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INTRODUCTION

Read through the Common Core Standards for “Reading: Literature,” and you will find that the work expected of students is expressed using such academic terminology as describe, determine, develop, support, and cite. Requirements such as these cannot be met via the comprehension-question worksheets and culminating quizzes that have long been the staples of literature guides designed for classroom use. The primary objective of those traditional activities was to make sure that students were keeping track of what was happening in the section of the novel that they had just read. Very little rigor and synthesis was asked of students, and usually none until the entire novel was read.

From a teacher’s standpoint, this style of classroom analysis misses multiple opportunities to delve deeply into the details that make a specific piece of literature a classic; from a student’s standpoint, this way to reflect on literature is monotonous and inflexible, and it fails to nurture the momentum experienced when one is invested in a compelling work of art. That is why the guides in the Rigorous Reading series aim to do much more: they aim to transform the reading of a great novel into a journey of discovery for students.

Instead of merely asking students what happened in any given section, this resource asks questions that require closer reading and deeper analysis—questions such as “Why did the author choose to include this information?” and “How does this information further the plot or offer more insight into the themes, characters, settings, etc.?” And instead of waiting until the end of the novel to put the pieces of the puzzle in place, students will learn to add to and alter their understanding of the novel as they are reading it. The various activities in this resource systematically prompt students to consider and appreciate the many ingredients the author has combined to form the novel as a whole.

A CUSTOM RESOURCE

*This in-depth guide has been written specifically for Louis Sachar's *Holes*. The lessons and activities have been structured and scaffolded to maximize the experience of reading and teaching this novel.*

*To prepare your students for their reading of *Holes*, utilize the **novel information** and **pre-reading activities** included on pages 7–9 of this guide. Included in this section is information about the book and its author, along with activities designed to acclimate students to the themes and/or concepts present in the book they are about to read.*

*This resource provides activities that help foster comprehension and reinforce knowledge of literary elements as students read *Holes*. These section activities allow students the opportunity to process short sections of the novel at a time, laying a strong foundation for their ability to engage more deeply with the chapters to come. For each section of the novel, students will complete individual and collaborative activities that encourage close reading, referencing textual evidence, and drawing their own conclusions about the text.*

Additionally, this resource provides students with another avenue through which they can reflect on recurring literary elements while also connecting personally with the novel. Each student maintains his or her own Interactive Novel Log, using it as a way to consider and then reconsider various aspects of the novel.

Upon completion of the entire novel, students can synthesize their ideas about the novel by completing several individual and/or collaborative post-reading activities on pages 54–73. This section of the resource contains larger assignments including group projects and essay assignments.

On pages 74–75, vocabulary lists are provided for each section of the novel, along with suggestions for ways to teach vocabulary during reading and after completing the novel.

*At the end of this guide, an answer key is provided for activities that require specific answers, and a list identifies how each activity correlates to **Common Core State Standards**.*

Key Notes

For a description of Interactive Novel Logs and how to use them in your classroom, see page 5 of this guide.

An ideal way to use this resource would be to follow the complete lesson plan given on page 6 of this guide.

The use of multiple texts can help build and extend knowledge about a theme or topic. It can also illustrate the similarities and differences in how multiple authors approach similar content or how an individual author approaches multiple novels. See the bottom of page 7 for suggestions about using *Holes* as part of a text set.

When teaching other novels in your classroom, consider using the specific ideas and also the general approach presented in this resource. Ask students to mine small sections of a novel for clues to theme and characterization. Examine the craft, structure, and purpose of select passages. Explore inferences and encourage connections.

This guide is designed for use in grades 5–8, and the standards correlations on pages 79–80 reflect this range. This leveling has been determined through the consideration of various educational metrics. However, teacher discretion should be used to determine if the novel and guide are appropriate for lower or higher grades, as well.

KEEPING NOVEL LOGS

Great works of literature are complex texts, and complex texts are multilayered. They enrich and reveal as they go along. Successful readers are those who “go along” with the novel, too. Interactive Novel Logs give students a place and a space to record their thoughts and observations as they journey through the book. After each section of the novel is read, students use their Interactive Novel Logs to track the introduction and development of such literary elements as plot, setting, theme, characterization, craft, and structure, while also choosing their own ways to connect the novel to their own life experiences.

Materials needed for each student:

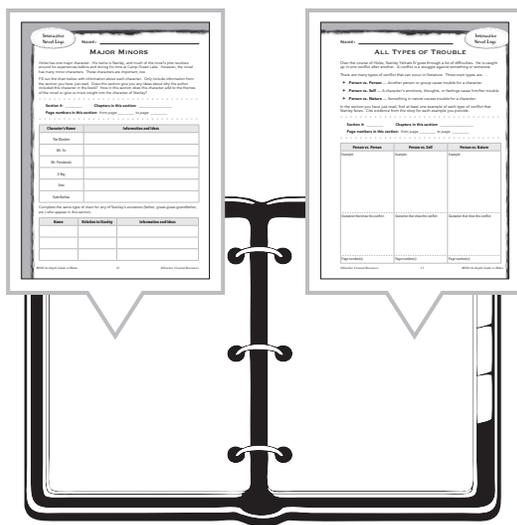
- ✦ a three-ring binder or presentation folder
- ✦ a blank sheet of plain paper with holes punched for title page
- ✦ two or three sheets of blank lined paper for Table of Contents
- ✦ several extra sheets of paper (both lined and plain) for student’s responses to the “Ideas for Your Interactive Log” prompts at the end of each section

Key Notes

One Interactive Novel Log can be kept for multiple novels, in which case a larger three-ring binder will be needed. If it will be used only for the activities included in this guide for *Holes*, a ½-inch binder or presentation folder will be adequate.

Assembling the Interactive Novel Log:

1. On the plain paper, allow students to design their own title page. Have them write “Interactive Novel Log” and “Holes” in the middle of the page. They should include their name and grade at the bottom. Allow students to decorate the page.
2. Add blank lined paper for the Table of Contents. Have students write “Table of Contents” at the top. They will add to this list as they create new pages.



3. Before reading each section of the novel, photocopy and distribute new copies of the Interactive Novel Log worksheets (pages 10–15). Directions for completing these activities can be found in the “Teacher Instructions” that begin Section I.
4. For the final activity in each section, photocopy and distribute the “Section Log-In” page for the section. Follow the directions given. Students select one or more of the four topics in the “Ideas for Your Interactive Log” section and create an Interactive Novel Log page that responds to that topic.

5. After the class has completed the entire novel and the post-reading activities, you may have students include the “My Book Rating” worksheet (page 73) as a final entry in their Interactive Novel Logs.

NAME: _____

ALL TYPES OF TROUBLE

Over the course of *Holes*, Stanley Yelnats IV goes through a lot of difficulties. He is caught up in one conflict after another. A conflict is a struggle against something or someone.

There are many types of conflict that can occur in literature. Three main types are . . .

- ✦ *Person vs. Person* — Another person or group causes trouble for a character.
- ✦ *Person vs. Self* — A character's emotions, thoughts, or feelings cause him/her trouble.
- ✦ *Person vs. Nature* — Something in nature causes trouble for a character.

In the section you have just read, find at least one example of each type of conflict that Stanley faces. Cite evidence from the story for each example you provide.

Section #: _____ Chapters in this section: _____

Page numbers in this section: from page _____ to page _____

Person vs. Person	Person vs. Self	Person vs. Nature
Example:	Example:	Example:
Quotation that shows this conflict:	Quotation that shows this conflict:	Quotation that shows this conflict:
Page number(s):	Page number(s):	Page number(s):

NAME: _____

WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

Several of the chapters in this section of the novel end with lines that the reader must interpret. In each of these cases, not all of the information is given. The reader must use what he or she knows about the characters or plot of the novel to fill in the gaps and understand what is really being said.

Write down the last lines of the following chapters. For each, explain what has just happened leading up to that line. Lastly, write the implication of that line. In other words, what information can we infer or assume from this one line?

Chapter: 20 **Last Line:** _____

What has just happened? _____

What is the implication? _____

Chapter: 21 **Last Line:** _____

What has just happened? _____

What is the implication? _____

Find in this section of the novel another chapter that ends in a similar way. Explain why you feel the author made this choice and what effect it has on the reader at this point.

Chapter: _____ **Last Line:** _____

What has just happened? _____

What is the implication? _____

Then, find in this section a chapter that ends with explicit information—in other words, the author tells you exactly what is happening.

Chapter: _____ **Last Line:** _____

Why do you think the author gives this information in this way? _____

CONNECT THE PLOTS

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

One of the major themes of *Holes* is how everything is connected. Events from the past are connected to the present, and people who seem to be strangers turn out to have affected Stanley and his family in significant ways. Even everyday objects like onions and old shoes have a way of being important and showing up in multiple times and places. Use this "Six Degrees of Separation"-style activity to illustrate the connectedness of the people, places, and things in *Holes*.

1. Create a bulletin board of labels. You may choose to do this in a variety of ways. Labels are provided for you on the following page. You may use pushpins to attach these labels on a bulletin board, or you can affix magnets to the backs of the labels and place them on a whiteboard. A third option would be to write the labels on a chalkboard. In all instances, the labels should be placed in a random order on the board.
2. Randomly announce two people, places, and/or things from the labels. Place a second set of labels in a hat or other container. Pull out two labels and read each aloud. Some combinations of people, places, and things will have obvious connections. Others will require a few intermediate connections to be made first.
3. Explain to students how they will be illustrating the connection between these two people, places, and/or things. If using pushpins on a bulletin board, give students string or yarn. Have them hook the yarn onto the pushpin affixed to the first label. Then have them pull the yarn over to the next label if there is a direct connection. If there is not, students must pull the yarn to a direct connection and continue to do this until they make a connection with the second label chosen by you. If a whiteboard/chalkboard is used, follow the same logic as detailed above by having students use whiteboard pens/chalk to draw lines between the connections.
4. Choose a student to illustrate the connection between these two people, places, and/or things. Allow students to demonstrate speaking skills as they explain these connections. For most combinations of objects, students will need to make intermediate connections in order to connect the two original items. As a student makes each connection, he or she will explain the connection aloud to the class. For example, if the two labels chosen are "Myra Menke" and "Onions," a student might say the following as he or she is demonstrating the connection at the board:

"Myra Menke" was the love interest of "Elya Yelnats," who was the father of "Stanley Yelnats I," who survived for 17 days in the mountains near "God's Thumb," which is where "Onions" have grown for over a century.
5. Allow discussion. Give students an opportunity to agree or disagree with the speaker. Also allow them to offer other ways of connecting the two people, places, or things.
6. Repeat this process until each student has had a chance to go to the board.

CONNECT THE PLOTS (CONT.) LABELS

Note: There are two *Mary Lou* labels given below. Remind students that the names of aircraft, watercraft, etc., are italicized (as are the titles of books, movies, plays, etc.).

Stanley Yelnats IV	Stanley Yelnats III	Stanley Yelnats I
Elya Yelnats	Myra Menke	Madame Zeroni
Sarah Miller	Linda Miller	Trout Walker
Katherine Barlow	Sam	Zero
Barf Bag	Twitch	the Warden
Mr. Sir	Mr. Pendanski	Ms. Morengo
God's Thumb	Yellow-spotted Lizards	onions
spiced peaches	Clyde Livingston	foot fungus
Sploush	Mary Lou (the donkey)	<i>Mary Lou</i> (the boat)