Discussion Questions for “What You Pawn, I Will Redeem,” by Sherman Alexie

Discuss these questions with your group.

1. What did you think of the narrator, Jackson Jackson? Do you know anyone like him?

2. A symbol is an object in literature that represents or stands for something else. What is the yellow bead in the story a symbol for?

3. How does the author make you want to keep reading?

4. Look at the definition of “quest” on this handout. Can you identify the parts in this story that match with each of the bullet points in the quest list?

 Literary Term of the Day:

quest

In literature, a quest describes a journey where a hero (male or female) and a group of friends go in search of a desired object.

Quests usually have several features:

- hero
- problem
- task (e.g. search for sacred object)
- journey
- helpers/companions
- obstacles
- final challenge (moment of truth—will they succeed?)
- return