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Holes

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Study Guide Questions

BOOKCLUB

Week 1: Chapters 1 - 6

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"? Why did Camp Green Lake always manage to find campers despite the appalling conditions?
4. How do we know that Stanley was very unhappy at home?
5. How did Mrs. Bell inadvertently embarrass Stanley?
6. What did everyone in the family like about Stanley Yelnat's name?
7. What instructions did the guard give to Stanley concerning digging?
8. According to Counselor Pendanski, what one rule should Stanley always remember?
9. Why was Stanley reluctant to tell Mr. Pendanski that he was innocent?
10. For what crime was Stanley sent to Camp Green Lake?
11. Briefly describe Stanley's version of the theft.
12. What did the judge think?

Week 2: Chapters 7-14

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. Explain Madame Zeroni's curse.
5. Why did Elya refuse to choose a number in order to win Myra's hand in marriage? How was Sarah Miller different from Myra Menke?
6. Explain why the sign on the rec room said wreck room.
7. How did X-Ray get his nickname? Why was Stanley surprised that X-Ray was the leader of the group?
8. What caused the smile to disappear from Zero's face during the meeting?
9. What occurs when the water truck arrives that indicates Stanley's status in the group of boys is improving?
10. Describe the Warden.

Week 3: Chapters 15 - 22

1. Why was Stanley so sure he wouldn't find anything despite his careful search through the dirt dug up by Zero?
2. According to ZigZag, how did the Warden know all their names?
3. Why did Zero not get the joke about the old lady who lived in a shoe?
4. How do we know that more than just Stanley's hands had become callused during his stay at the camp?
5. Describe the racial makeup of Stanley's work crew.
6. Why did Stanley get blamed for stealing from Mr. Sir? Predict the consequences for Stanley's misdeed.
7. Explain the unusual turn of events in the Warden's cabin.
8. Why was Stanley surprised when he returned to his hole? How was he able to determine who had helped him?
9. What did Stanley discover as he attempted to teach Zero the alphabet?
10. What insight did Stanley suddenly have about the gold tube in the Warden's office?

Week 4: Chapters 23 - 30

1. Describe Green Lake as it was one hundred and ten years ago.
2. Who was Katherine Barlow? Why may have refused Trout's offer to take her for a ride on his new boat?
3. What did Hattie Parker mean when she said, "God will punish you"?
4. Describe what happened to Sam.
5. Explain how Katherine Barlow acquired the reputation as "Kissin' Kate Barlow".
6. Explain what X-Ray meant when he told Armpit, "It's the same old story".
7. Explain why Stanley emptied his canteen onto the ground despite being extremely thirsty.
8. What is Zero's real name and why is it significant?
9. Why were Linda and Trout terrorizing Katherine Barlow? How did it lead to Kate's death?
10. What had Stanley's great grandfather allegedly said after being robbed by Kate Barlow?
11. How did Zero react when when Mr. Pendanski handed Zero the shovel and told him it was all he would ever be good for?
12. Explain what the Warden meant when she said it was almost time to paint her nails again.

Week 5: Chapters 31- 38

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 did Stanley's heart stop when he peered into the bottom of one of the holes?
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.
6. Explain what you think the sploosh might be.
7. What evidence is there that Barf Bag may have purposely stepped on a rattlesnake?
8. Why was Stanley reluctant to stop and rest?
9. What conclusion did Stanley make after seeing all the weeds and bugs?
10. How does Zero make it up the final portion of the climb to the top?
11. What two important discoveries does Stanley make after tumbling into the gully?

Week 6: Chapters 39 - 46

1. What does Zero say that causes Stanley to believe that his friend is delirious?
2. What surprised Stanley when he headed down the mountain looking for the shovel?
3. Why did Zero avoid the homeless shelters?
4. Explain how the sneakers had managed to fall on Stanley's head at the beginning of the story (Chapter Six).
5. What was Stanley alluding to when he asked Zero if he wanted to dig one more hole?
6. Explain the significance of Zero mentioning that his mother had sung a lullaby similar to the one Stanley's mother had sung to him.
7. Outline what the two boys had planned.
8. What did Stanley uncover in the hole?
9. Explain the Warden's statement, "It won't be very long."
10. Why did Stanley start to think about his mother?
11. Why did the Warden ask the counselors to relay the message that the "campers" would no longer have to dig any holes?

Week 7: 47- 50

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. Why did Mr. Pendanski hesitate (stared at her) when the Warden ordered him to get Hector Zeroni's file?
5. Why does the author relate the story of the rattlesnake hunters at the beginning of this chapter?
6. 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.
7. Describe the new product that Stanley's father has just invented.
8. Explain the curse and how it was resolved
9. What did they find in the suitcase that proved to be very valuable?
10. What was the new foot odor product called?
11. Describe the woman who is singing the lullaby to Hector (Zero) at the end of the story.