  
Supporting Details. Additional reading comprehension skills:  
Determining importance, asking questions.

Week Eight: Read and discuss *Part-Time Indian*. *Ten Steps*:  
Location of main ideas.

**Midterm: *Part-Time Indian***

Week Nine: Read and discuss *The Fault in Our Stars*. *Ten Steps*:  
Separating fact from opinion. Additional reading skills: Inferences,

Week Ten: Read and discuss *The Fault in Our Stars*. *Ten Steps*: Implied  
Main Ideas. Additional reading skills: Inferences, monitoring,  
summarizing

Week Eleven: Read and discuss *The Fault in Our Stars*. *Ten Steps*:  
Relationships I. Additional skills: Library skills.

Week Twelve: Read and discuss *The Fault in Our Stars*. Library skills.  
*Ten Steps*: Relationships II.

Week Thirteen: Read and discuss *The Fault in Our Stars*. *Ten Steps*: The  
Basics of Argument.

Week Fourteen: Read and discuss *The Fault in Our Stars*. *Ten Steps*: The  
Basics of Argument.

Week Fifteen: Read and discuss *The Fault in Our Stars*. Reading  
comp. skills: Synthesis, figurative language

Week Sixteen: **Final Exam:** Thursday, June 4, 2015, 1:45-3:45 p.m. Please bring a blue book for your midterm and final exam.

**Bonuses:**

- Students will receive bonus points on quizzes for having perfect attendance and no disruptive behavior in the weeks leading up to the quiz.
- Students who have perfect attendance (and one lateness or fewer) for the semester will receive a 15 point bonus in their participation grade.
- Students who have one absence (and one lateness or fewer) for the semester will receive a 10 point bonus in their participation grade.

**Student Services:**

West Institute for Student Excellence. Tel.: (310) 287-4261. Includes CalWorks/GAIN, Educational Opportunity Center, Educational Talent Search, Tech Prep, TRIO Student Services, and Upward Bound.

Counseling. Building A-13. Tel.: (310) 287-4357.

Student Health: Building A-9. Tel.: (310) 287-4478.

