

Author Style Activity 3

“The Approximate Size of My Favorite Tumor”

“ I think humor is the most effective political tool out there, because people will listen to anything if they’re laughing...Humor is really just about questioning the status quo, that’s all it is” (West and West par. 66).

“When it comes to death, we know that laughter and tears are pretty much the same thing.” (Alexie)

What do you think Alexie means by these quotes:

Author Style Focus:

- ✓ Syntax
- ✓ Diction
- ✓ Tone
- ✓ Mood
- ✓ Figurative language
- ✓ Juxtaposition
- ✓ Characterization
- ✓ Dialogue
- ✓ Irony

Today we will be looking at Alexie’s use of humor in writing. We will focus on the following questions: When does he use it? And, how does he incorporate it through his style? We will also consider the intent of this style, and determine whether or not you think he was effective.

Page #	Humorous Situations (quote or summary)	What element of style does Alexie use to create humor?	Difficult/Tense Situations (quote or summary)	What element of style does Alexie use to create tension?

What difficult issues did Sherman Alexie address in this piece? Were these issues specific to Native Americans, or were these issues more general? Explain. Why do you think Alexie chose to focus on these issues?

What was the tone of the piece? What was the overall mood of the piece? What does the tone and mood add to the meaning of this piece?

What type of syntax did Alexie use? What was the diction like? (Refer to Author Style Notes) Do you think his style adds to the meaning of this piece? Did the vulgar language add to or detract from the meaning?

What do you think the author's intent was to write a piece that balanced humor and despair? What evidence do you have?

What similarities do you see in the content of all his pieces? What topics or issues does he focus on or illustrate as specific to NA?