

Holes Study Guide Questions

Part One--You Are Entering Camp Green Lake

Chapters One & Two

1. Explain the irony in the name Camp Green Lake.
2. Why will campers sometimes permit themselves to be bitten by a rattlesnake or a scorpion?
3. What is the significance of the phrase, "The Warden owns the shade"?
4. Why does the narrator suggest that if someone is bitten by a yellow-spotted lizard they might as well lie in the hammock.
5. Why did Camp Green Lake always manage to find campers despite the appalling conditions?
6. What choices did the judge give Stanley?

Chapters Three & Four

1. Why did Stanley have a box of stationery?
2. How do we know that Stanley was very unhappy at home?
3. How did Mrs. Bell inadvertently embarrass Stanley?
4. Briefly explain the curse of the one-legged Gypsy.
5. Why did Stanley's apartment smell of burning rubber and foot odor?
6. What did everyone in the family like about Stanley Yelnat's name?
7. Explain the abundance of sunflower seeds on the floor by the desk.
8. How did the guard wish to be addressed by Stanley?
9. Explain how the laundry was done.
10. What instructions did the guard give to Stanley concerning digging?
11. According to Mr. Sir why did none of the *campers* attempt to escape despite the fact that there were no fences or guard towers?

Chapters Five & Six

1. Why was Mr. Sir in such a bad mood?
2. According to Counselor Pendanski, what one rule should Stanley always remember?
3. Why was Stanley reluctant to tell Mr. Pendanski that he was innocent?
4. What nickname did the boys in Stanley's tent use for Mr. Pendanski?
5. Why was Stanley surprised that Theodore insisted on being called Armpit?
6. For what crime was Stanley sent to Camp Green Lake?
7. Briefly describe Stanley's version of the *theft*.
8. What did the judge think?

Chapter Seven & Eight

1. How do we know that Stanley is not accustomed to hard physical work?
2. Why might X-Ray have preferred a shorter shovel?
3. How did Stanley's weight help him for once in his life?

4. Why did the digging get easier for Stanley as the hole got deeper?
5. Who was Elya Yelnats?
6. Describe Madame Zeroni.
7. What advice did Madame Zeroni offer Elya about Myra Menke?
8. Why did Madame Zeroni give Elya a piglet?
9. Explain Madame Zeroni's curse.
10. Why did Elya refuse to choose a number in order to win Myra's hand in marriage?
11. How might the counsellors have punished Stanley if he had refused to finish digging the hole?
12. What warning did Magnet give Stanley as he headed off to select a *bathroom*?
13. What did Elya remember as his ship was clearing the harbor?
14. What did Zero do after he had finished digging his hole?
15. How was Sarah Miller different from Myra Menke?
16. What does Stanley discover upon completing his first hole?
17. What would probably happen if you were ever close enough to see the yellow dots on a yellow-spotted lizard?

Chapter Nine & Ten

1. Explain why the sign on the rec room said wreck room.
2. Why in X-Ray's opinion was the second hole the hardest to dig?
3. Why is Stanley's letter home so comical?
4. Give proof that Stanley has learned from his previous day of digging.
5. Why did Stanley refer to the fossil as his miracle?

Chapter Eleven & Twelve

1. What did X-Ray ask Stanley to do the next time he found something interesting?
2. How did X-Ray get his nickname?
3. Why was Stanley surprised that X-Ray was the leader of the group?
4. Why was Stanley glad to be called Caveman?
5. What was Mr. Pendanski doing when Stanley finally dragged himself back to the compound?
6. What caused the smile to disappear from Zero's face?

Chapter Thirteen & Fourteen

1. Why was Stanley reluctant at first to retrieve the glistening object from the pile of dirt?
2. Describe the object that Stanley had found.
3. How did Stanley respond when ZigZag asked to examine the gold tube?
4. What advice did Stanley offer X-Ray about showing the tube to the Warden?
5. What occurs when the water truck arrives that indicates Stanley's status in the group of boys is improving?
6. Describe the Warden.
7. Why was Stanley surprised when the Warden addressed him as Caveman?
8. What instructions did the Warden give to Mr. Pendanski?
9. X-Ray had waited until the next day to reveal the discovery of the gold tube. Why is this time lag significant?

Chapter Fifteen & Sixteen

1. Why was the Warden treating the campers so well?
2. Why was Stanley so sure he wouldn't find anything despite his careful search through the dirt dug up by Zero?
3. According to ZigZag how did the Warden know all their names?
4. Why did Stanley decide against digging at night?
5. Why did Zero not get the joke about the old lady who lived in a shoe?

Chapter Seventeen & Eighteen

1. What indications are there that the Warden is growing impatient?
2. Explain Stanley's sudden collapse.
3. Why was Stanley relieved when the boys returned to their regular spot to dig?
4. Why did Stanley not have to worry about Zero reading over his shoulder?
5. How do we know that more than just Stanley's hands had become callused during his stay at the camp?

Chapter Nineteen & Twenty

1. Why was Stanley having difficulty sleeping?
2. Describe the racial makeup of Stanley's work crew.
3. How did Magnet get his nickname?
4. Why did Stanley get blamed for stealing from Mr. Sir?
5. Predict the consequences for Stanley's misdeed.
6. What is the secret ingredient of the Warden's nail polish?
7. Explain the unusual turn of events in the Warden's cabin.

Chapter Twenty-One & Twenty-Two

1. What did the Warden mean when she said that unfortunately for Stanley, Mr. Sir would live?
2. Why would the snakes be dangerous without a rattle?
3. Why was Stanley surprised when he returned to his hole?
4. How was Stanley able to determine who had helped him?
5. Explain what Stanley meant by Zero having X-Ray vision.
6. What did Stanley offer to do for Zero?
7. What did Stanley discover as he attempted to teach Zero the alphabet?
8. What insight did Stanley suddenly have about the gold tube in the Warden's office?

Chapter Twenty-Three & Twenty-Four

1. Describe Green Lake as it was one hundred and ten years ago.
2. Who was Katherine Barlow?
3. Why was Charlie Walker called Trout Walker?
4. Explain why Katherine Barlow may have refused Trout's offer to take her for a ride on his new boat.
5. Why did Stanley keep his eyes down as Mr. Sir ladled oatmeal into his bowl?
6. How did Mr. Sir respond to the young boy's question about his swollen face?

7. How did Mr. Sir punish Stanley?

Chapter Twenty-Five & Twenty-Six

1. According to Sam what could onions cure?
2. Explain why Doc Hawthorn didn't resent Sam.
3. Why did Doc Hawthorn's head often smell like onions in the morning?
4. Why wasn't Sam allowed to attend classes?
5. What did Hattie Parker mean when she said, "God will punish you"?
6. Why did the student not show up a school the next day?
7. Describe what happened to Sam.
8. Explain how Katherine Barlow acquired the reputation as "Kissin' Kate Barlow".

Chapter Twenty-Seven & Twenty-Eight

1. Explain what X-Ray meant when he told Armpit, "It's the same old story".
2. Explain why Stanley emptied his canteen onto the ground despite being extremely thirsty.
3. What is Zero's real name and why is it significant?
4. Who returned to Green Lake after a twenty year absence?
5. What had happened to Trout Walker during this twenty year period?
6. Why were Linda and Trout terrorizing Katherine Barlow?
7. Explain how Kate died.

Part Two--The Last Hole

Chapter Twenty-Nine & Thirty

1. What did Stanley believe he had seen for a split second during a flash of lightning?
2. What had Stanley's great grandfather allegedly said after being robbed by Kate Barlow?
3. Why did Mr. Pendanski fire his pistol into the air?
4. How did the Warden react when she discovered that Zero was digging Stanley's holes?
5. How did Zero react when when Mr. Pendanski handed Zero the shovel and told him it was all he would ever be good for?
6. Explain what the Warden meant when she said it was almost time to paint her nails again.

Chapter Thirty-One & Thirty-Two

1. Where did Stanley think that Zero might have taken refuge?
2. Why does the Warden repeatedly ask Mr. Pendanski if Zero (Hector Zeroni) had any family or social worker who might have taken an interest in him?
3. Why was the new boy given the nickname Twitch?
4. What was the new boy's claim to fame?
5. Why did Stanley steal Mr. Sir's truck?
6. Explain what happened when Stanley stole the truck?

Chapter Thirty-Three & Thirty-Four

1. Why did Stanley think that he might have to return to the camp?
2. Why did Stanley's heart stop when he peered into the bottom of one of the holes?
3. What did Stanley have for lunch?
4. Explain why the pool of water kept moving away from Stanley.
5. Describe what Stanley found while walking across the dry and barren wasteland.

Chapter Thirty-Five & Thirty-Six

1. Who was under the boat?
2. Explain what you think the sploosh might be.
3. What evidence is there that Barf Bag may have purposely stepped on a rattlesnake?
4. Why did the boys make frequent stops as they walked across the lake?
5. According to Zero how did the boat probably get its name?
6. What did the boys see when they finally reached the western edge of the lake?

Chapter Thirty-Seven & Thirty-Eight

1. Why was Stanley reluctant to stop and rest?
2. What conclusion did Stanley make after seeing all the weeds and bugs?
3. How does Zero make it up the final portion of the climb to the top?
4. What two important discoveries does Stanley make after tumbling into the gully?

Chapter Thirty-Nine & Forty

1. Why did the insides of Stanley's mouth and throat feel like they were coated with sand?
2. What does Zero say that causes Stanley to believe that his friend is delirious?
3. Explain why Mrs. Tennyson was wearing only a nightgown and a robe as she ran down the street after Sam.
4. Why did Hattie Parker blush when Gladys Tennyson mentioned that her daughter, Becca, had almost died from eating some bad meat?
5. What surprised Stanley when he headed down the mountain looking for the shovel?

Chapter Forty-One & Forty-Two

1. Why was Stanley so surprised that he hadn't gotten sick despite the drinking the sploosh and dirty water or from living on onions?
2. Why did Zero avoid the homeless shelters?
3. Why did Zero steal when he was young?
4. What did Zero do with Clyde Livingston's shoes when everyone started making a fuss about them being stolen?
5. Why did Zero fill the bottom of the hole with rocks?
6. Explain the bitter smell that Stanley had first detected upon reaching the top of the hill.
7. Explain how the sneakers had managed to fall on Stanley's head at the beginning of the story (Chapter Six).
8. What was Stanley alluding to when he asked Zero if he wanted to dig one more hole?

Chapter Forty-Three & Forty-Four

1. Explain the significance of Zero mentioning that his mother had sung a lullaby similar to the one Stanley's mother had sung to him.
2. Outline what the two boys had planned.
3. Where did Zero get breakfast?
4. What did Stanley uncover in the hole?

Chapter Forty-Five & Forty-Six

1. Who was shining the bright light in Stanley's eyes?
2. How do we know that the Warden and Mr. Sir were not expecting the two boys?
3. What terrifying event begins to unfold almost immediately?
4. Explain the Warden's statement, "It won't be very long."
5. Why did Stanley start to think about his mother?
6. Why did the Warden ask the counsellors to relay the message that the "campers" would no longer have to dig any holes?

Chapter Forty-Seven & Forty-Eight

1. What does Zero do to keep his mind off the lizards during the night?
2. What small but important piece of information do we glean about the Warden in this chapter?
3. Whose name was on the suitcase and how can it be used to describe Zero's behavior during the night?
4. What did Ms Morengo advise Stanley to do when the Warden ordered him to open the suitcase?
5. Do you think she gave him good advice? Explain your answer.
6. Why did Mr. Pendanski hesitate (stared at her) when the Warden ordered him to get Hector Zeroni's file?

Chapter Forty-Nine

1. Why does the author relate the story of the rattlesnake hunters at the beginning of this chapter?
2. Ms Morengo advises Zero not to admit that he has stolen Clyde (Sweet Feet) Johnson's sneakers. Do you agree with her advice? Explain your answer.
3. Describe the new product that Stanley's father has just invented.
4. What happens at Green Lake for the first time in over a hundred years?

Vocabulary: bloodstream, BMW, patent, attorney, recycle

Part Three--Filling in the Holes

Chapter Fifty

1. Explain the curse and how it was resolved
2. What did they find in the suitcase that proved to be very valuable?
3. What was the new foot odor product called?
4. Describe the woman who is singing the lullaby to Hector (Zero) at the end of the story.