



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

HOLES

BY LOUIS SACHAR



Copyright © 2002 by Prestwick House, Inc., P.O. Box 658, Clayton, DE 19938. 1-800-932-4593. www.prestwickhouse.com Permission to use this unit for classroom use is extended to purchaser for his or her personal use. This material, in whole or part, may not be copied for resale. *Revised January 2010.*

Item No. 201603

ISBN-13 978-1-60389-242-1

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 15

Theme

Objectives: Understanding the difference between a topic and a theme
Writing statements of theme

Activity

In small groups, read and discuss the following definitions of topic and theme. Complete Parts I and II of the Practice with the Differences Between Topic and Theme Worksheet.

Definition of theme:

Theme – the central or dominant idea behind the story; the most important aspect that emerges from how the book treats its subject. Sometimes theme is easy to see, but, at other times, it may be more difficult. Theme is usually expressed indirectly, as an element the reader must figure out. It is a universal statement about humanity, rather than a simple statement dealing with plot or characters in the story. Themes are generally hinted at through different methods: a phrase or quotation that introduces the novel, a recurring element in the book, or an observation made that is reinforced through plot, dialogue, or characters. It must be emphasized that not all works of literature have themes in them. **Example:** In a story about a man who is diagnosed with cancer and, through medicine and will-power, returns to his former occupation, the theme might be: “Real courage is demonstrated through internal bravery and perseverance.” In a poem about a flower that grows, blooms, and dies, the theme might be: “Youth fades, and death comes to all.”

Often a novel will have one or two main, overall themes and several smaller themes. Themes in longer works sometimes intertwine, so that an incident from the story illustrating a lesser theme may also illustrate the main theme.

Definition of topic:

Topic – a general phrase describing the subject of the story or incident. A topic is different from a theme. For example, the **topic** of a story might be friendship, but a statement of **theme** might be: Friends are important to a person's feeling of well-being. A different **topic** might be war, but the **theme** might be expressed in the sentence, “under the stresses of war, people react differently.”

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 15 – 21**Characterization**

Objective: Identifying leadership qualities in the characters in the story

Activity

In small groups, review the fifteen Qualities of Leadership on the information sheet that follows. Each group must discuss each quality of leadership so that all members of the team understand the quality and are able to apply the concept to the characters in the story. Complete the attached Leadership Qualities Charts for both X-Ray and the Warden.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – End**Plot**

Objective: Analyzing the impact of incidents of plot on the protagonist

Activity

Read the statement from the chapter on the Memorable Statements Chart. Briefly relate the incident from the story that the memorable statement brings to mind.

Finally, note the ways the meaning of the statement impacts Stanley's life. The first one is done for you as an example. As you continue to read the remaining chapters in the story, add to the chart.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 25 – 28**Inference, Persuasive Writing, and Headline Writing**

Objectives: Identifying significant facts from the story
Write a newspaper article about an incident from the book
Editorial writing about the incidents from a different perspective
Recognizing incidents from the story that support the injustice, prejudice, and racism in the story

Activity

Review the short biography of Frederick Douglass to understand the kinds of newspaper articles this great African American, who lived in the era of Katherine Barlow and Onion Sam, might have included in his newspaper *The North Star*.

Then, write a newspaper article telling the who, what, when, where, why, and how of Sam's murder for Mr. Douglass' newspaper, *The North Star*, including an appropriate headline. Review Chapters 25, 26, and 28 for the story details. Each newspaper article must be accurate. Do not add your personal opinions. State the facts as you believe the story might have appeared in a black-owned newspaper at the time. Include any information you believe readers will need or want to know about the incident.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 21 – 50**Theme and Letter Writing**

Objectives: Relating literature to life
Understanding theme

Activity

One person in each small group will read the list of QUESTIONS ABOUT FRIENDSHIP that follow to the other group members. Each member of the group should answer the question honestly. Someone will need to record the answers on a piece of notebook paper. After all of the QUESTIONS ABOUT FRIENDSHIP have been answered, the group will compile a list of TEN QUALITIES OF A GOOD FRIEND. The TEN QUALITIES OF A GOOD FRIEND should then be neatly printed on poster board to be displayed in the room.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 50**Theme and Motivation**

Objectives: Exploring the theme of fate in the novel
Interpreting the motivations of the characters

Activity

In small groups, complete the following COINCIDENCES, FATE, OR CONSEQUENCES CHART. One person in the group should read the brief statement of the incident from the chart that follows. The group should then discuss the incident and decide:

- is the incident the result of a decision one of the characters makes about his life
- is the incident a matter of fate over which the character has little or no control
- is the incident merely a coincidence

After the discussion is complete, write a brief explanation on the chart in the category your group selects, stating the reason(s) for placing the incident in the category. NOTE: You may elect to place the incident in MORE THAN ONE category. We have completed one incident as a guide. You do not need to complete all three categories for each incident—only the incidents where all three categories logically apply. The first one is done for you as an example.

At the bottom of the last page of the chart, state a theme for the story based on the role of fate in Stanley's life.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 50**Chronological Plot**

Objectives: Ordering incidents from the story in chronological order
Visualizing the growth or coming of age of characters from the story using a time line

Activity

A coming-of-age story is defined as a novel in which the main character or characters grow, mature, or understand the world in adult terms. Some critics believe that *Holes* is a coming-of-age story for both Stanley and Zero. Trace the pattern of growth for each of these characters by completing the following Coming of Age Timeline.

Working in small groups, place the following list of incidents from Stanley life in the correct chronological order. The first and last incidents have been done for you. Continue placing the incidents in order by noting the number of the incidents from 1 to 19 on the chart with 1 being the first incident in the story from the list and 19 being the last.

In a similar way, place the list in incidents from Zero's life in the correct chronological order. The first one is done for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 50**Research**

Objectives: Relating literature to life
Writing a research paper

Activity

Select one of the TOPICS FOR RESEARCH from the story. Research the topic in the library and on the Internet. Write a one-page report on your topic. At the conclusion of the report, tie the topic of the paper to the incidents from the story. For example, a paper on the topic of *How to Stop a Bully* might include one or two paragraphs discussing Stanley's relationship with Derrick Dunne. Students should present the papers to the class.

TOPICS FOR RESEARCH

- Female Outlaws of the Old West
- Poisonous Reptiles of the Southwest
- Lost Treasures in our Modern World
- Curses – Fact or Fiction
- Homelessness – the Fate of Homeless Children
- The Flora and Fauna of Texas
- Children Who Are Heroes
- Interracial Marriages
- Prejudice in the Judicial System
- Illiteracy in Children
- Harmful Effects of Bullies on a Child's Self-worth
- How to Stop a Bully
- How to Make a Family Tree
- Famous Legends
- Herbal and Natural Medicines
- Corruption in Law Enforcement
- Role of Social Workers
- Techniques for Teaching Reading to Adults
- Definition of Intelligence
- Difficulties in Quitting Smoking
- Weather in Southwestern Deserts
- History of Latvia
- Modern Day Inventors