



Sample Pages

Holes

by Louis Sachar

1999 Newbery Medal Winner

A Novel Teaching Pack

by Margaret Whisnant

Stanley Yelnats,
convicted of a crime he did not commit,
becomes one of the bad boys
at
Camp Green Lake.

*Blame it on his
no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather.*

There is no lake.
Hardly anything is green.

There are plenty of
Holes.



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by Louis Sachar
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Goals

To . . .

- Offer a teaching guide with a full spectrum of learning experiences that flow from **basic knowledge to higher-level thinking skills**.
- Provide **classroom-ready materials that motivate and instruct**.
- Create **novel-specific activities** that require careful reading, help develop comprehension skills, and challenge the thinking process.
- Accommodate a wide variety of student **ability and interest**.
- **Support teachers** by providing a practical teaching resource that saves preparation time.
- Include **cross-curricula activities** as an integral part of the novel study.
- Correlate to various state **education standards and requirements** for language arts.

The Seven Components

1. Summaries

Written in present tense, the chapter-by-chapter summaries are more detailed than those found in most teachers' guides or other sources. Important points of the plot, character motivation and development, and story clues are all included. For quick reference, the summaries are presented in bulleted format. These synopses are a valuable resource for

*quickly becoming familiar with a title when time is limited
managing a reading program that involves multiple titles/reading groups
facilitating independent study
refreshing memory when using a novel from year to year.*

2. Before You Read

In this component, the focus is on sparking student interest. Each teaching pack includes both an **independent activity** and a series of **whole-group/small-group discussion** or **research topics**, written as open-ended questions.

At least one **bulletin board idea** is included. In some cases, activities in the **Think, Write, Create** component also involve the creation of a bulletin board or classroom display.

3. Vocabulary

One of the many advantages of literature-based reading instruction is the opportunity to observe vocabulary in action! It is this circumstance that drives the vocabulary portion of the novel teaching packs.

Word Choices. . .

The words lifted from the novel for focused study are chosen based on one or more of the following criteria:

<i>their level of difficulty</i>	<i>their frequency of use in children's literature</i>
<i>their importance in comprehending the story</i>	<i>their value as useful composition vocabulary</i>
<i>the probability that they will be encountered across the curriculum</i>	<i>unique meanings, spellings, pronunciation, etc.</i>

Word Lists and Definitions. . .

For teacher convenience and reference, word lists with definitions are included. The selected words are arranged in story order, complete with page numbers so they can be spotted easily and studied in their "natural habitats." For clarity, the definitions are paraphrased to match the word's tense, number, part of speech, etc. rather than cross referenced as in a standard dictionary. The major resource of this information is www.dictionary.com.

Dictionary Activities. . .

Long word lists are divided into chapter sets of workable numbers and presented as **Dictionary Digs**—sometimes given a slightly different name to correspond with the theme of the novel. In this introductory stage, students use a dictionary to answer a series of multiple choice questions about word meanings, usage, unique characteristics, etc.

Using the Words. . .

Other activities, which pull terms from the lists in random order, lead students through a variety of word studies which include

sentence usage
word forms
synonyms and antonyms
anagrams
categories
word groups/connections

word types (acronyms, onomatopoeia, etc.)
scrambled sentences
analogies
whole-class/group games
etymologies

4. Assessment

The two sections in this portion of the teaching pack offer a wealth of materials designed to build a strong **foundation** for student progression to higher level thinking skills. The operative phrase is **basic comprehension**.

Short Answer Questions

Short answer questions for each chapter (or groups of chapters) are the first available assessment tools. The items encourage (and check) careful reading. Some require the reader to recognize a major event or idea while others involve finding a minor detail. The questions are in *sequence* with the pages they cover, but they are **not** designed to call attention to plot construction or other story elements.

The short answer questions can be used as

student reading guides
pop quizzes

discussion groups guides
conferencing with individual students

Objective Tests

The objective tests have multiple functions. In addition to their obvious application, they also serve as tools that can *improve **comprehension skills** by providing practice in understanding plot structure and recognizing important story elements.*

Rationale:

Focus on the Plot. . .

Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot of a novel, and consequently **comprehend** the story. They are in tune with cause and effect, behavior and consequence, sequence—the heartbeat of the narrative.

This “plot rhythm” forms the framework for the objective tests. The chain of events that tell the story have been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of sequential questions, none of which require **interpretation**. They are intended to **draw student attention to the fact that something happened**, not to what the incident means. That comes later.

In addition to their testing function, teachers may use the pages to strengthen their students’ ability to

Summarize: With only the questions as a guide, have students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven or fewer. When they work with twenty or more questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Report the News: Ask your students to write a newspaper article based on the events identified in a set of questions and the *who, what, when, where, why* elements. Some information needed to complete this assignment may be located in previous chapters.

Twist the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, etc.—to demonstrate how changing a single (or several) events would (or would not) change the story. This process can be used to help students become proficient in distinguishing major plot movers from minor story details.

The Characters. . .

Too often, when they are asked to describe a story character’s personality, the only answer many students can muster is “nice.” This portion of the Novel Teaching Pack, coupled with related activities from **Think, Write, Create**, is a well of opportunities for those teachers who wish to eradicate “nice” from their students’ vocabularies!

Questions that identify a character’s personality and/or motivation are purposely and carefully included with the plot movers. Again, the questions do not require **interpretation**. They simply establish that someone did or said something—knowledge that is invaluable when character analysis is required.

Implied Meaning and Story Clues. . .

The objective tests include items that establish the existence of story components carrying ***implied meaning***. ***Story clues*** that tantalize the reader with hints of future events also appear as question. At this point in the novel study, as before, **interpretation** is not the goal. **Awareness** of the **facts** is the target.

Developing/Improving Listening Skills. . .

Listening skills are rightfully included on every list of state competency requirements. Rather than always requiring students to answer test questions on a printed page, why not surprise them occasionally by doing the test orally and meeting competency goals at the same time?

Discussion Guide Capability. . .

The objective tests are helpful discussion guides. Use individual items on these pages to draw student attention to sequence, cause and effect, story clues (foreshadowing), character traits, recognizing and interpreting implied meanings, etc. These “thinking out loud” sessions are an **important building block** for the next learning phase.

5. Think, Write, Create

In this section, students pack up what they already know about the novel and go exploring into its every nook and cranny. Some activities require the simplest interpretation or application, while others will challenge the most proficient thinkers. There is a high probability that young scholars, even reluctant ones, will label some of the selections as **fun**.

Rationale:

Guidelines. . .

Most of the items in this section are based on the skills presented in the ***Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom’s Taxonomy)***. There are two reasons for this choice. First, it mirrors the Novel Teaching Pack’s primary purpose of building a variety of sophisticated thinking skills on a foundation of basic knowledge. Second, in following the taxonomy guidelines, activities that correlate with many state educational standards emerge automatically.

Organization. . .

Chapter-specific activities are grouped and presented according to their corresponding sets of **Short Answer Questions** and **Objective Test** page(s). Having led students through the basics for each chapter (or selected section), teachers may shop in this section for in-depth activities to optimize student understanding and interest. Armed with a firm grasp of each successive chapter, students are more likely to anticipate, embrace, and enjoy the next section. By repeating the process, students are also mastering concepts and intricacies connected to the **whole** novel!

The **Whole Book Activities**, as their name indicates, require a grasp of the theme(s), characters, implications, etc. as they apply to the full novel. These pages are a teacher’s smorgasbord of culminating possibilities. In some cases, the choices are outgrowths of concepts that students have dealt with in a previous activity. In others, students are encouraged to look at the novel from a new angle.

Levels of Difficulty. . .

A broad spectrum of **difficulty levels** to accommodate the needs of individual students, including the gifted, is an integral part of **Think, Write, Create**. However, **all** items from this section are intended to **challenge** and **sharpen** thinking abilities.

Activities. . .

Every novel teaching pack includes activities that require students to choose and use precise, appropriate, and meaningful **vocabulary**. These exercises involve choosing a group of words to describe a character’s personality or behavior. The following example is from ***Charlotte’s Web***.

Eight-year-old Fern cried and begged her father not to destroy the runt pig. She sealed the little animal’s fate by asking her father if he would have killed her if she had been born very small.

- Which **two** of the following words do you think **best** describe the way Fern’s father behaved during this episode? Explain your choice. Include the definitions of the words you selected in your answer.

practical *sensitive* *loving* *cruel* *considerate*
realistic *flexible* *callous* *compassionate* *logical*

- Choose **two** words from the list below that you believe **best** describe Fern’s behavior. Explain why they are the appropriate words. Use the definitions of your choices as part of your explanation.

impulsive *compassionate* *assertive* *tender-hearted* *hysterical*
undisciplined *naive* *juvenile* *humane* *empathetic*

In each case students work with a given collection of terms, all of which can be correctly applied to the character(s) in question. However, the individual words have strengths of meaning. It is the student's task to analyze both the character's behavior and the words, make choices, and then cite events from the story to support his/her selection.

Teachers may opt to narrow the choices to fewer words, choose words for individual students, divide the class into groups and offer a specific set of words to each group, or use the assignment as it is written. Whatever the technique, it is here that the word **nice** can be knocked off the shelf, shattered on the floor, and swept out the door. No longer necessary. Useless. Gone!

Other items in this section challenge students to . . .

*write for self expression, for communication, and
for entertainment*

form opinions and theories

*cite "evidence" from the story to support their
explanations and opinions*

connect personal experience to story situations

analyze story characters and events

make predictions based on given facts

imagine

think about social issues

*create drawings, diagrams, photos, maps,,
models, recordings, films, etc.*

categorize

engage in research and data gathering

become familiar with and identify literary elements

recognize and perceive story theme(s)

understand point of view

Cross Curricula . . .

Think, Write, Create takes full advantage of opportunities to connect both major themes and the smallest story detail to other realms of the curriculum. In **Charlotte's Web**, for example, students may apply their calculation skills to a page of "Spider Math." In the **Holes** teaching pack is a challenge to create a game that utilizes a "saved" group of Camp Green Lake's holes.

Options, options, and more options. . .

Think, Write, Create is purposely bulging at the seams to give teachers **pick-and-choose options** for
individualizing assignments
homework

group work

whole class activities

short-term and long-term projects

differentiating assignments for two or more classes

capitalizing on student interest

6. Graphic Organizers

Ideas for the graphic organizers are pulled from the chapter or whole book activities and expanded into a writing assignment. Priority is given to those topics that allow a student to relate personal experiences, make choices, empathize with a story character, and/or imagine.

Structure . . .

The organizers do not repeat a set pattern of circles, squares, lines, etc., prescribed for a particular type of writing. Each one is tailored to a **specific idea** pulled from the novel. **Structured directions** for organizing the topic support the student at this stage of the process so that **writing** is the major focus.

Non-writing Organizers. . .

Sometimes, students are enticed to stretch their imaginations by filling out "forms" or writing "diary entries." One graphic organizer from **Hatchet**, for example, allows students to assume the persona of the pilot who rescued Brian by writing three entries into his log—the day before the rescue, the day of the rescue, and the day after the rescue. In the **Holes** Novel Teaching Pack, students become detectives and conduct a "background check" on Mr. Sir, recording their findings on the provided "official form." In these cases, composition skills take a back seat to **imagination, empathy, and pure enjoyment**. Teachers may wish to capitalize on student enthusiasm by asking for a written "report" based on the information entered on the forms.

7. Answer Keys

Keys for **all items that require a specific answer** are included in this section.

A final note from the author. . .

It is my personal wish that when the last page has been read, the last activity completed, and the last idea discussed, at least one of your students will ask, "What are we going to read next?"



Margaret Whisnant

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Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1

- Camp Green Lake is in Texas. There is no lake.
- The largest lake in Texas used to be located at the town of Green Lake. The town, like the lake, no longer exists.
- Daytime temperatures reach ninety-five degrees in the shade on the dry lake. Rattlesnakes, scorpions, and yellow-spotted lizards live there.
- The hammock stretched between the only two old oak trees on the edge of the dry lake belongs to the warden.
- Being bitten by a yellow-spotted lizard is a certain slow and painful death.

Chapter 2

- Camp Green Lake is for bad boys, and they must dig a hole every day in the hot sun.
- Stanley Yelnats chooses Camp Green Lake over jail because he is from a poor family and has never been to camp.

Chapter 3

- A handcuffed Stanley Yelnats, the only passenger on the bus to Camp Green Lake, doesn't have any friends, is overweight, and is taunted at his middle school.
- Stanley is innocent of the crime for which he has been convicted.
- The family joke is to blame everything on Stanley's no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather. Years before he stole a pig from a one-legged Gypsy and got a curse put on him and all his descendants.
- Stanley's father is an inventor, currently trying to find a use for old sneakers, but he never has any luck.
- Everyone in the family has always liked the fact that *Stanley Yelnats* is spelled the same frontward and backward. Our Stanley is Stanley Yelnats IV.
- In spite of their bad luck, every Stanley Yelnats has remained hopeful.
- The first Stanley Yelnats makes a fortune in the stock market. He loses it all moving from New York to California when his stagecoach is robbed by the outlaw Kissin' Kate Barlow, and he is left stranded in the middle of the desert.

Chapter 4

- Stanley meets a man who introduces himself as Mr. Sir. He is eating sunflower seeds because he has quit smoking.
- Mr. Sir tells Stanley he isn't in the Girl Scouts anymore.
- Stanley receives two orange jumpsuits, two orange T-shirts, yellow socks, white sneakers, an orange cap, and a canteen.
- Stanley is to dig one hole each day, five feet deep and five feet across in every direction, measured by his shovel.
- Breakfast is served at 4:30 so the holes can be dug before the hottest part of the day.
- Mr. Sir says Stanley is to report anything interesting he digs up to him or another counselor.
- There are no fences or guards at Camp Green Lake because nobody runs away from the only water for a hundred miles.
- Mr. Sir says Stanley should get used to being thirsty, since that's how he is going to be for the next eighteen months.

Chapter 5

- Stanley's counselor, Mr. Pendanski, tells him the one rule at Camp Green Lake is *Don't upset the Warden*.
- Mr. Pendanski declares his respect for Stanley and his intent to help him turn his life around.
- Stanley learns that he will be sleeping in a cot that belonged to a camper called Barf Bag, who is in the hospital and won't be returning.

Word Lists with Definitions

(Arranged in Story Order)
(Some words appear on multiple pages.)

Set 1: Chapter 1-Chapter 31

- gruff** Hoarse; harsh; brusque in manner or appearance. (p. 8)
- descendants** All of the offspring of a given ancestor; people, animals, or plants whose ancestry can be traced to a particular individual or group. (p. 8)
- vast** Very great in area or extent; immense; great in size, amount, or quantity. (p. 8)
- perseverance** Steady persistence in adhering to a course of action, a belief, or a purpose; steadfastness. (p. 8)
- befell** To come to pass; to happen. (p. 9)
- dazed** In a state of mental numbness, especially as resulting from shock; stunned or confused; slow to react. (p. 11)
- desolate** Devoid of inhabitants; deserted; barren; lifeless. (p. 11)
- violation** A disrespectful act; an act that disregards an agreement or a right; a crime less serious than a felony. (p. 12)
- premises** A tract of land with its component parts, such as buildings; a building or part of a building with surrounding grounds; land or buildings together considered as a place of business. (p. 12)
- scarcity** Insufficiency in amount or supply; shortage; rarity of appearance or occurrence. (p. 21)
- prospect** Something expected; a possibility. (p.22)
- retrieved** Gotten back; regained; rescued or saved. (p. 23)
- despicable** Deserving of contempt or scorn; vile (p. 25)
- souvenir** A token of remembrance; a memento. (p. 25))
- defective** Having a fault; faulty; imperfect or malformed. (p. 26)
- forlorn** Wretched or pitiful in appearance or condition; nearly hopeless; desperate (p. 30)
- eternity** Time without beginning or end; infinite time. (p. 31)
- deftly** Quickly and skillfully. (p. 32)
- excavated** Removed by digging or scooping out; made a hole in; hollowed out. (p. 34)
- preposterous** Contrary to nature, reason, or common sense; absurd. (p. 34)
- dawdle** To move aimlessly or lackadaisically; to take more time than is necessary. (p. 35)
- grimaced** Contorted the face in an expression of pain, contempt, or disgust. (p. 39)
- predatory** Living by preying on other organisms; of, related to, or characterized by plundering, pillaging, or marauding. (p. 42)
- scowled** Wrinkled or contracted the brow as an expression of anger or disapproval. (46)
- intensity** Exceptionally great concentration, power, force, energy, or feeling. (p. 47)
- shrugged** Raised the shoulders in a gesture of indifference, doubt, or disdain. (p. 52)
- appropriate** Suitable for a particular person, condition, or occasion; fitting. (p. 57)
- metallic** Containing metal; having the characteristics of metal. (p. 60)
- paranoid** Characterized by extreme or irrational fear or distrust of others. (p. 71)
- evict** To put out, a tenant for example, by legal process; expel; force out. (p. 75)
- condemned** Pronounced or proven guilty; officially and strongly disapproved; officially pronounced unfit for use or consumption. (p. 88)
- toxic** Poisonous; capable of causing injury or death, especially by chemical means. (p. 90)
- refuge** Protection or shelter, as from danger or hardship. (p. 93)
- defiance** Bold resistance to an opposing force or authority; readiness to resist or contend. (p. 96)
- incurable** Being such that a cure is impossible; incapable of being altered, as in disposition or habit. (p. 102)
- vile** Filthy, foul, or nasty; thoroughly unpleasant; appalling. (p. 118)
- blotchy** A discoloration of the skin; blemished. (p. 121)
- depriving** Denying; taking something away from; keeping from possessing or enjoying. (p. 131)

Filling in the Holes (Analogies)

gruff	revving	excavated	evict
deftly	vile	soggy	descendants
strenuous	dawdle	eternity	nectar
ranting	delirious	frail	paranoid
vast	shrugged	comprehend	contritely
legitimate	illuminated	fugitive	preposterous
rigid	desolate	predatory	destiny
adjacent	hallucinations	sheepishly	mirage
contaminate	detainees	defective	

Fill in the holes in the following analogies with the correct vocabulary words. Choose your answer from the list above and write it in the blank to the left.

- _____ 1. **Cute** is to **cuddly** as _____ is to **raving**.
- _____ 2. _____ is to **understand** as **initiate** is to **begin**.
- _____ 3. **Delirious** is to **rational** as _____ is to **robust**.
- _____ 4. **Before** is to **after** as **ancestors** is to _____.
- _____ 5. **Silly** is to _____ as **frowned** is to **scowled**.
- _____ 6. _____ is to **while** as **dazed** is to **praised**.
- _____ 7. _____ is to **purify** as **precarious** is to **safe**.
- _____ 8. **Eagle** is to _____ as **vulture** is to **scavenger**.
- _____ 9. **Remote** is to **far** as _____ is to **beside**.
- _____ 10. _____ is to **mental** as **pneumonia** is to **physical**.
- _____ 11. **Despair** is to **joy** as **obscured** is to _____.
- _____ 12. **Limited** is to **confined** as _____ is to **boundless**.
- _____ 13. _____ is to **shoulders** as **snapped** is to **fingers**.
- _____ 14. **Legitimate** is to **lawful** as **regretfully** is to _____.
- _____ 15. _____ is to **predetermined** as **future** is to **uncertain**.
- _____ 16. **Twig** is to **flexible** as **stone** is to _____.
- _____ 17. _____ is to **stall** as **delay** is to **lag**.
- _____ 18. **Joyous** is to **forlorn** as **inhabited** is to _____.

Short Answer Questions

Chapter 1

1. What was the area called Camp Green Lake once like?
2. How hot did it get at Camp Green Lake in the summer?
3. Who owned the shade at Camp Green Lake?
4. What happened if you were bitten by a yellow-spotted lizard?

Chapter 2

1. Why were the bad boys at Camp Green Lake made to dig a hole every day in the hot sun?
2. What choices did Stanley have when he agreed to go to Camp Green Lake?

Chapter 3

1. How did Stanley get to Camp Green Lake?
2. Why was Stanley teased by the kids and sometimes the teachers at his middle school?
3. Who was responsible for Stanley's being in the wrong place at the wrong time and getting sent to Camp Green Lake for a crime he didn't commit?
4. Stanley's father was smart and had perseverance. What didn't he have?
5. Why was Stanley Yelnats the fourth Stanley Yelnats?
6. How had the first Stanley Yelnats lost his fortune?
7. What was Stanley's father trying to invent?

Chapter 4

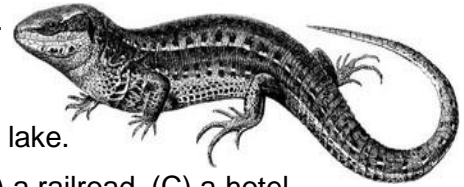
1. In addition to Camp Green Lake's few run-down buildings and some tents, what did Stanley see farther away?
2. Why did Mr. Sir have a burlap sack filled with sunflower seeds on the floor next to his desk?
3. What color were the clothes that Mr. Sir gave Stanley?
4. What was the required size of the daily hole and how was it to be measured?
5. What did Mr. Sir say about Camp Green Lake?
6. Why didn't Camp Green Lake need a fence or a guard?

PART ONE: YOU ARE ENTERING CAMP GREEN LAKE

1 Pages 3-4 2 Page 5 3 Pages 6-10

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Camp Green Lake was in (A) Arizona, (B) Texas, (C) Alabama.
- _____ 2. Camp Green Lake had no (A) buildings, (B) roads, (C) lake.
- _____ 3. Green Lake was also once the name of (A) a town, (B) a railroad, (C) a hotel.
- _____ 4. During the summer, Camp Green Lake was (A) a cool, shady retreat, (B) ninety-five degrees in the shade, (C) overflowing with campers.
- _____ 5. The hammock, strung between the only two trees in Camp Green Lake, belonged to (A) the Warden, (B) the younger campers, (C) the mayor of the town of Green Lake.
- _____ 6. The building that stood on Camp Green Lake was (A) a large two-story structure, (B) an old motel with twenty-two rooms, (C) a log cabin.
- _____ 7. Which of the following was **not** something found in the lake bed? (A) rattlesnakes and scorpions, (B) holes dug by the campers, (C) a small pool of mud.
- _____ 8. Sometimes, campers tried to be bitten by a rattlesnake or scorpion to avoid (A) digging a hole out in the lake, (B) hiking in the heat, (C) working on the Warden's new cabin.
- _____ 9. Being bitten by a yellow-spotted lizard meant (A) a day in the hospital, (B) a slow, painful death, (C) certain dismissal from the camp.
- _____ 10. The bad boys who were sent to Camp Green Lake were forced to (A) sleep outdoors, (B) dig a hole every day in the hot sun, (C) write about their feelings in a diary.
- _____ 11. The judge gave Stanley Yelnats a choice between going to Camp Green Lake or (A) a reform school, (B) jail, (C) a special school.
- _____ 12. At Stanley's middle school, the kids, and sometimes the teachers, made cruel comments about his (A) dirty clothes, (B) strange way of speaking, (C) large size.
- _____ 13. Stanley was not a bad kid, and he was (A) innocent of the crime for which he had been convicted, (B) extremely proud of his family, (C) a straight A student.
- _____ 14. Stanley's no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather was blamed when things went wrong in the family because (A) he had spent most of his life in jail, (B) a gypsy put a curse on him and his descendants for stealing a pig, (C) he was unlucky.
- _____ 15. Stanley's family seemed to always be (A) luckier than most, (B) moving from town to town, (C) in the wrong place at the wrong time.
- _____ 16. Stanley's father was an inventor with intelligence and perseverance, but he never had any (A) money, (B) time to work on his projects, (C) luck.
- _____ 17. Stanley's family kept naming their sons "Stanley Yelnats" because they liked the fact that the name was (A) spelled the same frontward and backward, (B) not difficult to remember, (C) had a pleasant sound to it.
- _____ 18. Which of the following was **not** true of all the Stanley Yelnats? They (A) had made fortunes in the stock market, (B) were only children, (C) always remained hopeful.
- _____ 19. Even though Stanley's great-grandfather lost his fortune when he was robbed by Kissin' Kate Barlow, the family considered him lucky because (A) he made it all the way to California, (B) he was the first Stanley Yelnats, (C) she didn't kill him.
- _____ 20. Which of the following led to Stanley's arrest? (A) His father's latest project of trying to invent a way to recycle old sneakers. (B) He was the only person riding on a bus that was later robbed. (C) He fought with a classmate who made fun of his name.



6 Pages 21-25 7 Pages 26-40

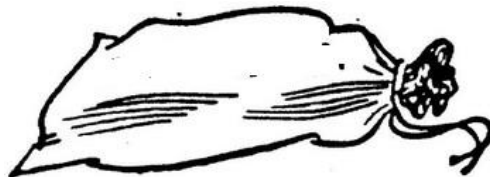
water	old sneakers	the shovels	blisters
Stanley's cot	jail	to build character	Madame Zeroni
a lawyer	Clyde Livingston's sneakers	X-Ray	Elya Yelnats
miss the bus	the dry lake bed	the Warden	a fat pig
a red pickup	the Girl Scouts	his piles of dirt	Myra Menke
Sarah Miller	the first hole	Zero	spit into his hole

From the list above, find the name, word, or phrase that matches each clue below and write it in the blank. **All** answers will be **used at least once**. **Some** answers will be **used more than once**.

- _____ 1. This was where the campers dug their holes.
- _____ 2. Her son lived in America, and Stanley's great-great grandfather tried to find him.
- _____ 3. Stanley's parents couldn't afford one, and his mother said he didn't need one if he told the truth.
- _____ 4. Stanley realized they were too close to his hole and would have to be moved.
- _____ 5. They smelled really bad, but Stanley thought they were special and could hold the key to his father's invention.
- _____ 6. Stanley's great-great grandfather's rival offered this in exchange for Myra Menke.
- _____ 7. It smelled like sour milk.
- _____ 8. They were five feet long and used to measure the holes.
- _____ 9. They were expected to sell at an auction for over five thousand dollars, which would go to help the homeless, and a policeman caught Stanley running home with them.
- _____ 10. It was used to haul water and food to the boys.
- _____ 11. When his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather's curse kept anyone from believing the truth, Stanley had a choice between Camp Green Lake or this.
- _____ 12. She gave Stanley's great-great grandfather a pig and made him promise to carry her up the mountain to drink from the stream and also sing the pig's song to her.
- _____ 13. Her head was so empty, she couldn't choose the man she wanted to marry.
- _____ 14. She was Stanley's great-great grandmother and the person who rewrote the words to the pig lullaby to sing to her son, the first Stanley Yelnats.
- _____ 15. Because it was so scarce, campers were allowed only a cold, four minute shower.

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. On the fourth day of digging in the area where X-Ray said he found the gold tube, all the holes met and formed one big hole.
- _____ 2. As the days wore on, the Warden was as patient and enthusiastic as ever.
- _____ 3. While all six boys were digging in the big hole, Zigzag's shovel hit Stanley on the side of his head causing a big gash just below his ear.
- _____ 4. Stanley's group continued to dig long after the other groups had finished for the day.
- _____ 5. After jabbing Armpit with her pitchfork, the Warden ordered Mr. Pendanski to bring the boys more water.
- _____ 6. The next day after Stanley was hurt, the boys went back to digging their own holes in another section of the lake.
- _____ 7. In addition to his head, Stanley's body continued to ache and his fingers throbbed.
- _____ 8. Stanley was still the slowest digger.
- _____ 9. Squid and the other boys no longer made fun of Stanley for writing to his mother.
- _____ 10. Stanley did not tell his mother the truth about what was happening to him at Camp Green Lake.
- _____ 11. Even though Zero had nobody to write to, Stanley quickly agreed to teach him to read and write.
- _____ 12. One night, Stanley heard Squid crying in the cot next to him.
- _____ 13. Stanley kept his mouth shut because he realized the boys were dangerous.
- _____ 14. X-Ray was black, but all the other boys in Stanley's tent were white.
- _____ 15. On the lake, all the boys were the same reddish-brown dirt color.
- _____ 16. Magnet claimed his fingers were like little magnets which made it impossible for him to keep from stealing Mr. Sir's sunflower seeds.
- _____ 17. Stanley spilled the bag of sunflower seeds on purpose when they came to his hole.
- _____ 18. When Mr. Sir returned, Stanley tried to hide the spilled sunflower seeds by burying them in the dirt.
- _____ 19. Caught with the empty burlap sack, Stanley told Mr. Sir the complete truth about the sunflower seeds.
- _____ 20. In Mr. Sir's truck, Stanley was surprised to find that he felt good about sitting in a comfortable seat with air blowing onto his hot, sweaty face.



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Write either **Yes** or **No** in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. In the past had Green Lake been the largest lake in Texas and was it surrounded by beautiful peach trees?
- _____ 2. Every year at Green Lake's Fourth of July picnic, was Miss Katherine Barlow given a special prize for her spiced peaches?
- _____ 3. Did Katherine Barlow, as Green Lake's only schoolteacher, educate adults and children?
- _____ 4. Was the fact that Trout Walker took a bath once a week the only reason his feet smelled like a couple of dead fish?
- _____ 5. Was Charles Walker rich, respectful, and interested in learning?
- _____ 6. Did Charles Walker's brand new boat make a horrible loud noise and spew ugly black smoke over the beautiful lake?
- _____ 7. Did Miss Katherine Barlow want to marry Trout Walker as everyone in town expected?
- _____ 8. Did Mr. Sir laugh when one of the campers asked what happened to his face?
- _____ 9. Did Stanley tell the other campers what he knew about Mr. Sir's face?
- _____ 10. When the second truck came, did Mr. Sir fill Stanley's canteen as usual?
- _____ 11. In Camp Green Lake's past, did sick people go to see Sam, the onion man, as well as Dr. Hawthorn?
- _____ 12. Did it take Sam all day to row across Green Lake to his onion field and another day to row back?



(Full page has 20 questions)

Whole Book Test

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Camp Green Lake was in (A) Texas, (B) Arizona, (C) New Mexico.
- _____ 2. Stanley was sent to Camp Green Lake because he was found guilty of (A) trying to take money from an old lady's purse, (B) stealing a pair of tennis shoes that had belonged to a famous baseball player, (C) breaking into the homeless shelter.
- _____ 3. Stanley's family blamed all of their bad luck on his (A) crazy aunt who had stolen a chicken from a gypsy, (B) no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great grandfather who caused a curse to be put on them, (C) low-down-sneaking-lying grandfather who lost the family fortune.
- _____ 4. The unusual thing about Stanley Yelnats' name was (A) there had never been another person with the same name, (B) his mother had broken a family tradition by naming him "Stanley," (C) it was spelled the same forward and backward.
- _____ 5. Which of the following was **not** true about Camp Green Lake? (A) It wasn't green and there was no lake. (B) There were no fences around it. (C) There were still a few people living in the nearby town, also called Green Lake.
- _____ 6. The most-feared animal at Camp Green Lake was the (A) scorpion, (B) rattlesnake, (C) yellow-spotted lizard.
- _____ 7. All the campers at Camp Green Lake had (A) nicknames, (B) their names printed on the back of their uniforms, (C) to wear bright green uniforms.
- _____ 8. Stanley's father was trying to find a way to recycle old (A) motor oil, (B) bricks, (C) sneakers.
- _____ 9. Before he went to Camp Green Lake, Stanley was (A) overweight and made fun at school by other students and sometimes teachers, (B) known as the bully at his middle school, (C) ashamed of his parents and all the bad luck they had.
- _____ 10. Stanley's great grandfather lost his fortune when he (A) bet everything in a poker game, (B) was robbed by Kissin' Kate Barlow, (C) invested it in the stock market.

(Full Whole Book Test has 50 questions)

Think, Write, Create

Chapter Activities

Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 3

One definition of the word **contradiction** is *not in agreement*.

- Explain how the name **Camp Green Lake** was a *contradiction in terms*. How is it not a **camp**? Why is the word **green** a total falsehood? What is wrong with including **lake** as part of the name?
- When he chose Camp Green Lake over jail, what do you suppose Stanley expected to find when he arrived?

Stanley's father was an inventor with intelligence, perseverance, and no luck. His latest project was trying to invent a way to recycle old sneakers.

- Stanley's father was probably aware of the old adage *Build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door*—that is, if you invent what people want, they will buy it. Is it possible that Stanley's father might have had better luck if he chose better things to invent? Explain your answer.
- Using the three topics below as a guide, think of an invention for each one that you believe would appeal to the public and be profitable. Explain how each one would be beneficial to the people who bought it. (See **Graphic Organizer #1**)

School and Education

Transportation

Sports and Entertainment

- Write a report to distribute to inventors such as Stanley's father. Include drawings and diagrams.

Chapter 4, Chapter 5

- Why do you think the boys of Camp Green Lake preferred their nicknames to their real names? What was the advantage of a fictitious name?
- How were their nicknames different from those of people on "the outside"?
- Once he was released, do you suppose a boy continued using his Camp Green Lake name? Why or why not?
- Do you think nicknames are a good idea, a bad idea, or a non-issue? Explain your thinking.

Chapter 6, Chapter 7

Consider the following facts:

Derrick Dunne tormented Stanley by playing keep-away with his notebook. Stanley missed his bus and had to walk home because he was fishing his notebook out of the boys' restroom toilet, where Derrick had dropped it.

Stanley believed that the pair of smelly sneakers that fell from the sky and hit him on the head as he was walking home was a gift from God. In excitement, he ran and attracted the attention of a patrol car.

(continued on next page)

Think, Write, Create

Whole Book Activities

Before his experience at Camp Green Lake, Stanley Yelnats believed that things often went wrong in his life. As a matter of fact, every Stanley Yelnats had awful luck, though all of them always remained hopeful.

- Do you agree with Stanley that he always seemed to be in the wrong place at the wrong time? Give several examples from Stanley's story to support your answer.
 - Does it seem that the Yelnats family actually encountered bad luck more than the average family? Explain your answer.
-

Both Stanley's and Zero's family passed along the same melody from generation to generation. However, the words were entirely different. Stanley's version can be found on page 8 and Zero's on page 233.

- Which words seem to say "*It's not my fault if I don't succeed*"? What line(s) can you offer as proof? Would you characterize the dominant mood as *optimistic* or *pessimistic*? Explain.
 - One family's version of the melody said, "*Pursue your dreams. Don't let anything stop you.*" Which lines carry such a message? Which family passed them from one generation to another?
 - According to the point of view in the song lyrics, which family should have met with great success and happiness? Which family, if its members had lived by the words they sang, would have created generation after generation of dismal failures? Did the families progress according to the song they sang to their children? Explain how you arrived at your answer.
-

Stanley's family jokingly blamed his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather for their bad luck. But things aren't always what they seem.

- Explain how Stanley's arrest, his sentence to Camp Green Lake, meeting Zero, and running away into the desert appeared to be bad luck but were actually events of good luck.
 - How did Stanley bring about a change of luck for everyone at camp Green Lake, especially the Warden, Mr. Sir, and Mr. Pendanski?
 - Do you believe in the forces of good luck and bad luck? Explain why you do or do not.
-

Madame Zeroni told Elya Yelnats that the pig would get a little bigger each day he carried it up the mountain to drink from the stream, and he would get a little stronger as well.

- In what ways were Elya's task with the pig and Stanley's job of digging holes alike? How did the obstacles that Stanley faced get bigger—just like Elya's pig? How did Stanley grow stronger?
 - How did both Elya and Stanley benefit from their difficult experiences?
 - Write a short narrative about a difficult experience from life that you believe made you a stronger person. How did it compare to Stanley's situation?
-

On the fateful day that he found the lipstick tube, Stanley decided to turn it over to X-Ray rather than keeping it for himself.

- How was Stanley's decision good for him, good for X-Ray, but not for the Warden?
- What do you think would have happened if Stanley had claimed the tube as his find?
- Prove that Stanley was in the right place at the right time and made the right decision.

Antisocial Animal Alert

Without a doubt, **Holes** author Louis Sachar had a good time creating Camp Green Lake's population of yellow-spotted lizards. He gave them the ability to spring out of holes and squash their prey. They also snacked on cactus thorns. They had a killer bite, and nobody snickered at their goofy color scheme. His little yellow varmits were worse than rattlesnakes. Even the Warden was afraid of them. Well, excuse me, but Mr. Sachar should not have all the fun! So. . .

Use the organizer below to create your own nasty little critter. After you have entered all the information in the appropriate spaces, design a poster to inform the public about your animal's antisocial tendencies. Advise them how to behave if they spot the repugnant rascal. Include a drawing or a three-dimensional replica of your reprehensible little beast. Give it a name.

Its Category (mammal, reptile, fish, insect, etc)

Where it lives, sleeps, eats, travels, hides, hangs out, etc.

How its appearance is different from others of its kind.

How its behavior is way off the chart.

What to do if you encounter the animal.

Its Common and Scientific Names

A note from the author. . .

North Carolina is my home, always has been, always will be. I live in Conover, a small town located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains.

My first love is teaching, and I spent thirty happy years in the classroom (1965-1995) as a middle school language arts teacher. After retiring from the classroom, I decided to pursue my long-time dream of writing teaching materials professionally. Along came my company, Taking Grades (1997), the World Wide Web, some extremely sharp learning curves, and my dream grew into a reality.

When I begin a new writing project, I am transported back to my own classroom where twenty-five or so sixth graders sat (sort of) staring and waiting for me to do something that registered near the top of the spectacular scale. I also remember the wonderful feeling of being ready for the challenge! It's that confidence that I strive to write into every novel teaching pack by providing a convenient, ready-to-use, motivating, jam-packed resource for today's

super busy teachers and their sitting, staring, and waiting students.

Ask anyone who knows me. Children and animals have always been my top two passions. During my teaching years, I served as secretary and president of the local humane society. There has always been at least one cat on my lap and a few others circling in a holding pattern.

On the internet I am known as Margaret at Taking Grades, but in the community I am known as The Bird Lady. There is a good explanation.

The same year I began writing, I also developed an interest in wildlife rehabilitation. Today I am a fully licensed rehabilitator, specializing in orphaned baby songbirds. From April to the end of August, I take in around 150 little ones, raise them to adults, and release them back into the wild. For about five months, my home office does double duty as a baby bird nursery.

I am withholding this information from the cats!

