Holes

Chapters 31-40

by Louis Sachar

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: comprehend, confession, despair, increments, mirage, nectar, parched, precipice, quack, systematic

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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. The directions were so confusing that I could not **comprehend** them.

A. to agree with
B. to understand fully
C. to recall clearly

2. After days of guilt, the boy's **confession** surprised his parents.

A. a sudden change of plans
B. an admission of wrongdoing
C. a promise to do better

3. When the rescue boat passed by without stopping, she felt only **despair**.

A. a rush of sudden fear
B. a complete loss of hope
C. a burst of bitter anger

4. The volume rose in steady **increments** as he turned the dial.

A. small steps of increase
B. slow, even glides
C. large, sudden jumps

5. On the hot highway, a **mirage** seemed to float just ahead of the car.

A. a blinding flash of bright light
B. a low cloud of blowing dust
C. an illusion that isn't really there

6. The bees buzzed from flower to flower, gathering **nectar**.

A. a soft bit of wax
B. a fine yellow powder
C. a sweet liquid

7. The **parched** traveler could barely speak above a whisper.

A. extremely dry from thirst
B. weary from a long journey
C. faint from the burning heat

8. One careless step near the **precipice** could send a climber tumbling.

A. a steep cliff or rock face
B. a swift, rushing mountain stream
C. a heap of loose, rolling stones

9. My aunt refused to see that **quack** about her aching back.

A. a fake or unskilled doctor
B. a costly new specialist
C. a rude, pushy nurse

10. The detective took a **systematic** approach to searching every room.

A. done by random guessing
B. done in a hurried way
C. done in an orderly way

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

Holes

Chapters 31-40

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

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Vocabulary in Context

Holes

Chapters 31–40

by Louis Sachar

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

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

1 *"Back at the compound, they had dug in a systematic order, row upon row, allowing space for the water truck."*

In context, the word "systematic" emphasizes that the digging back at the compound was…

A. done in a great hurry
B. carried out in an orderly way
C. deeper than the usual holes

2 *"It was a mirage caused by the shimmering waves of heat rising off the dry ground."*

It can reasonably be inferred that the pool of water Stanley hurried toward…

A. had dried up before he reached it
B. was hidden behind the heat waves
C. was never really there at all

3 *"It was a warm, bubbly, mushy nectar, sweet and tangy."*

As it is used in "It was a warm, bubbly, mushy nectar, sweet and tangy," the word "nectar" most nearly suggests that the sploosh was…

A. a thick, sour mush
B. a sweet, delicious liquid
C. a plain, watery drink

4 *"It felt like heaven as it flowed over his dry mouth and down his parched throat."*

The passage most strongly suggests that, before Stanley drank, his throat had been…

A. extremely dry from thirst
B. swollen shut from injury
C. sore from shouting aloud

5 *"Instead they zigzagged back and forth, increasing their altitude by small increments every time they changed directions."*

According to the passage, the boys raised their altitude up the mountain by…

A. moving up in small steps
B. taking one long, steep path
C. climbing straight up quickly

6 *"As the ground flattened, a huge stone precipice rose up ahead of him, just barely visible in the moonlight."*

Which statement is best supported by the passage's description of the precipice?

A. A steep rock face rose in his path.
B. A field of boulders blocked his path.
C. A deep canyon cut across his path.

7 *"It was the bitter smell of despair."*

The passage most strongly suggests that, as the smell grew stronger near the top, Stanley felt…

A. sure that water was just ahead
B. proud of how far he had come
C. that all hope was slipping away

8 *"It took a moment for Stanley to comprehend."*

According to the passage, when Zero said he had taken the shoes, Stanley…

A. grew angry right away
B. laughed it off as a joke
C. needed a moment to understand

9 *"Zero's "confession" seemed to bring him some relief."*

It can reasonably be inferred that Zero felt some relief because he had…

A. finally admitted his wrongdoing
B. stopped feeling any stomach pain
C. escaped from the camp at last

10 *"That quack wanted to put leeches on her stomach!"*

Which statement is best supported by Mrs. Tennyson's words about Dr. Hawthorn?

A. She found his cures old-fashioned.
B. She thought he was a poor doctor.
C. She blamed him for Becca's illness.

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

Holes

Chapters 31-40

by Louis Sachar

#	KEY	NOTE
1	B	
2	C	
3	B	
4	A	
5	A	
6	A	
7	C	Event comprehension.
8	C	
9	A	Event comprehension. The quotation marks around 'confession' signal Stanley's doubt that Zero's admission is real.
10	B	Tests the uncommon sense of 'quack' — a fraudulent or incompetent doctor, not the sound a duck makes.

Teacher Context: Chapters 31-40

Surviving on wild onions under the boat, Stanley and Zero reveal their full histories: Zero is Hector Zeroni—a descendant of Madame Zeroni—and he stole the sneakers that led to Stanley's arrest. Stanley carries Zero up God's Thumb mountain, unknowingly fulfilling Elya's broken promise, and they recover their strength on sweet spring water and onions at the summit. Section ends as the boys resolve to return to camp and dig up what Stanley believes is buried treasure.

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