

Holes by Louis Sachar

Holes is a book for young adult readers. It is about a fat kid, bullied at school, called Stanley who tries to dig up the truth (sic) in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment - and redemption.

Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnats. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention centre, Camp Green Lake, where the warden makes the boys "build character" by spending all day, every day, digging holes: five feet wide and five feet deep. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake. The boys are digging holes because the warden is looking for something.

The first 5 chapters set the scene for the story. The story is set in Texas. At the camp, there is now no lake nor a town. It is a dry wasteland where unfortunately you can get bitten by not just things like scorpions and rattlesnakes, but a yellow spotted lizard. If you are unlikely to be bitten by one of these lizards it will lead to a slow and painful death.

So, what is Stanley's crime? A pair of sneakers fell off from an overpass onto him. He took them as he thought it would help his father, an inventor. The sneakers unfortunately belonged to a famous baseball player, Clyde Sweet Feet, and they were supposed to be auctioned for \$5,000 to help a homeless shelter.

Stanley is arrested and after his trial a judge sends him to Camp Green Lake, a young detention centre to build his character. Here Stanley meets other kids - Squid, X-ray, Armpit, Zig-zag, Zero - who have also been found guilty of crimes.

We are now at chapter 6. Listen and answer these questions:

1. How long could a camper take a shower for? = 0.15
2. What did he have for dinner? = 0.50
3. Why was Stanley sent to Camp Green Lake? = 1.10
4. Who did the sneakers belong to? = 1.27
5. What was his nickname? = 1.30
6. What did Clyde do? = 1.60
7. Why had he donated his sneakers? = 2.30
8. What did Stanley's cot smell of? = 3.01
9. What happened to Stanley at school? = 3.13
10. What had Derrick done to Stanley on the day he was arrested? = 3.35
11. How did Stanley find the sneakers? = 3.55
12. Why did Stanley take the sneakers? = 4.15
13. Where had the sneakers been stolen from? = 5.12
14. How much were the rich people paying for a dinner? = 5.22
15. What was the expected price that the sneakers would be auctioned for? = 5.32
16. Why did the judge think that Camp Green Lake would be good for Stanley? = 6.27

In the story, you hear some interesting vocabulary and phrasal verbs. What do these mean:

Adjectives:

Smelly

Scratchy

Rotten

Despicable

Noun:

Scarcity

Homeless

Sour milk

Odour

Phrasal / Multi-word verbs:

To step into

To jump back

To shut off

To rinse off

To mop up

To hang on

To turn over

To roll over

To pick on

To walk out

To run away

To turn out

To find out

Expressions:

No way.

Yeah, right

Connectors:

In spite of