BOOK KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER – HOLES BY LOUIS SACHAR

Important Information

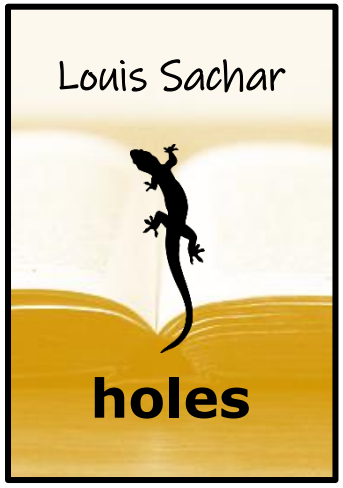
Plot
A boy is wrongfully convicted of stealing an orphanage donation and must choose between going to jail or Camp Green Lake. He decides to go the camp, which turns out to be a brutal place where he is forced to dig holes in the desert all day on the orders of the mysterious warden, who is actually using the prisoners' hard labour to look for buried treasure.

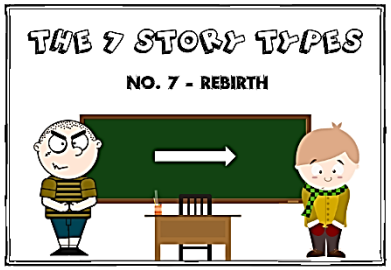
Themes
Fate and Destiny, Friendship, Cruelty, Resilience, Stress and Problem Solving.

Setting
The book is set in the detention centre for young boys called Camp Green Lake, in a dried-up lake in Calhoun County, Texas. Desert-like heat make conditions harsh. There are also brief flashbacks to scenes in Latvia (Europe) and Texas in the mid to late 19th century.

Characters

Stanley Yelnats	Protagonist – Convicted of a crime he did not commit/ possibly cursed.
Zero	becomes friends with Stanley who has suffered many hardships in life.
X-Ray	Takes charge of other boys at the camp and friendly to Stanley.
Squid	Often taunts Stanley about writing letters to his mother.
Magnet	Earned his nickname by his ability to steal things.
Armpit	Pushes Stanley to the floor when he forgets to call him by his nickname.
Zigzag	Stanley thinks Zigzag is the weirdest kid at Camp Green Lake.
Warden	Antagonist – She is a cruel authority at the camp.
Kate Barlow	Intelligent and kind but a violent outlaw since Sam was murdered.
Sam	Sam is killed by the racist people of Green Lake.
Charles Walker	Leads the citizens of Green Lake to burn down the schoolhouse and kill Sam.
Elya Yelnats	Travels to America, forgetting a promise to Madame Zeroni.
Madame Zeroni	May have put a curse on Stanley's family.
Stanley Yelnats I	Son of Elya and great grandfather of protagonist Stanley.
Mrs. Yelnats	Stanley's mother who does not believe in curses.
Mr. Yelnats	Stanley's father and an inventor who is smart, persistent but unlucky.
Mr. Sir	Counsellor at Camp Green Lake who is tough and mean.
Mr. Pendanski	In charge of tent D. He seems friendly but is still mean.
Clyde Livingston	Famous baseball player whose shoes Stanley is accused of stealing.
Derrick Dunne	Bully from Stanley's school.





Name of Book: Holes
Date Published: 1998
Author: Louis Sachar
Reading 'Reconsidered'
Spine: Non-Linear
Genre: Adventure / Mystery

What Can the Book Teach Us?
Fate can determine life events. History is important in shaping your current situation and life.

Quotes

"A lot of people don't believe in curses. A lot of people don't believe in yellow-spotted lizards either, but if one bites you, it doesn't make a difference whether you believe in it or not." His muscles and hands weren't the only parts of his body that had toughened over the past several weeks. His heart had hardened as well.

Key Vocabulary

lurched	abrupt, unsteady, uncontrolled movement
contritely	Feeling regret and sorrow for one's sins or offenses
increments	an increase or addition, especially one of many
precipice	a very steep rock face or cliff / can be metaphorical
desolate	uninhabited and giving an impression of bleak emptiness
perseverance	persistence in doing something despite difficulty
protruding	sticking out; projecting
incarcerated	imprison or confine
calloused	having an area of hardened skin
upholstery	soft, padded textile covering that is fixed to furniture
spigot	a small peg or plug
mirage	an optical illusion caused by atmospheric conditions giving the impression of water.
concoctions	a mixture of various ingredients / elaborate stories
legitimate	conforming to the law or to rules
barren	land too poor to produce much or any vegetation
precarious	not securely held or in position
inexplicable	unable to be explained or accounted for
jurisdiction	the official power to make legal decisions and judgements

Context – The narrator of Holes seems reliable but often interjects dark humour or irony into the narration. Many statements are made which require the reader to make his or her own inferences about the subject matter. At times, the narrator breaks with the omniscient narration to address the reader directly and pose questions about the events in the book.

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