

Summer Reading – Upcoming 6th graders

Holes by Louis Sachar

Lexile Level: 660L

AR Level: 4.6 grade equivalent

AR points: 7 points

Short Synopsis: Stanley Yelnats tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment and redemption.

Be prepared to take an AR test on this book within the first couple of weeks of school.

Directions: Write each answer using a WELL WRITTEN COMPLETE sentence. Please use evidence from the book to support your answers.

Questions:

1. In what ways is the saying "You can't judge a book by its cover" a good one for this story? For example, what do you expect Camp Green Lake to be like based on its name? What is it really like?
2. What do you think the title *Holes* means? What might be another reason other than the holes the boys dig in the lake? What hole (or holes) is in Stanley's life when he first arrives at Camp Green Lake? Are the holes still there when he leaves?
3. Why do the boys call Mr. Pendanski "Mom"? How does this name fit his personality? In what ways is it not a good name for him?
4. What do the boys' nicknames tell about each of their personalities? Do you think a name changes the way others see a person and the way the person sees him- or herself?
5. Stanley and his family half-jokingly blame their misfortunes on Stanley's "no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great grandfather." Do you believe in fate — that people are lucky or unlucky — or do you believe, as Mr. Pendanski tells the boys, that we are all responsible for our selves and our destinies?
6. As Stanley becomes stronger and his skin becomes tougher from digging the holes, how is he changing inside? What are the causes of those changes?
7. Why do you think Stanley gives X-Ray the lipstick tube? What would you have done if you were in Stanley's place?
8. At home, Stanley did not have friends. But at Camp Green Lake, he forms a special friendship with Zero. How did Zero and Stanley prove their friendship to each other? In what way does Zero fill a hole in Stanley's life?
9. How is Stanley's friendship with Zero similar to Kate Barlow's friendship with Sam? In each case why don't people approve of the friendship?
10. Why don't the other boys like Stanley and Zero's agreement that Zero will help Stanley dig and

Stanley will help Zero read? Do you think it is fair to both Stanley and Zero? Do you think it is fair to the other campers?

11. *Holes* is really three stories tied together. One is about Camp Green Lake. The second is the tale of Stanley 's great-great grandfather and the "curse" put on him by Madame Zeroni. The third story is of Kissin' Kate Barlow, the outlaw who robbed his great grandfather. How do these three stories fit together within the larger story of *Holes*?
12. Stanley always seems to find humor even in the worst situations. He laughs on the bus to Camp Green Lake thinking about his "no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather." While walking across the hot, dry lake, he laughs at the sight of the boat, Mary Lou. Climbing Big Thumb, he even makes Zero laugh. What does this say about Stanley? How does his attitude help him?
13. Where does Stanley find the strength to carry Zero up the mountain? Why did he do it even though he didn't know what he'd find at the top? Describe something you've done that at first seemed impossible. What did you learn from the experience?
14. Even though his fate is uncertain, Stanley is suddenly very happy as he lies awake on the top of the mountain, staring at the stars. Why does he feel this way? How has his life changed from the start of the story?
15. When Hattie Parker sees Katherine and Sam kiss, she says, "God will punish you!" Based on the events later in the book, whom do you think God punished?