



## Discussion Questions for *Holes* by Louis Sachar

1. What is the significance of Stanley's name being a palindrome, a word or phrase spelled the same forward and backward? What would your name be as a palindrome?
2. What did you expect Camp Green Lake to be like based on its name? How was it different?
3. What *holes* are in Stanley's life when he first arrives at Camp Green Lake?
4. Stanley's father says, "I learn from failure." What does this mean? Is there a time that you can remember that you learned from failure?
5. What do the nicknames of the boys at Camp Green Lake say about them? Do you think a name changes the way other people see a person? What would your Camp Green Lake nick name be and why?
6. Before going to Camp Green Lake, Zero is homeless. Discuss how it would feel to be homeless. How does your community help fight homelessness?
7. Stanley and his family blame their misfortunes on Stanley's "no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing great-great grandfather." Does your family have any stories that have been passed down through generations?
8. Stanley believes that his family is cursed no matter what they do, but Mr. Pendanski tells the boys that we are responsible for ourselves and our destinies. Do you believe in fate- that people are generally lucky or unlucky- like Stanley? What are some choices or decisions that you could make right now that could affect your future?
9. Why do you think Stanley gives X-Ray the lipstick tube that he finds in his hole? What would you have done if you were in Stanley's shoes?
10. How is Stanley's friendship with Zero similar to Kate Barlow's friendship with Sam? In each case, why don't people approve of the friendship?
11. How does race affect the different storylines in *Holes* (including the Kate and Sam as well as the D-tent boys)? Is there a time in your life that you have noticed people treated differently based on the color of their skin?
12. Stanley and Zero reach an agreement: if Zero helps Stanley dig his hole, Stanley will teach Zero how to read. What do you think about this agreement? Do you think it is fair to the other campers?
13. How does Stanley find the strength to carry Zero up the mountain even though he didn't even know what he would find at the top? Describe something you've done that at first seemed impossible. What did you learn from the experience?
14. Even though his fate is uncertain, Stanley is suddenly very happy as he lies awake on the top of the mountain, staring at the stars. Why does he feel this way? How has his life changed from the start of the story?
15. When Hattie Parker sees Katherine and Sam kiss, she says, "God will punish you!" Based on the turn events later in the book, whom do you think was really punished?