In Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian,* Junior realizes that expectations play a big role on allowing him to break boundaries. When switching from Wellpinit to Reardan, Junior changes the way he acts, especially when it comes to basketball. At Wellpinit Junior was “a decent player”, but at Reardan “something magical happened” to him (180). Junior believes that he “became a good player”, as his skills were much better at Reardan than at Wellpinit. Perhaps this “had something to do with confidence”, making Junior realize “the power of expectations” (180). At Wellpinit, Junior was thought poorly of, and he “wasn’t expected to be good”, so he wasn’t (180). On the other hand, when Junior is at Reardan, his “coach and the other players” from his basketball team want, need, and expect Junior to be good (180). Junior, wanting “to live up to his expectations” became good and “rose above” his old Wellpinit teammates (180, 192). However, after Juniors basketball game where he beats Rowdy, he realizes that he and his team, “the Reardan Indians, was goliath” (192). Junior realizes how far his expectations have pushed him, and although his expectations let him break boundaries, the boundaries were there for a reason. Junior remembers his roots of being an Indian and realizes how much like a white kid he has become. If Junior is a tree, you could say he is trying to grow away from his roots because he is ashamed of them and he thinks they are rotting. Junior then realizes he is growing too tall and his life is becoming unsteady, perhaps this is why he becomes a yucker. He needs to grow his roots back, for his life to stay steady and stable, so he grows them out, making connections and bonds with Indians and white kids. He tries to reconcile with the Indians, knowing he might have gone too far. This is all because of expectations that are set upon Junior and he tried to meet them, not realizing how far he goes. Expectations make people push their limits because of the lengths people go to achieve them. High expectations make people push their boundaries and low expectations don’t allow people to realize their full potentials. From observing how expectations affect Junior, we know that they allow people to push their limits or hide behind them, not allowing them to fulfill themselves.

Similarly, in Sherman Alexie’s articles, “Superman and me”, Sherman realizes that expectations set upon him as a kid have dragged him down. For example, Sherman Alexie and other Indians “were expected to be stupid” (3). He was also expected “to stay quiet when the non-Indian teacher asked for answers, for volunteers,” or “for help”, as “a smart Indian is a dangerous person” (3). A smart Indian was dangerous because they would probably leave the reservation they lived in and leave behind some of the Indian culture, knowing there was not much hope in reservations like Sherman’s. The whites think that Indians will cause chaos in their world, and the Indians think if someone leaves their reservation, they are betraying their culture. Therefore, a smart Indian is “widely feared and ridiculed by Indians and non-Indians alike” (3). Sherman was also scared that if he left the reservation, he wouldn’t succeed like he hoped to, because Indians were expected to “fail in the non-Indian world” (3). All of these expectations acted as a barrier to Sherman Alexie’s success, and they dragged him down. Although most Indians “lived up to those expectations”, Sherman Alexie did not; he “refused to fail” (3). Sherman’s outlet to his expectations was reading. Sherman’s “father loved books”, so he was expected “to love books as well” (2). This expectation affected Sherman positively. It caused him to start reading at a younger age, have higher capabilities in literature, be smarter than the average boy, and eventually become the author he is today. From reading Sherman Alexie’s article “Superman and Me, we have learned that expectations set upon Sherman have both negatively and positively impacted his life.

Knowing that expectations can be good or bad, expectations have affected my life by changing the way I act. Different people have different expectations for me, and like most people, I try to live up to my expectations. Therefore, I am changing the expectations I am trying to conquer when around different people or doing different tasks, causing me to not always act the same. For example, when I am around my soccer team, I am expected to play and improve my soccer abilities, and talk about my soccer, soccer video games, and soccer matches. Many people on my team do this, however I do not always live up to this expectation. Another example of when expectations change the way I act is when around other peers, like my classmates. I am expected to be smart and competent, because I am in TALONS, but as my TALONS classmates would know, this is not always true. This is because I am a human, and no human is good at everything. However, when different expectations are set upon me at different times, I try hard to meet the expectations causing me to improve in some areas, but also pressure me to do things I might not always be comfortable with. Expectations have, and probably always will change the way I think and act, in both positive and negative manners.

By examining Sherman Alexie’s novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian,* his essay “Superman and me”, and connecting these ideas to our own lives, we see that expectations of others can often effect our lives both positively and negatively. I have been pressured to do things I have not wanted to do before. Likewise, Sherman Alexie was pressured to stay quiet when a non-Indian teacher was nearby. This is due to our expectations. Expectations have allowed me to push boundaries before and improve at certain areas or skills. This is the same for Junior with basketball, and Sherman with literature. However, we have all once struggled through expectations set upon us. We have all once collapsed and succumbed under our expectations, but we have all also once risen over and overcome our expectations. Expectations can cause us to do things we might not do without them, sometimes good and sometimes bad. So, from connecting our lives to Sherman Alexie’s article and novel, we know that expectations set upon us can be both positive and negative, depending on how we and others perceive them.