

FICTION 2

'EVERY BOOK IS A MYSTERY.

AND IF YOU READ ALL THE BOOKS EVER WRITTEN,

IT'S LIKE YOU'VE READ ONE GIANT MYSTERY.

AND NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU LEARN,

YOU KEEP ON LEARNING SO MUCH MORE

THAN YOU NEED TO LEARN.'

SHERMAN ALEXIE IN
'THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART-TIME INDIAN'

Welcome to Fiction 2. You are going to explore the world of realistic fiction. No dragons and magic this time, just reality. Relate to the main characters in a coming-of-age novel, or dream of the technological possibilities in the near or distant future. A realistic story can suck you in easily because you already know the world around it. It can tell you about times past and societies far away. It will help you understand yourself and the world you live in. We'll show you books, films, songs and even poetry. Have fun.

This Is What You Will Do

You will read various fictional texts and books, watch and listen to stories, and answer questions about them. Some of these questions and assignments will be saved in your fiction file. You will work on this file, adding new books, films, short stories, song texts, poems or comics and assignments every year.



This is What You Will Need

You will need:

- at least one reading book for the final assignment;
- a fiction file: a portfolio where you keep all the required assignments;
- a word file, to write down new words and phrases.

This is What You Will Learn

You will learn:

- about different genres within realistic fiction; what they are called and what their characteristics are;
- about setting: why it is important to a story and what culture, background, history and society have to do with it in realistic fiction;
- about the plot elements of a story; how a story works and the way it is built up;
- about figures of speech; about similes and metaphors and their function;
- that reading skills will improve when you read, giving you more vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and language fluency.

ERK

Je werkt vooral aan de volgende onderdelen:

- kijken en luisteren op B1-niveau: Je kunt de verhaallijn in veel films volgen;
- lezen op B1-niveau: Je kunt beschrijvingen van plaatsen, gebeurtenissen, gevoelens en perspectieven in verhalende teksten begrijpen. Je kunt het plot volgen van verhalen, eenvoudige romans en stripverhalen. Je kunt eenvoudige gedichten en liedjesteksten begrijpen;
- analyseren van creatieve teksten op A2-niveau en op B1-niveau: Je kunt in een verhaal met een eenvoudige en bekende constructie aangeven hoe het verhaal verloopt en wat de belangrijkste gebeurtenissen van het verhaal zijn;
- een persoonlijke reactie geven op creatieve teksten op A2 niveau en op B1 niveau: Je kunt de gevoelens van een personage herkennen, begrijpen en deze aan jouw eigen gevoel relateren. Je kunt uitleggen waarom bepaalde delen van een verhaal je wel of niet interesseren en de gebeurtenissen van een verhaal relateren aan je eigen ervaringen en kennis. Je kunt de persoonlijkheid van personages omschrijven. Je kunt goed uitleggen met welk personage van een verhaal je je het meest identificeert en waarom. Je kunt kort uitleggen wat je van een verhaal vond en welke gevoelens/ideeën het in je losmaakte.

A

REALISTIC FICTION

1

Read **Realistic Fiction** and answer the questions.

- 1 **Read the text of the backflaps of three different books. Which of the stories most likely does not belong to the realistic fiction genre?**
- A Malini's story is set in a world inspired by the history and epics of India, in which a captive princess and a servant who has forbidden magic become unlikely friends on a dark journey to save their empire from the princess's evil brother.
- B Now that they're going to college, Wren has told Cath she doesn't want to be roommates. Cath is on her own, completely outside of her comfort zone. She's got a roommate with a charming, always-around boyfriend; a handsome classmate who only wants to talk about words ... and she can't stop worrying about her dad, who's loving and fragile and has never really been alone.
- C This is the story of Junior, a boy growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on 'the rez' (the reservation) to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.
- 2 Watch the film trailers. For each trailer, write down the genre it belongs to. Choose from: **crime thriller - coming-of-age - historical fiction - realistic science fiction.**
- Trailer 1
- Trailer 2
- Trailer 3
- Trailer 4
- 3 Which realistic films, series and/or books have you seen or read? Write down at least three titles.
-
-
-
-



Realistic Fiction

All the stories you read, watch and hear that are not true, but could be true, fall into this genre. High-school films, films set during real wars, love stories and books about people going through something difficult, like an illness or divorce, are all part of the realistic genre. You will also find many **thrillers** in realistic fiction, especially **crime thrillers**.

The most popular genre within realistic fiction is **coming-of-age**. In that genre children - usually teenagers - go through some kind of process to grow up and become more mature. The characters always learn important lessons, learn about themselves and decide who they want to be.

But there are more types of realistic fiction. **Historical fiction** gives you a made-up story, in a real historical setting, like the First World War, colonial times, the Middle Ages or during the sinking of an important boat. The story is not real, but the time and place are.

Another popular realistic genre is **realistic science fiction (sci-fi)**. These stories take place sometime in the future, but in a place that is real, or could be real. If climate change heats up the Earth, what would happen? If someone uses DNA technology to bring back dinosaurs, what will happen?

2

Read **Setting**. The following sentences are from different books. What does each sentence tell you about the setting? Copy the words that are about the setting. Then write down in Dutch where and when the story is set.

- Juliet flattens her hair and I adjust my hijab and we start walking out of St Pancras station. We're silent for a moment, and I'm suddenly nervous, which is strange, because Juliet and I are practically soulmates - two people who found each other in the depths of the Internet and just like that, we are friends.

Setting

Where?

When?

- I could see the whole world! Or at least the whole of Vienna, and that was my world. It was my ninth birthday and the best day of my life. When my parents asked me last week what I wanted for my birthday, there was no contest. I wanted to ride on Vienna's Ferris Wheel: the *Riesenrad*.

Setting

Where?

When?

Setting

The setting of a story answers the questions **where?** and **when?** Often, it is described at the beginning of a book, and it is usually the first thing you see in a film. It gives you information about the story. If you read about a spaceship landing on an unknown planet, it's going to be a different story than if you see a dinosaur stomping through the jungle. Are there horse-drawn carriages riding through the cobble-stoned streets? Then the story is probably set in the past.

In addition, the setting tells you about the **mood (sfeer)**. A dark forest will usually have a scary or a mysterious mood. Spring and summer are more cheerful.

How do you find out what the setting is? What do you look for? Well, the **surroundings** of course - the desert, in someone's bedroom, at school, in a certain country or city. But also take note of the **language** that is spoken, the **clothes** people wear and the **technology** they have - when people have a smartphone, the story has to be set in the 21st century. Sometimes, there is a clear **year** or **date**, and sometimes the surroundings or characters will tell you if the story is set in the **past, present** or **future**. The answer to the 'when' question can also be: during the day, at night, in summer, or during the celebration of Eid al-Fitr. The setting also tells you about the **genre**.



3

Read **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian**, a short extract from the book by Sherman Alexie about a teenage Native-American boy named Junior who lives on an Indian reservation in the USA.

1 Look at the underlined words. Look them up in a dictionary and write down what they mean in Dutch:

- 1 whispered
- 2 suffering
- 3 saddest
- 4 poverty
- 5 to blame
- 6 wealth
- 7 destined
- 8 perseverance
- 9 relieved
- 10 afford

2 Who is Oscar?

.....

3 Why do you think Junior's parents don't take Oscar to the vet (dierenarts)?

.....

4 Is this a realistic story? Explain your answer.

.....

.....

5 **To which genre does this book belong?**

- A coming-of-age
- B crime thriller
- C science fiction

6 What do you think it's like to live in an Indian reservation? Name two things you can find in the text about their way of life.

.....

.....

.....

7 Are there any more words in the text that you don't know? Look them up in a dictionary and add them to your word file. Ask your teacher how to make a word file, or look at the video about making a word file in the online version of Library.



The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

There was nothing I could do to save Oscar.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

So I lay down on the floor beside him and patted his head and whispered his name *for hours*.

Then Dad came home from *wherever* and had one of those long talks with Mom, and they decided something *without me*.

And then Dad pulled his rifle and bullets from the closet.

'Junior,' he said. 'Carry Oscar outside.'

'No!' I screamed.

'He's suffering,' Dad said. 'We have to help him.'

'You can't do it!' I shouted.

Dad just looked down at me with the saddest look in his eyes. He was crying. he looked *weak*.

I wanted to hate him for his weakness. I wanted to hate Dad and Mom for our poverty.

I wanted to blame them for my sick dog and for all the other sickness in the world.

But I can't blame my parents for our poverty. It's not like my mother and father were born into wealth. My parents came from poor people who came from poor people who came from poor people, all the way back to the very first poor people.

But we reservation Indians don't get to realize our dreams. We don't get those chances. Or choices. We're just poor. That's all we are.

It sucks to be poor, and it sucks to feel that you somehow deserve to be poor. You start believing that you're poor because you're stupid and ugly. And then you start believing that you're stupid and ugly because you're Indian. And because you're Indian you start believing you're destined to be poor. It's an ugly circle and *there's nothing you can do about it*.

Poverty doesn't give you strength or teach you lessons about perseverance. No, poverty only teaches you how to be poor.

So, poor and small and weak, I picked up Oscar. He licked my face because he loved and trusted me. And I carried him out to the lawn, and I laid him down beneath our green apple tree.

'I love you, Oscar,' I said.

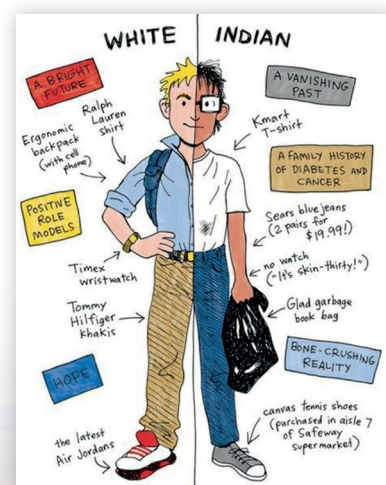
He looked at me and I swear to you that he understood what was happening. He knew what Dad was going to do. But Oscar wasn't scared. He was relieved.

But not me. I ran away from there as fast as I could.

I wanted to run faster than the speed of sound, but nobody, no matter how much pain they're in, can run that fast. So, I heard the boom of my father's rifle when he shot my best friend.

A bullet only costs about two cents, and anybody can afford that.

Adapted from: **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** by Sherman Alexie



4

Junior, the main character in ‘The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian’, lives on ‘The Rez’; an Indian Reservation in Spokane, USA.

- 1 Read **The Rez**. These are ten sentences from different parts of the book. Which sentences say something about the setting? Write down the number(s) of the sentence(s).

.....

- 2 Which sentences from **The Rez** describe a character?

.....

Answer the next questions in Dutch.

- 3 Zin 1 komt uit een van de eerste hoofdstukken van het boek. Zin 10 uit het laatste. Wat is het verschil in sfeer tussen de twee zinnen?

.....

.....

.....

- 4 **Wat kun je afleiden uit zin 4?**

- A De schrijfster vindt het in Montana geweldig.
- B Dit is het einde van een brief.
- C Indianen in Montana hebben alleen paarden als vervoersmiddel.

- 5 **Welke informatie over de setting kun je uit zin 6 halen?**

- A Het verhaal speelt in een tijd waarin ze computers en e-mail hebben.
- B Junior is te arm voor een smartphone.
- C Rowdy woont niet op de Rez.

- 6 Look up any words you don't know in a dictionary and add them to your word file.

The Rez

- 1 ... there's probably no place more isolated than my reservation, which is located approximately one million miles north of Important and two billion miles west of Happy.
- 2 So Rowdy and I walked the three miles to the powwow grounds. It was dark, maybe eight o'clock or so, and the drummers and singers were loud and wonderful.
- 3 First of all, I learned that I was smarter than most of those white kids.
- 4 Dear Junior: I love it in Montana. It's beautiful. Indians still ride horses in Montana.
- 5 He was an extremely weird dude. But he was the smartest person I'd ever known.
- 6 So, I walked over to the computer lab and emailed Rowdy.
- 7 Eugene was a good guy, but he was drunk all the time.
- 8 He left on Christmas Eve and came back on January 2.
- 9 It was July. Crazy hot and dry. It hadn't rained in, like, sixty days.
- 10 The reservation is beautiful. I mean it. There are pine trees everywhere. Some of the pine trees are ninety feet tall and more than three hundred years old. We could see our whole world when we climbed those trees.





5

Read the extracts from the song **Tribute** by Tenacious D. and answer the questions.

- 1 Do you think this story is realistic? Why (not)?
.....
.....
.....
- 2 Some people believe demons are real, and some people don't. Would they both give the same answer to question 1? Why (not)?
.....
.....
.....
- 3 Now watch the music video of this song. What is the setting of the music video?
.....
.....
.....
- 4 Do you believe their story? Why (not)?
.....
.....
.....
- 5 Look up the words you don't know and add them to your word file.

Tribute

Long time ago me and my brother Kyle here,
We was hitchhiking down a long and lonesome road.
All of a sudden,
There shined a shiny demon,
In the middle of the road,
And he said!

Play the best song in the world, or I'll eat your souls ...
Well me and Kyle,
We looked at each other,
And we each said,
Okay.

And we played the first thing that came to our heads,
Just so happened to be
The best song in the world,
It was the best song in the world.

Look into my eyes and it's easy to see
One and one makes two, two and one makes three,
It was destiny.
Once every hundred thousand years or so
When the sun doth shine
And the moon doth glow and the grass doth grow.



Needless to say,
The beast was stunned.
Whip-crack went his whippy tail,
And the beast was done.
He asked us,
Be you angels?
And we said nay,
We are but men,
Rock!

6

Read **Round One**, the beginning of the book ‘Becoming Muhammad Ali’, a collection of short stories and poems about the life of the great boxing champion Muhammad Ali, written by James Patterson and Kwame Alexander.

- 1 Look at the underlined words. Match them to the descriptions. Then look them up in a dictionary and write what they mean in Dutch.
 - 1 a part that moves around in a circle -
 - 2 a person who is not trained or has no experience -
 - 3 a lot of things forced into a small space -
 - 4 dark in colour -
 - 5 something that is very likely -
 - 6 thin -
 - 7 A collection of things that happened in the past, especially events of a particular period, country, or subject. -

- 2 ‘Muhammad Ali’ is the boxer’s stage name (artiestennaam). What was his real name?
.....

- 3 Who is telling us the story?
.....

- 4 Write down what the setting is: Where? When? What is the mood?
Where?
.....
When?
.....
What is the mood? Choose from **funny - mysterious - nervous**.

Round One

I remember *everything*. You probably would have too. That night was a piece of American history.

The Clay family phone was dusky black with a rotary dial, and it sat on a wooden table in the neat-as-a-pin living room of the little house on Grand Avenue in Louisville, Kentucky.

Some twenty of us were crammed like sardines into the room, waiting for that phone to ring.

Waiting. Waiting. Waiting for Cassius to call home.

It was a February night in 1958. And I remember it like it was *yesterday*.

My best friend, Cassius, was three hundred miles north in Chicago, and that night he was fighting for a championship in the Golden Gloves boxing tournament.

Cassius wasn’t a professional yet, just an amateur. Tall, but a little skinny, and a lot raw. Only sixteen years old, like me.

I’m Lucius, by the way. Nice to meet you. You can call me Lucky. All my friends do.

