

HOLES – Knowledge Organiser

Context – ‘Holes’ was published in 1988

About the book

Stanley Yelnat’ family has a history of bad luck, so when a miscarriage of justice sends him to Camp Green Lake Juvenile Detention Centre he is not surprised. Every day he and the other inmates are told to dig holes, five feet wide and five feet deep., reporting anything they find. The evil Warden claims it is character building, but the truth lies buried in the past.



Louis Sachar



Louis Sachar is an American young-adult mystery-comedy author. He is best known for the Wayside School series and the novel Holes. Holes won the 1998 U.S. National Book Award for Young People's Literature and the 1999 Newbery Medal for the year's "most distinguished contribution to American literature for children".

Key Vocabulary

juvenile	detention	centre
Warden	Texas	fairy tale
justice	destiny	auction
councillor	descendants	shovel
desolate	shrivelled	curse

Language Devices, Grammar and Punctuation

Metaphors	He dug the hole into his memory.
Similes	His throat felt as if it was coated in sandpaper.
Hyperbole	Only ten million more to go.
Binary opposition	Black/white; male/female
Simple, compound and complex sentences	Semi-colons to separate main clauses

Quotes

‘It was all because of his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing great, great, grandfather.’

‘I’m not saying it’s going to be easy. Nothing in life is easy. But that’s no reason to give up. You’ll be surprised what you can accomplish if you set your mind to it.’

‘Excuse me!’

‘You make the decision: whom did God punish?’

Themes

Fate and free-will

Friendship

Justice and Judgement

Morality

Other books by Louis Sachar

Little Steps

There’s a boy in the Girl’s bathroom

Line of Enquiry

Is ‘Holes’ a fairy-tale or a modern-day adventure?

Key Characters

Stanley Yelnats	The key protagonist
Zero	Another inmate at Camp Green Lake
Warden	The ultimate symbol of cruel authority at Camp Green Lake
Mr Pendanski	In charge of Tent D, Stanley’s tent at Camp Green Lake
Kate Barlow	The school-teacher turned outlaw who robbed Stanley’s great, great grandfather
Sam	He was in love with Kate Barlow 110 years ago.