Click on the paper clip to hear the correct pronunciation of the author's name or scroll down to the bottom of this page.

Sachar rhymes with cracker
Grade 5 Reading Vocabulary Terms

antonym/the opposite of
author
author's purpose
beginning
benefit
cause/effect
characteristics
character trait
compare/contrast
conclusion
cost -- How did the event cost him the job?
define
definition
describe
draw a conclusion
event/action
idea
influence
information
main/central idea
mood
passage
predict
probably
selection
sequence
statement
subheading
support
summary
synonym/the same as
the first thing
trace the events
Chapter 4 Discussion Questions

1. What does Stanley’s response to the sign about the Texas Penal Code violations reveal about him?

2. Why does Mr. Sir eat sunflower seeds?

3. The driver said, “Be careful.” Stanley was unsure what he meant. What caused Stanley to be confused? Which way do you think the driver meant? (opinion)

4. How many sets of clothing is Stanley given? Describe what he is to do with each set.

5. Why don’t they need fences at this camp for bad boys?

6. Why do you think the boys have to dig the holes at Camp Green Lake? (opinion)

7. “You’re not in the Girl Scouts anymore.” What does this mean? What type of figurative language is this?

8. Do you think Stanley will try to run away? Explain your answer with reference to the text. (opinion)
Write a summary of Chapter #5.

Stanley sees the tents numbered a–f and he is assigned tent D. Stanley Yelnats meets Mr. Pedanski, a counselor. After being warned about the warden, Stanley meets the other boys. He finds out that Lewis is in the hospital, and learns that Lewis’s nickname is Barfbag. Stanley gets Barfbag’s old bed.
This chapter describes the nature and needs of the yellow-spotted lizards.

Use the text to complete the graphic organizer, or outline, about lizards.

Yellow-spotted Lizards

I. Physical characteristics (what they look like)
   a. _______________________________________
   b. _______________________________________
   c. _______________________________________
   d. _______________________________________

II. Home (where they live)
   a. _______________________________________
      i. _____________________________________

III. Diet (what they eat)
   a. _______________________________________
   b. _______________________________________
   c. _______________________________________
   d. _______________________________________

Use the physical characteristics provided in the chapter to draw a life-sized yellow spotted lizard.
Palindromes are words or phrases that read the same in both directions.

mom
dad
wow
RACECAR,
or MADAM I'M ADAM
Never odd or even
Too bad – I hid a boot
Rats live on no evil star
No trace; not one carton
Was it Eliot's toilet I saw?
Go hang a salami; I'm a lasagna
hog!
A Toyota! Race fast... safe car: a
Toyota
Some men interpret nine memos
A man, a plan, a canal: Panama.

Check it out, the following list of names is also a palindrome!
Dennis, Nell, Edna, Leon, Nedra, Anita, Rolf, Nora, Alice, Carol, Leo,
Jane, Reed, Dena, Dale, Basil, Rae, Penny, Lana, Dave, Denny, Lena,
Ida, Bernadette, Ben, Ray, Lila, Nina, Jo, Ira, Mara, Sara, Mario, Jan,
Ina, Lily, Arne, Bette, Dan, Reba, Diane, Lynn, Ed, Eva, Dana, Lynne,
Pearl, Isabel, Ada, Ned, Dee, Rena, Joel, Lora, Cecil, Aaron, Flora,
Tina, Arden, Noel, and Ellen sinned.
Chapter 8 Discussion Questions

1. Chapter 8 begins with a sentence about curses, but instead of curses, what is the main topic of the chapter?

2. Why do you think the author begins the chapter with a sentence about curses?

3. What does the following sentence mean?

A lot of people don’t believe in yellow-spotted lizards either, but if one bites you, it doesn’t make a difference whether you believe in it or not.

4. Why do you think that the lizards are mentioned so many times?

5. Why do you think that we are told that lizards eat sunflower seeds?
Chapter 7 Discussion Questions

1. For what reasons were the boys told they were digging the holes?

2. Why do you think the warden wants to know if the boys find anything while digging? (opinion)

3. How do you think Stanley feels when he realizes that he can’t even dent the ground with his shovel? (opinion)

4. How is Stanley’s decision that he is defective different from his usual way of thinking?

5. Why did the digging get easier as the hole got deeper?

6. What did Stanley’s great-great-grandfather offer for the hand of Myra?

7. Describe Madame Zeroni’s opinion of Myra as well as the strategy she suggested.

8. Why do you think that Madame Zeroni pointed out all Myra’s shortcomings? (opinion)

9. What was the curse that Elya would have to endure if he failed to fulfill his end of the bargain?

10. Why do you think Elya finally tells Myra to marry Igor? (opinion)

11. What did Stanley do to protect his blistered hands?

12. Why does Stanley feel as if he is digging his own grave?

13. Why did Zigzag think Zero was “one weird dude?”

14. Why do you think Elya looked for Madame Zeroni’s son in America? (opinion)

15. Why do they call Elya a pig thief? Didn’t Madame Zeroni give him the pig?

16. What was the last thing that Stanley did before starting back for the camp after digging the hole?

17. Why does Stanley feel so proud of his hole?

18. Why didn’t Stanley accept Mr. Pendanski’s offer to give him a ride back to the compound?
Chapter 6 Discussion Questions

1. What was Clyde Livingston’s nickname?

Clyde Livingston’s nickname is “Sweet Feet.”

2. What is most upsetting to Stanley about his trial? Why?

The worst part of Stanley’s trial is that Clyde Livingston truly believes that Stanley is guilty of stealing his shoes.

3. What were the two special feats that Clyde Livingston accomplished in his baseball career?

Clyde Livingston led the league in stolen bases for three years and is the only player to hit four triples in one game.

4. Why are we told about all the bad things that happen to Stanley on the day of his arrest? (opinion)

5. Why did Stanley’s story about how he came to have the running shoes seem so unbelievable to the judge? (opinion)

6. Why did Stanley’s mother feel that he didn’t need a lawyer? Do you think this is a good idea? (opinion)

7. What advice does Stanley’s mother offer Stanley at his trial? Is this how you would advise Stanley? Why or why not? (opinion)


9. Why does Stanley consider the sneakers to be a sign from God?

The shoes falling from the sky led Stanley to consider them a sign from God.

10. Why do you think vacancies do not last long at Camp Green Lake? (opinion)
The land was *barren* and *desolate*.

Next to it was another sign which declared that it was a violation of the Texan Penal Code to bring guns, explosives, weapons, drugs, or alcohol onto the *premises*.

Stanley looked out across the *vast* wasteland.
It contained his toothbrush, toothpaste, and a box of stationery his mother had given him.

Mrs. Bell wrote the ratio on the board, 3:1, unaware of how much embarrassment she had caused both of them.

He was innocent of the crime for which he was convicted.

Supposedly, he had a great-great-grandfather who had stolen a pig from a one-legged Gypsy, and she put a curse on him and all of his descendants.

To be a successful inventor you need three things: intelligence, perseverance, and just a little bit of luck.

At such times she neglected to mention the bad luck that befell the first Stanley Yelnats.
Chapter 2
Discussion Questions

1. Who goes to Camp Green Lake?

2. What was Stanley expected to do while he was at the camp?

3. Explain the choices given to Stanley by the judge.
Chapter 1 Discussion Questions

1. What is Camp Green Lake like?
   Camp Green Lake is dry, flat, hot, has few trees, has few people, and has rattlesnakes, scorpions, and yellow-spotted lizards.

2. What is the town of Green Lake like? Would you like to visit it? Why or why not?
   Green Lake has no people and is just like Camp Green Lake.

3. What is the rule to remember about snakes and scorpions?
   The rule to remember about snakes and scorpions is that if you don't bother them, they won't bother you.

4. What's the worst thing to be bitten by? What would the effect of being bitten be?
   The yellow-spotted lizard is the worst thing to have bite you because you will die a death that is slow and very painful.

5. Why does the author feel you might as well lie in the hammock if you are bitten by a yellow-spotted lizard?
   You are going to die anyway if bitten by a yellow-spotted lizard, so lying in the hammock will not bring any worse punishment.
Chapter One: pages 3-4

Setting

A "setting" is where something is or where something happens. To describe the setting can also include the time of day, the moods of any people there, and any other details that would help you understand what is happening.

Holes opens with a description of the setting of most of this story. In your own words, write a description of the setting.

or

Draw this setting. Be sure to include each thing on this list, and as many details from the chapter as you can find (be creative about showing what it is like there):

- log cabin
- hammock
- "lake" ("lake" is in quotation marks because something is called a lake, but it's not really a lake)
- scorpions
- rattlesnake
- lizard
- holes
To infer something (or, make an inference) is to figure something out, or at least make a guess about something. For example, if someone bursts into tears and leaves the room, you could infer that something has upset them. You might even know what it is. A good inference is not a wild guess. It's based on evidence. Tears are evidence that someone is upset.

What are two reasons you could infer that "Camp Green Lake" isn't fun for the campers?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What is one reason you can infer that the Warden is not nice to the campers? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Vocabulary Chapter 1

wasteland--page 3 first paragraph
shriveled--page 3 second paragraph
hovers--page 3 third paragraph
hammock--page 3 fourth paragraph
forbidden--page 3 fifth paragraph
warden--page 3 fifth paragraph

Now it is just a dry, flat wasteland.

The town shriveled and dried up along with the lake, and the people who lived there.

During the summer the daytime temperature hovers around ninety-five degrees in the shade—if you can find any shade.

A hammock is stretched between the two trees, and a log cabin stands behind that.

The campers are forbidden to lie in the hammock.

It belongs to the Warden. The Warden owns the shade.
1. Who was Stanley’s counselor? Describe his appearance.

Mr. Pendanski, Stanley’s counselor, has a shaved head, a thick black beard, and sunburned nose.

2. What is Mr. Pendanski’s nickname?

Mr. Pendanski is nicknamed Mom.

3. Why do the boys call Mr. Pendanski that name?

The boys at Camp Green Lake call Mr. Pendanski “Mom” because it makes the boys feel better.

4. Why do you think Armpit liked his nickname? (opinion)

5. Why do you think the boys’ nicknames are so important to them? (opinion)
He wondered if he had a defective shovel.

Madame Zeroni hated to see Elya so forlorn.

Stanley was dumping the dirt within the perimeter of his hole.

Supposedly, he had a great-great-grandfather who had stolen a pig from a one-legged Gypsy, and she put a curse on him and all of his descendants.

He grimaced as he sliced off a chunk of dirt.

"That's preposterous," exclaimed Igor.

The problem was that when the dirt was in the ground, it was compacted.
Imagine that you are at Camp Green Lake and write a letter home describing your experience.

or

Hold a mock trial for Stanley, assuming the roles of Stanley, the judge, Stanley’s parents, Clyde Livingston, lawyers, a jury, court reporter, and bailiff.
Extension Activity

Write a paragraph telling each boy's nickname and a description of each boy.  

or

Make a chart which shows the information.
Flashbacks

Many books tell a story by starting at the beginning, telling you what happened, and ending at the end. *Holes* does not do this. We find out why Stanley is at Camp Green Lake after he gets there, and little by little we find out more about what happened.

*Holes* also has something called **flashbacks**. In the middle of the story, FLASH! we are zapped back in time and we find out about things that happened a long time ago that are important to Stanley, even though he doesn't know it. We don't really know how they will be important -- but we can make inferences about them. Whenever there are extra blank lines on the page, ask yourself "why??" Usually the setting is changing to a different time or place, or a lot of time passes by. Sometimes the pause is because something very important has happened or been said.

In chapter 7, what is the first sentence of the "flashback" to his grandfather's time? What is the setting?

There is a new character, an animal, involved. Why is a pig important to this flashback story?

Madame Zeroni gives Elya advice about the girl he loves. She tells him to do something. Why is Elya going to need perseverance to do as Madame Zeroni asks?
A theme is the moral or message from the story. An author tries to teach us lessons using theme.

In *Holes*, one theme involves something called **perseverance**. Perseverance means continuing to try, even though what you're trying is hard, things get in the way, or it's discouraging, or all three.

- How do you know Stanley's father has perseverance?
Chapter 3
Discussion Questions

1. Describe Stanley’s appearance.

2. Why did Stanley and his parents pretend that he is going away to a fun camp?

3. What does Stanley believe that he will do while at camp? Do you think that his prediction is correct?

4. What character traits would you use to describe Stanley’s teacher? Explain.

5. Why do you think we are told about what Mrs. Bell did to Stanley on the day of his arrest? (opinion)

6. How do we know that this book is fiction?

7. What does “He was on a long bus ride to nowhere” mean?

8. What does Stanley say about his conviction?

9. Does Stanley believe in curses and bad luck? How do you know?

10. Why do you think that the author included the poem in this chapter? Is it appropriate? Why or why not? (opinion)

11. What character trait describes Stanley’s father?

12. Why is it surprising that Stanley’s father is an inventor?

13. What do we know about Stanley’s great-great-grandfather.

14. How do you think Stanley feels when he first sees Camp Green Lake? (opinion)
1. Who was Stanley’s counselor? Describe his appearance.

2. What is Mr. Pendanski’s nickname?

3. Why do the boys call Mr. Pendanski that name?

4. Why do you think Armpit liked his nickname? (opinion)

5. Why do you think the boys’ nicknames are so important to them? (opinion)
What is a gypsy?

An original gypsy may also be called a Roma person. Romani people roamed or traveled around in Europe in the 16th century. This term is often used for people who live unconventional lives.
Connection with Tall Tales

In some ways, the story *Holes* is like a tall tale. In "tall tales," things are extreme. Good is very, very good and bad is very, very bad. Things don't change -- a rule is a rule.

What is "the one rule" at Camp Green Lake?

Who is probably a very, very bad character in the book *Holes*? Explain your choice with references to the text.
Extension Activity

Research juvenile detention facilities.

Consider the following questions in the research.
• What is a typical facility?
• What do juveniles do in these facilities?
• How does the legal system protect juveniles in detention?
• Will the treatment at Camp Green Lake be typical of what most juveniles face in detention facilities?
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In *Holes*, one theme involves something called **perseverance**. Perseverance means continuing to try, even though what you're trying is hard, things get in the way, or it's discouraging, or all three.

- How do you know Stanley's father has perseverance?
Attachments

- Learning Log.doc
- Characters.xls
- Pig Latin Translator
- Vocab lists.xls
- The Hole Truth Site
- Jeopardy for Holes.ppt