

# Holes

## Holes by Louis Sachar

### A Scheme of Work for Year 8

#### Lesson 1: (Chapters 1 to 3)

*Objective: to appreciate how the writer has created setting and atmosphere through description*  
*NLS Writing 6: Figurative language*

#### Starter

Remind students of the meaning of metaphor and simile with an example of each.

Students to each come up with a metaphor and a simile for;

extreme heat, thirst, loneliness

on "show me" boards.

Students then to get into groups of four, then eight, then half-class, then full class and each time they should decide amongst themselves the best examples of each in their group given one minute to choose.

#### Development

Read the first three chapters of the novel to the class while making them fill in a grid of what they have found out or sensed about: (make sure class know terms first)

Characters	Place	Atmosphere	Emotion	Tension
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Examples are abundant and they should be able to pick out both metaphors and similes from the rich description.

After they have completed their grids they should feed back examples to the group and the teacher. By now they may have raised questions themselves such as why the place may be called Camp Green Lake and so on. Ask students to write down five questions they would like answering about the novel.

Plenary: How does Louis Sachar introduce a strong sense of atmosphere into his writing? Give three examples or a specific phrase he used.

#### Lesson 2:

*Objective: to change the medium of a text from novel to film genre*  
*NLS Writing 8: Experiment with conventions*  
*Resource: [Film trailer storyboard](#)*

#### Starter

In groups of four students should decide what three things a film trailer must have to prevent them from fast-forwarding it if it was on a video. After five minutes one member of each group has one minute to feed back to the class and a key list is compiled on the board to encompass everything the class feels is important.

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## Development

### Class reading

Ask- why are they digging? Is it just a punishment or could there be another motive?

Imagine you have been asked to write a trailer advertising this film. Write the script and draw the storyboard using your knowledge of the novel so far and the likely genre of the film.

Students should consciously use the key list they have constructed in the starter.

**Plenary:** Students narrate their trailers with the rest of the class indicating their "fast-forward" point with "show me" boards.

## Lesson 3:

*Objective: to develop knowledge of character and situation by writing in different forms*  
*NLS Writing 8: Experiment with conventions (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person and cartoon genre)*

Class reading – should now be up to the point where we find out about Stanley's background and the sneakers incident.

### Starter

The class should be divided into groups of four and each group should be given a different role from; Stanley's teacher, a policeman, Clyde Livingstone, the judge, the charity shopkeeper, passer-by who sees the whole thing, a passenger in a car driving past who does not see the whole incident.

These groups then have three minutes to write, in two sentences only, on one show me board, their view of what happened. The group feed back their sentences to the class.

## Development

Two choices of activity: 1) Write a description of the event from Stanley's point of view entitled 'The Best and Worst Day Of My Life' or 2) Draw the incidents of the day in a series of pictures including speech and thought bubbles.

**Plenary:** Ask what kind of character Stanley is from the way he reacted to the sneakers incident and how his background is a factor in his treatment. Elicit –low self-esteem, placid, no access to lawyer etc Does social background affect your chances in life? How and why?

## Lesson 4:

*Objective: to develop understanding of the writer's choice of vocabulary*  
*NLS Reading 10 – Understanding the writer's craft – development key ideas*

### Starter

Students are briefly reminded of the meaning of the following figures of speech with an example of each;

alliteration, repetition, onomatopoeia, assonance (for all you "Educating Rita" fans)

Students in groups of four should then produce examples of each of these, which describe how their day at school has gone so far. The groups feed back to class after five minutes. The most popular examples should be recorded on the board.

## Development

### Class reading

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What are Stanley's reactions to the place so far? List his reactions to both physical and emotional stimuli i.e. the way he responds to friendship disputes, in 'Wreck Room', showers, food, water rations etc.

Students should note down in their books the best examples of how the writer builds up the description of the work Stanley does and how he copes with it. Look for repetition of phrases, how the difficulty of the task is conveyed, the heat etc.

Plenary: Discuss particularly powerful words and sentences and get students to explain why they are powerful (alliteration? repetition? onomatopoeia? power words?)

Homework: Write, using powerful phrases, an account of an occasion when you had to do something you didn't want to.

## Lesson 5:

*Objective: to develop knowledge of character and themes (curses)*

*NLS Reading 5: Reading for meaning – Trace developments*

### Starter

Students in groups of four have two minutes to think of an apt curse to place on someone who has annoyed them on that day. E.g. if they have been yelled at they can lay a curse so that the person ends up with a mouth that is one centimetre wide until they apologise. The groups have one minute each to feed back to the class. Good curses are compiled on the board

Then in groups of four again students should come up with one superstition, which they know is stupid, but which they still observe such as not walking under ladders. Again a list should be compiled.

### Development

#### Class reading

By now subplot may need to be touched on – Stanley's great great grandfather refused to honour the Gypsy Zeroni's request= curse on Stanley for generations... Briefly discuss superstitions and curses. Do we make our own luck or are things laid down for us (predestination)? Is Stanley being affected by his Grandfather's curse or is it purely psychological?

#### Choice of activities:

- 1) Script an interview between Mr Pendanski and Stanley about his progress so far or write Mr Pendanski's official report on Stanley's progress.
- 2) Illustrate five of Stanley's hopes and wishes.
- 3) Describe an incident from your own experience, which could be viewed as either bad luck or a curse coming true.

### Plenary:

The class should be invited to state if they think that Stanley will ever be able to lift this curse. Think of ways that someone could outwit a curse such as self confidence, contentment with their lot, being realistic about life, being "good".

# Holes

## Lesson 6:

*Objective: to respond to character development*

*NLS Reading 5: Reading for meaning- development of ideas*

### Starter

In groups of four and using "show me" boards the students have four minutes to write down a school rule which they were scared of breaking when they first came to the school but which now they don't bother about and also a school rule which was important when they first came to the school and which they still feel is an important one. Groups have two minutes to feed back to the class with reasons and a list of good and unimportant (in their view) school rules can be compiled on the board.

### Development

Elicit Stanley's changing attitude to Camp Green Lake. In what ways is Stanley beginning to show resilience to the events that are happening to him? Does he get upset? Why not? Has he got confidence now and how do we know? Has his self-esteem improved?

- ☆ Write the rulebook of Camp Green Lake
- ☆ List ten adjectives that describe Stanley's character now...
- ☆ Ask if you think Stanley's character will continue to change/ grow /develop?
- ☆ Make his 'Camp Green Lake Identity Card' with a space to draw his picture, a space for distinguishing characteristics, counsellor's comments on his attitude to Camp life so far etc.

**Plenary:** Students should suggest a sentence that sums up the ways in which Stanley has changed since his arrival in camp

**Homework:** One of the activities from this lesson may be given as a homework.

## Lesson 7:

*Objective: to experiment with presenting similar material in different forms and styles of poetry-*  
*NLS Writing 9: write to imagine, explore, entertain, rework in different forms*

### Starter

Students should divide "Show Me" boards or A4 paper into two A5 sections. They then have five minutes to write a description in one section of someone famous that they like but they must not give any clues as to who it is except by describing what they look like. The boards/papers should then be passed to someone they do not normally work with who then has five minutes to draw a picture of the person from the description. The picture, the artist's idea of who it is, who it actually is meant to be are fed back to the class.

### Development

#### Class reading

Write an acrostic about Stanley's character and experience using his name and surname as a starting point eg

S.....	Y
T	E
A	L
N	N
L	A
E	T
Y	S

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Then complete the following sentences (point out importance of adding information to a sentence with *and* / *when* / *if* – subordinate clauses, if students aren't aware)

Stanley began life with...

Stanley will be successful if...

Stanley will be happy when...

Camp Green Lake will change when...

**Homework:** If students are able to take books home, tell students to draw Stanley with his Camp Green Lake friends, this is an important comprehension exercise to understand which characters are mixed race, and their varying physical appearance.

## Lesson 8:

*Objective: to condense knowledge about Stanley's experience into structured sentences-present knowledge in different way*

*NLS Writing 9: - Write to imagine, explore, entertain – rework in different forms*

## Starter

Students should write in their books a series of paired sentences (aim for 5) starting with:

*Stanley used to be (or + other verb)...*

*But now he's...(noun/ adjective/participle etc)*

**For example:**

*Stanley used to be bullied*

*But now he's the Caveman.*

## Development

### Class reading

Students should be given an A4 sheet divided into two. On the left hand side they should write the title 'I wish I hadn't' and on the right 'I wish I could...'. Write as Stanley, filling in his thoughts, hopes and regrets.

Or write Stanley's Diary entitled 'My discoveries so far...'.  
Write Stanley's real letter to his Mum- the one he wrote in his head...but could not send.

**Homework:** Draw on a double page divided in two:

Stanley before and after at Camp Green Lake.

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## **Lesson 9:**

*Objective: to predict the next development in the novel- trace the development of ideas-*

*NLS Reading 5: Reading for meaning – Trace developments*

### **Starter**

Students should be reminded of the genre of films which are set around escaping from a prison such as "The Great Escape", "The Password is Courage", and "The Shawshank Redemption". In groups of four or five the students have five minutes to come up with a realistic, interesting, and possibly funny plan for their group only to escape from the classroom they are currently in. The plan must be in keeping with the genre of escape films. Groups then have two minutes to feed back to the rest of the class.

### **Development**

Ask for predictions about Stanley's future action. Will Stanley escape? (The class usually expect him to). Discuss the following points in pairs and write down your thoughts about:

- How will he do it?
- With anyone's help or alone?
- What time of day will it be?
- What equipment will he need to make a successful getaway? Will he steal provisions?
- Does he get home? (Bear in mind the obstacles he faces such as the distance from nearest town/ village and lack of water for miles etc)

Write the chapter of Stanley's escape in the third person entitled 'Stanley's Escape' or an alternative title

and/or *plot* Stanley's Escape Route through drawing and labelling the plan of Camp Green Lake and plotting lines which Stanley takes.

**Plenary:** Which elements did you have to include in order to make your chapter a coherent continuation? Elicit same attention to detail/ author's style? Stanley's thoughts etc

Read real version of escape noting similarities and differences.

This last activity could be a homework if books can be taken home.

## **Lesson 10:**

*Objective: to develop understanding of subplot of the novel and its significance*

*NLS Reading 5: Reading for meaning –Trace developments*

### **Starter**

Students should be reminded of the concept of the subplot.

Groups have three minutes to come up with at least three reasons why the author uses the Katherine Barlow subplot in the novel. These should be fed back to the class and a list of relevant ones compiled.

### **Development**

Choice of activities:

- 1) Draw a cartoon strip of Katherine Barlow, 'Teacher Turned Outlaw' showing her change in character and the reasons for this
- 2) Draw Green Lake over a hundred years ago, the schoolhouse, the peach trees etc  
Research costume/ style of houses on internet or using books from the library first for an authentic flavour! (Could be given as previous homework to prepare for this lesson).

# Holes

- 3) Write front page story of contemporary newspaper entitled something on the lines of 'Scandal in Green Lake'. Write a report on the (then) shocking affair (!) between white teacher and black man. Could include 'Trout's Comment' in the corner of it, with Trout Walker giving his opinion! (Would be a good idea to research racism in America during this period, a good homework opportunity.)

## Lesson 11:

*Objective: to make connections between characters and circumstance in the novel*

*NLS Reading 5: Reading for meaning – trace developments*

*Resource: Filling in the Holes*

### Starter

Students on their own have three minutes to write down on "Show Me" boards the five things they expect to happen in the story. They then have five minutes in groups of six to arrange their predictions in order of likelihood. Groups feed back to the class who help compile a list of predictions from the consensus on likelihood.

### Development

#### Class reading

Complete worksheet entitled 'Filling in the Holes' from your knowledge of the novel so far. The links between Stanley's family, the gypsy Zeroni, Zeroni and Stanley with same name as his great, great Grandfather etc should begin to appear. Ask class how they expect the history and the present to merge now, how it all comes together (the denouement). The predictions list should be amended in the light of fresh events. Students should note down when a prediction is proved right or not as they read on...

Get students to divide blank page into two. On the left they should draw 'What Stanley's Great Grandfather forgot to do...' (carry the gypsy uphill) and on the right 'How Stanley removes the curse'. On the right side they should think how Stanley might do this before drawing Stanley carrying Zero(ni) uphill. They should make the connections.

Plenary: What will happen if the curse is removed? To Stanley and Camp Green Lake?

## Lesson 12:

*To explore the likely ending to the novel*

*NLS Reading f5: Reading for meaning – trace developments*

### Starter

Students should be made aware that "happy" endings to films or stories may not always seem realistic but they do make them commercially successful because of a "feel-good" factor.

In groups of four and given five minutes, students should come up with an example of a novel or film that they think has an unlikely ending-happy or sad. They should come up with a reason for their choice. They should then construct the ending that they think is more likely to have happened. Each group has two minutes to feed back to the rest of the class.

### Development

#### Class reading.

Anticipate the ending to 'Holes'. Briefly discuss expectations as readers, cohesion, reunion etc

Write the last chapter of 'Holes' using either 3<sup>rd</sup> person narrative or writing in character as Stanley (first person account). What will Stanley's life be like in six months/ a year's time? How will his lifestyle/personality/hopes/ ambitions be affected?

# Holes

Plenary:

Students should sum up the way they think the story is going to end.

## Lesson 13:

*To consider importance of Zero in the novel- the importance of writer's values*

*NLS Reading 5: Reading for meaning – trace developments*

### Starter

Students have five minutes to write down five ways in which they and their attitudes have changes since coming to secondary school. E.g. What has become more important? What has become less important? What have they learned about that is new? What has disappeared from their lives?

Students should then compare their thoughts in groups and pick five significant (to the group) ways in which they have changed to feed back to the class.

### Development

#### Class reading

Ask what has Stanley learned since the beginning of his time at Camp Green Lake? Do you think you would have survived better or worse than Stanley so far?

Quick Task: Write as though 1) Stanley and 2) Zero, writing 10 sentences each starting with 'I have learned that...' and complete the sentence. Ask the class how they conveyed differences in character through their writing. How do both characters thoughts differ?

Draw a scene representing the ending of the novel with symbols for what you expect to find or draw a jigsaw explaining how Zero's and Stanley's family history merges.

Homework: Draw a mind map showing everything you know about Zero's character or write a list of the things that remain mysterious about him.

## Lesson 14:

*Objective: to experiment writing material in different forms, a newspaper article etc*

*NLS writing 9: Writing to imagine, explore, entertain –Rework in different forms*

*Resource: Newspaper frames*

### Starter

Students should be made aware that (Tabloid) Newspapers constantly have to attract their readers. A good headline and an enticing first paragraph are used to achieve this.

E.g.

#### **School Closed as Science Block Stinks**

**A cloud of deadly cheese gas forced the closure of ??????? School today when a Year 8 science lesson went badly wrong. ??? (A suitable person's name should go here) denies that they were responsible for this latest crime against the atmosphere.**

Students in groups of four have five minutes to write a headline and an eye-catching paragraph for a newspaper article about the most significant thing that has happened in school to them so far that day. The results could be fed back to the class in the style of "News At Ten"

### Development

Class reading – should now be up to the final chapter.

Choice of activities:



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- 1) Write Newspaper article about Stanley's escape from Camp Green Lake and the aftermath on the lines of 'Camp Green Lake: A Cover Up! / Exposed!' Include 'Stanley's story' and Editor's comment.
- 2) Write Stanley's interview with a journalist after his reunion with his family.

## Lesson 15:

*Objective: to develop the use of commentary and description in narrative, writing as Zero NLS writing 5*

*Resource: If Zero could write ..*

### Starter

Students in groups of four should come up with a "Double Act" or famous pair of people that they know, who are totally linked together by an event or legend, such as; Bonnie & Clyde, Anthony & Cleopatra, Morecambe & Wise, Robin Hood & Little John. They should explain how each character benefited from the relationship and how they were more successful together than either of them could have been by themselves. After five minutes the groups should feed back to the class and a summary compiled on the board.

### Development

Discuss Zero's future and how his character has developed through the course of the novel. Use ideas from previous night's homework.

Complete Worksheet 'If Zero could write...'

Consider:

- What Zero's experience at Camp Green Lake has been like
- What he thinks of Stanley
- If he feels guilty about the sneakers incident
- What his future hopes are
- What his view of his past is

**Plenary-** Discuss with the class what Zero's perspective adds to the novel as a whole. Should be another social class perspective- inability to read but bright etc. Why has the author added these factors to his portrayal of Zero? Could explain history of paired friendships in literature, one weak character, one strong, dating from Roman Comedy through to George and Lennie in 'Of Mice and Men' to Thelma and Louise.

## Lesson 16:

*Objective: to predict the outcome of events for characters in the novel*

*NLS Reading 5: trace the development of ideas*

### Starter

Each group of four students should be given a different sealed container containing an object.

They can lift the container, and shake it but they cannot feel it or try to look inside. The group should then imagine (not guess) what could be in the container and come up with a realistic reason for their choice.

Containers might be; A shoebox, a pencil case, a biscuit tin, a small rucksack, etc.

Objects can be any familiar household object which will fit inside the containers but which is not easy to identify.

# Holes

After five minutes the students can feed back their imagination to the class.

A list of the best examples can be compiled on the board.

## Development

Class reading up to discovery of suitcase, before it is opened...

Ask class to write down five things they expect to find in the 'Stanley Yelnats' suitcase/ treasure chest. Lower ability students enjoy drawing what they expect to find.

Check, through reading what it does actually contain and discuss disappointments/ surprises with the class. How do they expect the future will change for Stanley and Zero respectively? Will it all end well for both of them? Write a paragraph answer for each.

## Plenary:

Draw together common themes in the paragraphs that the students have written.

## Lesson 17:

*Objective- to see connections between characters and gain insight into the writer's craft- NLS Reading 5: Understanding the author's craft – Trace developments*

## Starter

Students have four minutes to write in their books how they came to meet their "best friend" "or "main man" etc. They should come up a single reason to explain why they feel that they are still such good friends with each other. (They do not have to identify the person). Students should then get together in groups of four and take two minutes to decide the best reason a friendship survives. The group should feed back to the class and a list of reasons compiled on the board.

## Development

Write the title on the board 'How Stanley and Zero's paths cross'. Draw a symbol of friendship, such as holding hands in the middle of the board. On one side of the board link facts associated with Stanley and do the same for Zero on the opposite side. Ask for students' contributions and write them up as given below for example. Then discuss similarities and differences and interwoven experiences. Are they both victims of circumstance/ fate? Discuss for example.

How Stanley and Zero's paths cross	
bullied at school because he was fat	teased for inability to read
poor, family( up until now has unsuccessful inventor father) threatened with eviction	homeless, though remembers once living in a house
wrongly accused of stealing trainers belonging to Clyde Livingstone	left waiting in park for Mum who never returned
Great, Great Grandfather stole from a gypsy Zeroni	actually stole Clyde Livingstone's trainers, unknowingly because he couldn't read
limited involvement with the law (up until now)	real name Hector Zeroni.
	files from Camp Green Lake 'missing' because no one expects him to have a family

## Writing tasks:

Write full answers to the following:

# Holes

- 1) What makes theirs a good friendship? (forgiveness/ trust/ team spirit?)
- 2) Who has had the worst experience to date/ worst time so far in your opinion. Explain your answer with evidence from the text.
- 3) Write a page, divided into paragraphs, about their similarities and differences in character.
- 4) Write a page about the difficulties you have had to face so far in your life.

**Homework:** Draw a picture of God's Thumb and write alongside how it helped both generations of Stanley Yelnats featured in the novel.

## Lesson 18:

*Objective: to write in a variety of conventions- present similar material in different forms*  
*NLS Writing 9: Write to imagine, explore, entertain*

### Starter

The activity starting the earlier 'newspaper article' lesson could be reprised here.

### Development

Finish class reading

To consolidate work so far make whole front page of Newspaper including the following:

- A 'Sploosh' advertisement corner endorsed by Clyde Livingstone.
- 'Lawyer comes to the rescue!' an account of events by Ms Morengo
- 'Stanley's Story!' from earlier in the scheme
- A likely American Newspaper name
- Close up picture of the contents of Stanley Yelnats senior's suitcase and or a picture of Zero and Stanley together with their cheque.

This would be an excellent IT opportunity.

## Lesson 19:

*Objective: to criticise the novel through writing a review- read a substantial text revising and refining interpretations of subject matter, style and techniques*  
*NLS Reading 13: Study of literary texts.*

### Starter

Students should take three minutes on their own to write a single sentence, which sums up their opinion of the last book they read (NOT Holes!). If appropriate, students who have read the same book should group together to agree a short paragraph, which sums up the book. After three more minutes these reviews should be fed back to the class.

### Development

Class to read several different book reviews between them both positive (from book covers) and otherwise (from newspapers) to familiarise themselves with this genre. (If possible each student should be given a different review)

Elicit examples of what you find in a typical book review i.e.

- Positive critical acclaim from several sources such as other writers

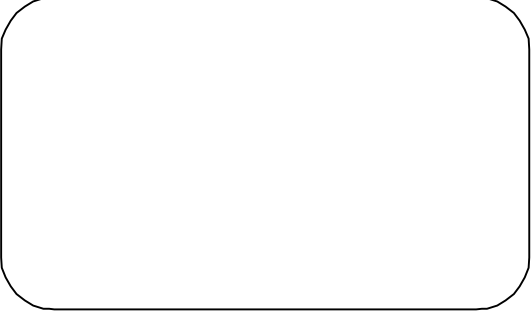




## Holes

- An indication of who the book would appeal to and why
- A taste of what the novel is about
- The genre of the book etc
- A glimpse into the authors preoccupations and themes and if the author is asking any questions of the reader

Now write your own book review for "Holes" including your personal opinions about the success of the book.

Holes

*“Holes” film trailer storyboard*

Scene	Commentary / Screenplay
	
	
	
	
	

<b>Name of Paper</b>	<b>Advert</b>
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A special feature that is inside this edition on page...

<b>Main Headline</b>
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<b>Main Headline Picture</b>
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<b>Headline</b>
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<b>Picture</b>
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<b>Eye-catching paragraph</b> <hr/> <b>The rest of the main story</b> (this can be continued inside the paper)
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<b>Eye-catching paragraph</b> <hr/> <b>The rest of this story</b>  (this can be continued inside the paper)
--

<b>Headline and eye catching paragraph for yet another story continued inside this paper</b>
--

<b>Other features including regular features like TV Listings / Horoscopes / Letters Page / Etc.</b>
--

# Holes

_____	_____

Holes

*If Zero could write...*

What was his past like? What were his earliest memories?

Describe his experiences of life at Camp Green Lake.

Does he feel guilty about the past and the trainers' incident?

What does he think of Stanley?

What are his future hopes and dreams?



## Worksheet: Filling in the Holes (in the Story)

What Stanley's Great Grandfather Forgot To Do...	How Stanley Lifts The Curse...

Holes

Filling in the  
holes in *Holes*