Holes

Chapters 1–10

by Louis Sachar

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: convicted, deftly, descendants, desolate, destiny, perimeter, perseverance, preposterous, scarcity, stifling

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PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Vocabulary Preview 2

Answer Key — Preview ..... 3 — **Caution:** share only if self-checking

OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

Vocabulary in Context 4

Answer Key — In Context ..... 5 — **Caution:** do not share with students

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About the Pre-Reading Activity (open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade):

Students preview 10 words from the upcoming reading, each in a sentence that supports understanding. They choose the best meaning from 3 choices.

About the Optional Post-Reading Quiz (use after reading, or skip):

Same words, now in real excerpts from the text, with questions that build reading and analytical skills.

Vocabulary Sections for this Book:

Section 1 · Chapters 1–10 · Stanley arrives at Camp Green Lake

Section 2 · Chapters 11–20 · Stanley and the boys of Group D

Section 3 · Chapters 21–30 · Zigzag, Zero, and the Warden's demands

Section 4 · Chapters 31–40 · Stanley and Zero in the wilderness

Section 5 · Chapters 41–50 · The return to Camp Green Lake

Bold = this section. *Other sections are available at verbalworkout.com.*

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Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ **Date** _____ **Period** _____

Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.

1. After the trial, the man was **convicted** and led away.

A. placed under arrest
B. questioned by the police
C. found guilty in court

2. She **deftly** folded the paper into a tiny crane.

A. skillfully and quickly
B. slowly and carefully
C. calmly and patiently

3. The king's **descendants** ruled for many centuries.

A. children and later generations
B. trusted advisors and friends
C. loyal soldiers and guards

4. After the storm, the beach looked **desolate** and gray.

A. damp and chilly
B. rocky and uneven
C. bleak, empty, and lonely

5. She believed it was her **destiny** to become a singer.

A. a fated future
B. a personal dream
C. a free choice

6. Guards walked the **perimeter** of the base every hour.

A. the central courtyard
B. the outer edge of an area
C. the main entrance

7. It took real **perseverance** to reach the mountain's summit.

A. plain good luck
B. sudden bursts of energy
C. steady effort over time

8. His plan to fly using an umbrella was **preposterous**.

A. rather risky
B. utterly absurd
C. very clever

9. The **scarcity** of rain left the fields dry all summer.

A. a shortage
B. a long delay
C. an uneven spread

10. The crowded gym grew **stifling** by the third hour.

A. loud and restless
B. hot and airless
C. dim and gloomy

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

canteen — a small container for carrying drinking water

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

Holes

Chapters 1-10

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#	KEY
1	C
2	A
3	A
4	C
5	A
6	B
7	C
8	B
9	A
10	B

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Vocabulary in Context

Holes

Chapters 1–10

by Louis Sachar

Name _____ **Date** _____ **Period** _____ **Score** _____ / 10

Read each excerpt carefully. Then choose the best answer to each question.

1 *"The bus wasn't air-conditioned, and the hot, heavy air was almost as stifling as the handcuffs."*

As it is used in 'the hot, heavy air was almost as stifling as the handcuffs,' the word "stifling" most nearly suggests that the air was…

A. suffocating and oppressive
B. filled with smoke
C. heavy with dust

2 *"He was innocent of the crime for which he was convicted."*

According to the passage, saying that Stanley was "convicted" of the crime means that he was…

A. questioned by police
B. waiting for his trial
C. found guilty in court

3 *"… and she put a curse on him and all his descendants."*

It can reasonably be inferred that the curse placed on Elya "and all his descendants" still reaches…

A. the one-legged Gypsy woman
B. Stanley, born generations later
C. the people of Green Lake

4 *"To be a successful inventor you need three things: intelligence, perseverance, and just a little bit of luck."*

Which detail best supports the idea that Stanley's father showed "perseverance" in his work?

A. He was a clever, smart man
B. He worked on projects for years
C. He often took afternoon naps

5 *"The land was barren and desolate."*

In context, the word "desolate" emphasizes that the land around the camp feels…

A. empty, bleak, and lonely
B. wide and open
C. rocky and uneven

6 *"Because of the scarcity of water, each camper was only allowed a four-minute shower."*

Which statement about the camp's water is best supported by the passage's mention of the "scarcity" of water?

A. It is dirty and unsafe
B. There is not enough of it
C. It is wasted by campers

7 *"Stanley had felt like he was holding destiny's shoes."*

The passage most strongly suggests that, in feeling he held "destiny's shoes," Stanley believed the shoes…

A. had been a gift from school
B. were worth a lot of money
C. were meant to shape his future

8 *"He unearthed several shovelfuls of dirt in this manner, before it occurred to him that he was dumping his dirt within the perimeter of his hole."*

According to the passage, dumping his dirt "within the perimeter of his hole" was a mistake because the dirt landed…

A. inside the hole's outer edges
B. only along one short side
C. deep down at the bottom

9 *"He popped some sunflower seeds into his mouth, deftly removed the shells with his teeth, and spat them into Stanley's hole."*

From the way Mr. Sir "deftly removed the shells with his teeth," it can reasonably be inferred that he…

A. was new to the camp
B. disliked the sunflower seeds
C. was practiced and skillful at it

10 *"'That's preposterous!' exclaimed Igor, expelling saliva as he spoke."*

When Igor cries that Elya's suggestion is "preposterous," the passage most strongly suggests that Igor finds the idea…

A. completely absurd and foolish
B. clever but a bit risky
C. fair to both of the men

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	A	
2	C	
3	B	Character comprehension. Stanley is Elya's great-great-grandson, so the curse falls on his line.
4	B	Character comprehension.
5	A	
6	B	
7	C	
8	A	
9	C	
10	A	

Teacher Context: Chapters 1-10

Stanley Yelnats IV arrives at Camp Green Lake—a Texas desert detention camp with no lake—and joins Group D, where each boy digs one five-foot hole per day. He finds a lipstick tube stamped with the initials K.B. and passes it to X-Ray, who presents it as his own find; the Warden's sharp excitement signals the digging has a hidden purpose. Section ends before the Warden narrows her operation to the area where Stanley found the tube.

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