

“Superman and Me” Figurative Meanings

Directions: The following phrases from “Superman and Me” by Sherman Alexie each contain figurative meanings. As you read through Sherman Alexie’s life, paraphrase/translate the meaning of each sentence and explain its importance in his life.

1. “We were poor by most standards, but one of my parents usually managed to find some minimum-wage job or another, which made us middle-class by reservation standards.”

2. “We lived on a combination of irregular paychecks, hope, fear, and government surplus food.”

3. “My father loved books, and since I loved my father with an aching devotion, I decided to love books as well.”

4. “I didn’t have the vocabulary to say ‘paragraph’, but I realized that a paragraph was a fence that held words.”

5. "Now, using this logic, I can see my changed family as an essay of seven paragraphs: mother, father, older brother, the deceased sister, my younger twin sisters and our adopted little brother."

6. "A smart Indian is a dangerous person, widely feared and ridiculed by Indians and non-Indians alike."

7. "They look at me with bright eyes and wonder. They are trying to save their lives."

8. "Then there are the sullen and already defeated Indian kids who sit in the back rows and ignore me with theatrical precision."

9. "'Books,' I say to them. 'Books,' I say. I throw my weight against their locked doors. The door holds. I am smart. I am arrogant. I am lucky. I am trying to save our lives."
