

THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PARTNERSHIP AND ROYAL & DERNGATE NORTHAMPTON PRESENT
THE NOTTINGHAM PLAYHOUSE PRODUCTION OF

H O L E S



by **Louis Sachar**

Directed by
Adam Penford



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

**Creative Approaches to Literacy
Resources for Teachers**

**THE GRAND
THEATRE** | BLACKPOOL



ROYAL
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HOW TO USE THE RESOURCE PACK

This pack contains practical activity ideas for teachers to choose from, to be used alongside the study of *Holes* by Louis Sachar. Our activities use creative, active approaches to explore different themes. The activities are described in relation to specific themes, storylines or events, but can be adapted for use with any other themes or events in the story.

Activity ideas are within the following sections:

- EXPLORING CHARACTERS
- RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS between characters, settings and events (past and present)
- CHANGES which characters and settings go through, or which affect situations
- CHOICES which characters make
- KEY EVENTS TO EXPLORE
- KEY QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE
- RESILIENCE
- GENDER ROLES in *Holes*
- AFTER WATCHING THE LIVE PERFORMANCE OF HOLES post-show activities

Throughout the activities are coloured boxes to indicate:

Curriculum Links:
These are directly from the KS2 curriculum to fit your learning goals.

THEMES: Ideas for exploring themes within *Holes*. If you are focussing on a particular theme, you can pinpoint suitable activities.

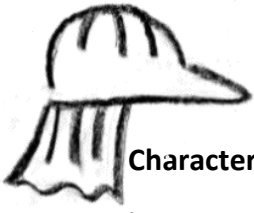
Appendices

1. The Play in 10 Scenes & Resources to use in support of the activities:
 - a. Character list and descriptive vocabulary
 - b. Character cards (with and without space for images)
 - c. 'Resilient Rankings' cards and game rules (based on Top Trumps)
 - d. The Hope song (If Only)- 3 versions
 - e. Resilient moves cards
 - f. 'Resilient' cards
 - g. Useful quotes
 - h. 'Word Carpet' activity
2. Annotated examples of some of the activities:
 - a. Character map
 - b. Hierarchy
 - c. Relationships web
 - d. Family tree
3. Key Stage 2 and 3 English Curriculum links
4. Arts Award Discover Log Book Template
5. Production Images (© Nottingham Playhouse 2018)



ACTIVITIES

CHARACTERS



Character maps (see APPENDIX 2a for example)

In groups, pupils to draw round one of them on large paper (or just draw a big body outline).

Pupils should record what they know about the character, using evidence from the novel- What do others say about them? What do they do? What do they say about themselves? What can pupils infer about the character? They should use quotes and their own words.

This is done most effectively by starting when we first meet the character and revisiting it throughout the story (especially after key events/ changes or extra information).

Alternatives to filling this in:

- Use a different colour each time so they can see what has been added at different points
- Write their first impressions inside the body and new information outside
- Write what they know for definite inside and what they infer outside

Hot-seating/ Question-time

- 1) Pupils think of questions to ask the characters based on events in the story. A pupil sits in the 'hot seat' to be questioned in character (You could model this with Teacher in Role first).
- 2) A few pupils sit on the panel in character (e.g. the warden and counsellors) and the rest of the class ask them questions which they can discuss and debate.

Getting to know the characters

Think of words to describe each character in a chosen situation (e.g. Camp Green Lake or just the boys in D tent). This can be done by providing word cards (some examples in APPENDIX 1b.iii) and the pupils choose which matches each character, or they can come up with their own words.

Pupils to walk around as the different characters- how would they hold themselves? How would they react to others? Extend this to all being different characters- how would they react/respond to each other (e.g. how would Squid act differently around X-Ray to Zero?)

Try this at different parts of the book- do their attitudes change? Provide different situations from the story- pupils to show their feelings physically- ask different pupils how they are feeling, can they elaborate using different descriptive vocabulary?

Using the image character cards, pupils can draw pictures of the characters.

Curriculum Links:

Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.

Compare characters, consider different accounts and discuss viewpoints.

Consider how authors have developed characters.

Curriculum Links:

Enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama.

Hierarchy

Put the characters into a hierarchy of Power. Choose situations from the story based on your class discussions, but some good ones would be:

- The boys in D tent
- Camp Green Lake (including the warden, councillors, boys, etc)
- The town of Green Lake (Kate Barlow's story)

THEMES: Systems/ Crime and Punishment/ Power/ Resilience

Who is at the top? Where is Stanley? Does his position change through the novel? What events lead to this change? Think about the idea of power- who loses or gains power in the different environments and storylines? Are there different sorts of power? Who uses which sort of power?

You could extend this activity by creating different hierarchies and discussing the changes.

Examples for the D tent boys:

- 1) Social hierarchy (this is the position the boys put themselves, so X-Ray at the top, Stanley at the bottom) Does this change at all?
- 2) Friendship hierarchy- who is a good friend? What evidence can you use from the novel to back up your ideas? Do they change through the novel? Why?
- 3) What other ways can they think of to sort the boys? E.g. confidence

Curriculum Links:
Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read.
Participate in discussions about books, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously.

These can be done using the character cards and moving them around, or physically with each pupil being a character. Remember more than one character can be on each level. This can be done in a triangle or diamond shape. (See APPENDIX 1a/1b for resources, APPENDIX 2b for example)

Resilient Rankings

Use the 'Resilient Rankings' cards (APPENDIX 1c.i) to rate the characters on the different Resilient traits. You could choose just to do this out of ten, or discuss using larger values and negative values (how you choose to do this might depend on the ability of your class). Revisit this in the middle and at the end of the story- do their ratings change? (See APPENDIX 1c.ii 'Resilient Rankings Rules' on how to rate characters and play the game).

Use the blank cards to come up with your own characters or use the same characters and think of your own traits to rate, using your class discussions and the *Resilience Framework (Children & Young People) Oct 2012- adapted from Hart & Blincow 2007 www.boingboing.org.uk*

What about combining characters to increase their rating? E.g. Does Stanley become braver with the support of Zero?



RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS

Relationship Webs (See APPENDIX 2c for example)

- 1) Each pupil has a character (this can be on a sticker or hung round their neck). Pass and hold string for the connections (e.g. there would be a string between Stanley and Elya because they are related, between Elya and Kate because she robbed him, etc). Following this, pupils can discuss the relationships and the visual representation of how many connections there are in the novel.
- 2) Either following on from option one, or stand-alone, pupils draw the web, writing each character and tracing the relationships between them, being prepared to explain their connections.
- 3) Like a police investigation board. Stick character names or images (see character cards APPENDIX 1b) on the display board, pin strings between them for their connections. You could also add locations and properties which characters have connections to. This can also be done as a timeline board, for example using Stanley's timeline and adding connections to the past and present.
- 4) One character sits in the centre. Other characters come up and show their connection/relationship by standing in an appropriate proximity to the main character (e.g. If Stanley is in the centre, his mother might come up and place a hand on his shoulder, the warden may stand at a distance, and Zero might kneel at his feet) Pupils should decide on their position based on their characters' judgement of the central character.

THEMES: Fate

Curriculum Links:
Reading books that are structured in different ways.
Making comparisons within books.

Family trees (See APPENDIX 2d for example)

Each pupil is a character. They stand in order to map out their family tree. They then discuss (or use the relationships string activity) to find connections between the families. Families to focus on would be Stanley's family, Zero's family and the Warden's family. Think about how other characters, such as Kate Barlow, fit in.

They can use the character cards to create this on display instead of (or as well as) physically. This can then be added to/ adapted as they find out more.

Key Questions:

- How do the family trees connect?
- What happens as a consequence of this?
- What would happen if the characters knew about their connections (e.g. Stanley and Zero?)
- What part did fate play in the family tree?
- What part did the curse play?
- If Elya had married Myra Menke, how would Holes be different? Would it even have happened?
- How would things be different if Elya had remembered to carry Madame Zeroni up the mountain?
- What would happen if Stanley could meet Elya? What would he ask?
- What would happen if the Warden could meet Kate? What would she ask?

THEMES: Fate/ Curse/
Choice and Freewill

Curriculum Links:
Participate in discussions about books, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously.

Relationships and **Family Tree** activities can be done for the beginning, middle and end of the story. If they are displayed they can be changed and added to as the pupils discover different facts about the characters and their connections.

Peaches and Onions

Peaches and onions have a significant role in the story. Both grow near Green Lake and are used by the townsfolk. They change their uses and play a role in the breaking of the curse and how things turn out for the present characters.

Curriculum Links:
Recognise themes in what they read.

Discuss the following key questions.

THEMES: Fate/
Chance/ Luck

Key questions:

- How did the past affect the present?
- What might have been different if the peaches hadn't played their part? (hint: Zero survives in the desert on the jars of peaches)
- What might have been different if the onions hadn't played their part? (hint: Stanley and Zero survive on onions when they reach God's thumb/ yellow-spotted lizards don't attack them because they eat the onions. Zero also finds shade under Sam's onion boat)
- If Kate and Sam hadn't traded with onions and peaches, would things have turned out differently?

Using their conclusions, pupils to decide the most significant change based on how the past affected the present, then script and perform the event twice- one how it happens in the novel and the second without the peaches and onions.

e.g. Scenario A: Because Sam rows across the lake with the peach jars, his boat ends up on the lake bed. Zero then finds shade and sustenance under the boat.
Scenario B: Without the peaches and onions, Sam would not have rowed across the lake to the onion field or had the peaches with him. Zero would then not have shade or sustenance and would likely have died in the desert.

Curriculum Links:
Adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.
Improvise, devise and script drama for one another.

Can pupils think of other parallels in the novel, where modern events mirror past events?





CHANGES

Use the following activities to explore the changes which occur through the different storylines, including the change from past (Kate's story/ Elya's story) to present (Stanley's story).

Green Lake to Camp Green Lake

Green Lake: Lake town → Desert → Juvenile correctional facility → Lake → Girl Scout camp

1) Collage/map layering

- Camp Green Lake is described early on in the story based on Stanley's first impressions of the place. Pupils should create a collage map of Camp Green Lake, mapping out where things are. This can be added to as we find out more.
- We find out in Kate Barlow's story about the town of Green Lake, before the lake dried up. Pupils should create another collage map of Green Lake, which can be layered over their original (best done on acetate, or could be done on computer if you or your pupils are tech-savvy!)

This layering should show the changes from Green Lake to Camp Green Lake and how the stories link together (e.g. the onion fields, warden's cabin, Sam's boat, etc). They could extend this to show what they think Camp Green Lake looks like at the end of the story, when the lake is back and it is a girl scout camp.

Curriculum Links:
Read easily and with good understanding.
Discuss what they have read.
Develop a wide vocabulary.

2) Word carpet

You will need a large space for this activity, ideally the hall.

- Imagine the space is Green Lake. Read the description ([APPENDIX 1h](#)) then pupils to write down things they might see on different pieces of paper (one per piece) and place them where they think they would go (model this first to establish where key things are, e.g. Sam's onion field).
- Go round and add descriptive vocabulary to the items. Also use this point to remove any which have been duplicated or any things which are not appropriate.

In pairs, pupils guide each other round and describe what they see/hear/smell/feel. Ideally this should be done with the pupil who is being guided having their eyes closed, but this can depend on the trust of the class.

- Now think about how the location has changed to become Camp Green Lake. Pupils to go round and remove anything which would now not be there (e.g. fish) and add anything new (e.g. holes, tents, etc).
- Pairs swap round and again guide their partner round the space and describe it. Discuss the changes and how this affects experience. This activity can lead onto great descriptive writing.

Curriculum Links:
Opportunities to work in groups of different sizes.

Characters

- 1) You can explore changes in character by using activities which have already been described (hot-seating, walking round as characters, etc).
- 2) Explore the key events which you think led to the changes in the characters. What are the 'Turning Points'. Put these events into action by using freeze-frames which come to life, or creating their own scripts and acting these out.

- 3) Think about how things may have been different if different choices had been made (see 'CHOICES' activities).

THEMES: Chance/ Luck/
Fate/ Curse/ Revenge/
Crime and Punishment/
Morals/ Justice/ Choice/

Characters to explore:

Stanley

Bullied, lonely, isolated → Caveman (one of the gang) → Teacher/friend to Zero → Hero?

Kate Barlow

Respected schoolteacher → Victim of discrimination → Criminal (thief and murderer)

'If Only' Song

Throughout Holes, we hear different versions of the 'if only' song (See [APPENDIX 1d for different versions](#)). Compare the Yelnats version to the one which Zero's mum sings at the end- how are they different? Why do you think they are different?

Curriculum Links:
Identifying how language,
structure and presentation
contribute to meaning.

Pupils could write their own hopeful song, thinking about what they are hopeful for (see Creative Writing Challenges p18-19).



CHOICES

Conscience

Before you find out what choice a character makes, use different active approaches to decide what they should do. Discuss the ideas first, with the pros and cons of different decisions and possible outcomes.

- 1) **Conscience Alley**- pupils line up down two sides, creating an alleyway. One pupil (in character) walks down the centre. The lines feed advice and opinions to the character, who listens and makes a decision at the end. This can be done as a whole group or split into smaller groups. You can swap who is the character.
- 2) **'Angel and Devil'**- in groups of 3- one is the character and the other two are the conscience. They feed the pros and cons of a decision and the character makes a decision based on these. They can do this standing still, or each time they hear a good argument they can walk forwards or backwards (e.g. pros forward, cons backward- whichever end they are closer to at the end is their decision).

Curriculum Links:

Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied. Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas.

THEMES: Choice/
Freewill/ Fate/ Chance/
Luck/ Right and Wrong

Crossroad moments

Throughout the novel, the characters face 'crossroad moments' and make various choices which affect what happens next.

- 1) Each time a choice is made, think about 'what if they made a different choice?' (like the 'sliding doors' idea)
- 2) Create a Still Image (freeze-frame, like you have taken a photograph of the moment) or act out scenarios for what the consequences might be if they made a different choice. How might their choice affect other characters or situations? What resilient moves might they need to make? (see [Resilient Moves cards APPENDIX 1e](#))
(Developed from the Resilience Framework (Children & Young People) Oct 2012- adapted from Hart & Blincow 2007 www.boingboing.org.uk)

- e.g. What if Stanley had chosen jail instead of Camp Green Lake?
What if Stanley and Zero had told the Warden where the lipstick was actually found?
What if Elya had chosen a number rather than saying no to marrying Myra?

- They can think of their own 'what if' questions for the different choices in the book. These may arise naturally as they are reading, from the pupils themselves or scaffolded by the teacher.

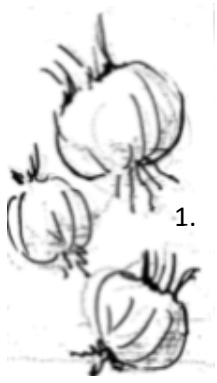
Curriculum Links:

Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume and movement so that meaning is clear.

Curriculum Links:

Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge.





KEY EVENTS TO EXPLORE

1. Use the 'Play in 10 Scenes' ([APPENDIX 1](#)) to explore the skeleton of the story. Split the group into 10 (or 5) small groups and provide a scene (or two) to each group. Groups to bring this scene to life by freezing the image then moving it, using the narration and quote from the play. This is a good way to get an overview of the whole story, moving around the room and telling the story group by group.
2. Bring key events in the story to life. Think about who was there and set up the image like a photograph. Think about the facial expressions of each character and their positioning based on who they are and their relationships.

Pupils could bring the image to life and refreeze it, then discuss how the image has changed based on the event (e.g. how expressions/attitudes have changed).

In Still Images, pupils can tap different characters on the shoulder when they want to know more about how they are feeling or what they are thinking. They can ask the character questions about this.

Pupils could go into the image and replace a character to change their expression or position if they disagree- justify their opinion. They could also use this idea to change the outcome of the event, either by replacing, adding or removing characters.

Here are some Key Events to focus on, but pupils may think of their own, or these may arise during class discussions. Which events do they think are the Key moments?

Stanley's story:

Stanley's trial What outcome do you want from the trial?

Sunflower seeds/ snake venom incident What consequences do you think there will be from the events? Characters think about consequences of their actions during this event? Who do they blame?

Elya's story:

Elya refusing to choose a number to win Myra Why does he choose not to? How would things be different if he had? What if he had remembered to take the pig up the mountain one more time? What if he ended up marrying Myra?

Madame Zeroni telling Elya about the curse or Elya forgetting to go back for Madame Zeroni Does Elya feel worried about the curse? Does he feel guilty about forgetting Madame Zeroni?

Kate's story:

Sam fixing the schoolhouse/ Kate kissing Sam How does Kate feel about Sam? Does she think about the consequences of her actions? Does Sam?

Sam's murder Is this the 'switch-flipping' moment for Kate? How does she change after this event?

Kate killing the sheriff Why is this significant?

Curriculum Links:
Summarise main ideas,
identifying key details that
support the main ideas.

THEMES: Systems/ Crime
and Punishment/ Justice
and Law/ Choice/ Power

THEMES: Choice/ Fate/
Curse/ Morals/ Chance

THEMES: Discrimination/
Prejudice/ Choice/ Crime
and Punishment/ Revenge/
Resilience/ Systems

KEY QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE

Pose a key question and ask pupils to put together their arguments for and against, then conduct a debate. You could choose 3 pupils to be the adjudicators and come to a conclusion based on the arguments (perhaps using your more able pupils to do this, who can get on with a greater depth challenge whilst the others are constructing their arguments).

Key Questions:

Was there actually a curse?

Is Camp Green Lake fair?

Is Camp Green Lake a good model for a prison?

Who is the hero of the story?

Is Kate a hero? Were her actions understandable? Justifiable?

Was Kate right to take revenge on the Sheriff?

Is 'fate' real? Are people lucky or unlucky, or are we responsible for our own destinies?

Think about the deal for Stanley to teach Zero and Zero to dig part of Stanley's hole. Is this a fair deal for both boys? Is it fair to the other campers?

When Hattie Parker sees Katherine and Sam kiss, she says, "God will punish you!" Based on the events later in the book, whom do you think God punished?

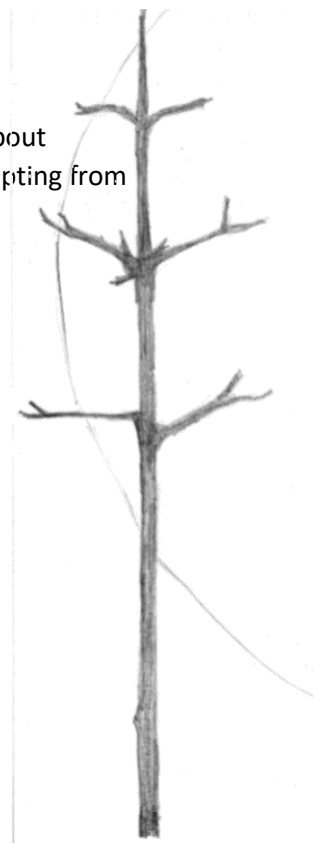
Their own debate questions may arise during class discussions also. These could come about naturally or you could give them a task to think of a good debate question. Further prompting from the teacher could help with more depth.

Curriculum Links:

Use discussion in order to learn; elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.

Competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate. Understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

Provide reasoned justifications for their views. Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s). Speak audibly and fluently. Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.



RESILIENCE

1) Resilient Moves cards (See APPENDIX 1e)

Each group can have a set of cards- cut these out (laminating them is probably a good idea too). Whenever a significant event happens whilst reading the book, these cards can be used to aid discussion about the resilient moves the characters make, what is missing, how the situation might be different if a resilient move had been made, or which resilient moves the characters could make to change the situation.

THEMES: Resilience/ Choice

2) Resilient Moves hats (can be created just with paper bands round heads)

Each pupil to wear a resilient move (can use the cards and clip to their hats). At key moments, pupils to stand up if their resilient move could be used, then justify it.

Bring key moments to life by acting them out. Pupils to stand up and shout 'freeze' when they think their resilient move can be used. They then go in and replace a character, using the resilient move on their hat to adapt the situation.

These could be adapted to having each pupil in the scene with a blank hat on, and other pupils clipping the resilient moves to the character's hat who would then use this move to alter their situation.

Curriculum Links:
Develop pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.

3) Spot the resilient move

Each pupil to have a card with the word 'Resilient' on it (APPENDIX 1f). As they read the story, or during acting activities, pupils to hold up their card and shout 'RESILIENT' when they think a character has been resilient. They will then use the framework to justify their thoughts: what resilient move do they think has been made?

This could lead onto further discussion or debate between pupils.



Resilience Framework (Children & Young People) Oct 2012- adapted from Hart & Blincow with Thomas 2007, www.boingboing.org.uk)



GENDER ROLES

Women in Holes

Are the women in Holes considered 'main' characters? Especially as the main protagonist is Stanley, who attends a boys' camp. The women have a great effect on the storylines and connections, and hold a lot of power.

Curriculum Links:
Have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually and socially.

Significant women:

Kate Barlow

Kate Barlow is a respected schoolteacher in Green Lake town. After she kisses Sam (who is black), Sam is murdered. Kate kills the sheriff and kisses him, earning her the nickname Kissin' Kate Barlow. She is now an outlaw, robber and murderer. Kate is a strong woman who stands up for what she believes in, but is everything she does 'right'?

THEMES: Prejudice/
Discrimination/ Systems/ Power/
Right and Wrong/ Resilience

Key Events/Quotes:

Kate refuses Trout Walker. *"He pointed his finger at her and said, "No one ever says 'No' to Charles Walker!" "I believe I just did," said Katherine Barlow."*

Kate kisses Sam. *"God will punish you!"*

Sam is killed and the schoolhouse is burned down.

Kate refuses a kiss from the sheriff, and later goes back to kill him, kissing him afterwards. *"For the next twenty years Kissin' Kate Barlow was one of the most feared outlaws in all the West."*

Kate steals from Stanley Yelnats (the first).

Kate refuses to tell Trout and Linda Walker where the treasure is and to start digging. *"You, and your children, and their children, can dig for the next hundred years and you'll never find it"*

Key Questions:

Is Kate a hero?

What made Kate into a killer? What other options might she have had?

What if Kate had never kissed Sam? What if she had never even met him?

When do you think Kate is the strongest?

Do you respect Kate's decisions? Why/why not?

Curriculum Links:
Listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers.
Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions.
Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, initiating and responding to comments.
Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.
Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings.

Warden Walker

Warden Walker is descended from Trout Walker, who wanted to find the treasure which Kate Barlow buried. The Warden was made to dig holes every day of her childhood and created Camp Green Lake to continue this legacy.

We hear a lot about the Warden before we meet her and, from the descriptions, Stanley assumes she is a man. The Warden is a tough woman who seems unfair. We later find out about her childhood.

Key Events/Quotes:

Stanley's arrival at Camp Green Lake- we first hear about the Warden and form an impression. *"The Warden owns the shade"*

The Warden comes to the holes to be shown the lipstick tube.

The snake-venom incident. *"Stanley wondered if this was how a condemned man felt on his way to the electric chair—appreciating all of the good things in life for the last time."*

The Warden tries to take the chest from Stanley. *"Do you know how long..." Her voice trailed off, then started up again. "When I was little I'd watch my parents dig holes, every weekend and holiday. When I got bigger, I had to dig, too. Even on Christmas"*

Key Questions:

Do you ever feel sorry for the Warden?

How do the Warden's feelings change from when she first finds out about the lipstick tube to when they do not find anything new?

Is the Warden the villain of the story?

How would you describe the Warden?



Madame Zeroni

Madame Zeroni appears in Elya's story, but we later find out that Zero is called 'Hector Zeroni' so the connections continue. Madame Zeroni is the one who warns Elya about the curse. Although she does not appear in much of the story, she seemingly affects what happens.

Key Events/Quotes:

"When she looked at you, her eyes seemed to expand, and you felt like she was looking right through you."

Madame Zeroni warns Elya against marrying Myra and advises he goes to America. *"Madame Zeroni spat on the dirt. She told Elya that he should go to America."*

Madame Zeroni warns Elya that she will curse his family if he does not carry her up the mountain.

Elya forgets to go back for Madame Zeroni. *"He wasn't afraid of the curse. He thought that was a lot of nonsense."*

Key Questions:

How do you feel about Madame Zeroni? Do you like her? Why/why not?

Do you think Madame Zeroni actually cursed Elya and his family?

Ideals of Masculinity

"This is not a Girl Scout Camp!"

Think of some words to describe these male characters. Do this at different points in the story- do your impressions change? Do their attitudes change depending on the situation?

Elya Stanley Zero Other boys at Camp Green Lake

Mr Pendanski Mr Sir Stanley's father



Find quotes and examples from the story which fit or challenge typical stereotypes of masculinity.

e.g. The boys picking on Stanley for writing to his mother.

Use a hot-seating activity to question the characters about how they truly feel in these different situations. Pupils could create collages of the stereotypes of men and women, then think about the counter-stereotype. Using these explorations, they could debate what is the 'ideal' man or the 'ideal' woman- are their views different to the typical stereotype? How can they connect these to characters in Holes?

THEMES: Prejudice/
Discrimination/ Systems/
Power/ Choice

Boy to man

There is a key idea that Stanley grows from a boy to a man throughout the story. What does this mean? What are the key differences beyond the physical? Explore the key events which lead to his change. Is it sudden or gradual? How do other characters affect this change? Does the way he makes choices change?

Mr Sir vs Mr Pendanski

Compare the characters of Mr Sir and Mr Pendanski. How are they similar? How do they differ?

Think about their approaches to different situations and how they deal with the boys at Camp Green Lake. Are they both acting naturally or 'putting it on'? What do you think about the first time Stanley meets them?

Mr Sir: *"My name is Mr Sir. Whenever you speak to me you call me by my name, is that clear?"*

Mr Pendanski: *"My name is easy to remember. Three easy words: pen, dance, key."*

Using role-play, put the two counsellors into different situations. Pupils to react how they think each character would (Mr Sir or Mr Pendanski).

You could use Mr Sir and Mr Pendanski as the 'angel and devil' from the conscience activity. In character as a boy (possibly Stanley), ask the counsellors a question. Using a back-and-forth, pupils in role as Mr Sir and Mr Pendanski answer the question in the differing ways that they would. The pupil asking the question decides who they think is being truthful/genuine and who they would listen to.



AFTER WATCHING THE LIVE PERFORMANCE OF HOLES

Review the performance through class and group discussion and personal reflection.

Here are some questions to prompt discussion:

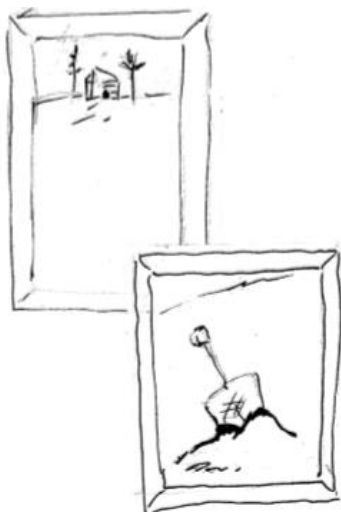
Curriculum Links:
Rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

- What were the key, stand-out moments in the performance?
- How were characters portrayed?
- Was it how you expected?
- What did you think of lighting, sound, costume, props?
- What scenes did you relate to the most? Why do you think you related to this scene?
- Which character did you relate to? Why?
- If you could change one thing about the performance, what would it be?
- Have your opinions changed about the characters after watching how they were portrayed on the stage?
- What else did you think/feel during or after the performance?

Pupils can discuss these or physically explore these ideas.

For example:

- Miming or freeze-framing their favourite scenes
- Acting out a scene with a change they would have made





CREATIVE WRITING AND DESIGN CHALLENGES

1. Take a short section of the novel and prepare it for performance.

Turn it into a play script with dialogue and stage directions.

You could add guidance on costumes, lighting, sound effects and props.

You will need to think about who your audience will be, and what you want them to think and feel as they read or watch your scene.

2. Write about one of the events in the novel from an alternative point of view.

The novel's voice is that of the narrator. What if one of the characters were to tell the story – how would it be different?

You might, for example, give Zero's view of his escape into the desert or write Kate Barlow's diary entries as she gets to know Sam and then writes about her feelings and actions after the prejudiced attacks on them.

3. Fill in the holes in the story.

We have to imagine some scenes that aren't described in the book but which must have taken place, e.g. Zero stealing the trainers or his journey through the desert after running away from Camp Green Lake.

Can you write the extra chapter or section?

You could also think about past events which we hear a small amount about.

e.g. The Warden's childhood or her experience growing up? Kate Barlow's years as an outlaw?

4. Write a song or poem of your own called 'If only...'

Using the 'If Only...' song as a starting point, write your own song or poem entitled 'If Only'. It could be entirely made up or be based on real events, but should be about something which could have been different if only....

5. Design the costumes for a character.

Choose a character from Holes and explore their involvement in the story. What different costumes would they wear?

Think about the materials, colours, fastenings. How often or how quickly they would need to get changed- might this affect your design?

A good character to choose would be Kate Barlow, but you could choose any character.

6. Write a review of the performance of Holes at the theatre.

This should be aimed at people of your age and maybe their parents and should give us an idea about the events of the play, the performances by the actors, the best moments, the set, lighting and sound. You could also tell us what you thought was best about the play and what might be improved. You might also say how it differs from the book and film or how it captures what is important in the book. You could write this for a website or a newspaper or magazine.

7. Create an alternative scene or ending.

Characters have certain knowledge or make choices which affect events and lead to different consequences. The past affects the present. Choose one of these questions to write a new scene (as a script or story).

- What would happen if Stanley and Zero knew their families were connected?
- What would be different if Elya had married Myra Menke?
- How would things be different if Elya had remembered to carry Madame Zeroni up the mountain?
- We know that the peaches and onions are a common theme throughout the novel, but how important is their role? Think about what might have been different if the peaches or onions hadn't played their part? (e.g. Zero survives in the desert on the jars of peaches, and also finds shade under Sam's onion boat- what if these things didn't happen?)

OR

Can you think of anything else in the past which affected the present? What if it had been different? Choose another significant change based on how the past affected the present, then rewrite the scene how it would have happened.

8. Write an interview between characters.

Imagine if connected characters from different times could meet. What might they say? What would they want to know?

Write and perform an interview between two characters who are connected but would never meet.

Stanley interviewing Elya?

The Warden interviewing Kate?

Can you think of any other pairs?



CREDITS

The Grand Theatre has been commissioned by the Children's Theatre Partnership to develop and produce a new three-year National Creative Learning Programme: *Creative Resilience*

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adapted from Hart & Blincow with Thomas 2007, www.boingboing.org.uk

