

1. What is the significance of Stanley's real name and nickname in the novel? What is the significance of other characters' names and nicknames? What kinds of nicknames do the people in your life have and how do they impact them?
2. Discuss how the title, *Holes*, is a recurring motif throughout the novel. Discuss its significance both literally and metaphorically.
3. Recount the curse on Stanley's family. How do they react to it, and what does this reveal about their character?
4. What three stories are woven together to make up this novel? What is recurring in all three narratives? Why might Sachar have chosen to write his novel this way?
5. Compare and contrast the role of prejudice in the different stories throughout the book.
6. The Warden is such a great villain. Brainstorm words that describe her character other than mean, evil, and scary. Select the one that you feel is most responsible for making her so scary. Pull out details from the text that you feel best support that description of her character.
7. Why do you think Stanley lies in the letters that he writes home? What would you have done?
8. As Stanley's skin begins to harden from digging holes, what else is changing about him? What other turning points for his character stand out to you?
9. Reread the different verses/versions of the pig lullaby as they appear throughout the story. How is the version at the end of the story different from the ones at the beginning? How does the change in tone of the lullaby reflect the change in tone at the end of the novel?
10. Discuss the role of fate in Stanley and Zero's life. How do they deal with it? What lessons can we learn from their behavior?