

Year 6

Reading and Writing

Home Learning

Hi year 6,

This is **week four** of your home learning and it includes: reading activities, writing activities and a chance for you to be creative using both your art and writing skills. You will need to complete the tasks in order. As always we want you to take care with your handwriting and presentation and are really looking forward to seeing some of the great learning we know you will complete this week so we can add this to our year 6 Star Learning page on the website.

There are quite a few chapters for you to read this week so if you prefer to listen Mrs Maccallum has recorded them for you. Check out the links on the website.

You will recognise our reading task sheets, learning objectives and steps to success. Make sure you use these to help you when working through each of the learning tasks.

Have fun with your learning!

Mrs Davie, Mrs Booth, Mrs McQuay and Mr Richards

Year 6 - Task one – reading focus (40 minutes)

Over the last three weeks, we have explored in detail the setting of Camp Green Lake and have got to know the main character, Stanley Yelnats, inside and out. Now we are going to change our focus to the adults who are in charge of this juvenile detention centre.

We will still need to use both our retrieval and interpreting skills to find out about the people who are in charge.

Retrieval – finding information from the text.

Inference/interpreting – reading between the lines to find the clues in a text.

Task one: We have already been introduced to or heard about the following adults at Camp Green lake:

Mr Sir, Mr Pendanski and The Warden.

Mr Sir

Mr Pendanski

The Warden

Divide your page into three sections and write one of these adults names in each section.

Read back through chapters 1-9 and write down everything you can retrieve or infer about each of these characters.

To gather information about characters from multiple chapters

Retrieve and infer information about Mr Sir, Mr Pendanski and the warden from chapters 1-9.

Interpret



Task two: If you were Stanley, which of these adults would you be most scared of? What is it about this adult that makes you feel this way?

Read the rest of chapter 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the book Holes.



9 continued.....

He waited to write the letter until after Squid had gotten up and joined the game of pool.

Dear Mom,

Today was my first day at camp, and I've already made some friends. We've been out on the lake all day, so I'm pretty tired. Once I pass the swimming test, I'll get to learn how to water-ski.

He stopped writing as he became aware that somebody was reading over his shoulder. He turned to see Zero, standing behind the couch. "I don't want her to worry about me," he explained. Zero said nothing. He just stared at the letter with a serious, almost angry look on his face. Stanley slipped it back into the stationery box. "Did the shoes have red X's on the back?" Zero asked him. It took Stanley a moment, but then he realized Zero was asking about Clyde Livingston's shoes.

"Yes, they did," he said. He wondered how Zero knew that. Brand X was a popular brand of sneakers. Maybe Clyde Livingston made a commercial for them. Zero stared at him for a moment, with the same intensity with which he had been staring at the letter. Stanley poked his finger through a hole in the vinyl couch and pulled out some of the stuffing. He wasn't aware of what he was doing. "C'mon, Caveman, dinner," said Armpit.

"You coming, Caveman?" said Squid. Stanley looked around to see that Armpit and Squid were talking to him. "Uh, sure," he said. He put the piece of stationery back in the box, then got up and followed the boys out to the tables. The Lump wasn't the Caveman. He was. He shrugged his left shoulder. It was better than Barf Bag.

10

Stanley had no trouble falling asleep, but morning came much too quickly. Every muscle and joint in his body ached as he tried to get out of bed. He didn't think it was possible but his body hurt more than it had the day before. It wasn't just his arms and back, but his legs, ankles, and waist also hurt. The only thing that got him out of bed was knowing that every second he wasted meant he was one second closer to the rising of the sun. He hated the sun.

He could hardly lift his spoon during breakfast, and then he was out on the lake, his spoon replaced by a shovel. He found a crack in the ground, and began his second hole. He stepped on the shovel blade, and pushed on the very back of the shaft with the base of his thumb. This hurt less than trying to hold the shaft with his blistered fingers. As he dug, he was careful to dump the dirt far away from the hole. He needed to save the area around the hole for when his hole was much deeper. He didn't know if he'd ever get that far.

X-Ray was right. The second hole was the hardest. It would take a miracle. As long as the sun wasn't out yet, he removed his cap and used it to help protect his hands. Once the sun rose, he would have to put it back on his head. His neck and forehead had been badly burned the day before. He took it one shovelful at a time, and tried not to think of the awesome task that lay ahead of him.

After an hour or so, his sore muscles seemed to loosen up a little bit. He grunted as he tried to stick his shovel into the dirt. His cap slipped out from under his fingers, and the shovel fell free. He let it lie there. He took a drink from his canteen. He guessed that the water truck should be coming soon, but he didn't finish all the water, just in case he was wrong. He'd learned to wait until he saw the truck, before drinking the last drop.

The sun wasn't yet up, but its rays arced over the horizon and brought light to the sky. He reached down to pick up his cap, and there next to it he saw a wide flat rock. As he put his cap on his head, he continued to look down at the rock. He picked it up. He thought he could see the shape of a fish, fossilized in it. He rubbed off some dirt, and the outline of the fish became clearer.

The sun peeked over the horizon, and he could actually see tiny lines where every one of the fish's bones had been. He looked at the barren land all around him. True, everyone referred to this area as "the lake," but it was still hard to believe that this dry wasteland was once full of water. Then he remembered what Mr. Sir and Mr. Pendanski had both said. If he dug up anything interesting, he should report it to one of them. If the Warden liked it, he would get the rest of the day off. He looked back down at his fish. He'd found his miracle. He continued to dig, though very slowly, as he waited for the water truck. He didn't want to bring attention to his find, afraid that one of the other boys might try to take it from him. He tossed the rock, face down, beside his dirt pile, as if it had no special value.

A short while later he saw the cloud of dirt heading across the lake. The truck stopped and the boys lined up. They always lined up in the same order, Stanley realized, no matter who got there first. X-Ray was always at the front of the line. Then came Armpit, Squid, Zigzag, Magnet, and Zero. Stanley got in line behind Zero. He was glad to be at the back, so no one would notice the fossil. His pants had very large pockets, but the rock still made a bulge. Mr. Pendanski filled each boy's canteen, until Stanley was the only one left. "I found something," Stanley said, taking it out of his pocket. Mr. Pendanski reached for Stanley's canteen, but Stanley handed him the rock instead. "What's this?"

"It's a fossil," said Stanley. "See the fish?" Mr. Pendanski looked at it again. "See, you can even see all of its little bones," said Stanley.

"Interesting," said Mr. Pendanski. "Let me have your canteen." Stanley handed it to him. Mr. Pendanski filled it, then returned it. "So do I get the rest of the day off?"

"What for?"

"You know, you said if I found something interesting, the Warden would give me the day off." Mr. Pendanski laughed as he gave the fossil back to Stanley. "Sorry, Stanley. The Warden isn't interested in fossils."

"Let me see that," said Magnet, taking the rock from Stanley. Stanley continued to stare at Mr. Pendanski. "Hey, Zig, dig this rock."

"Cool," said Zigzag. Stanley saw his fossil being passed around.

"I don't see nothing," said X-Ray. He took off his glasses, wiped them on his dirty clothes, and put them back on. "See, look at the little fishy," said Armpit.

11

Stanley returned to his hole. It wasn't fair. Mr. Pendanski had even said his fossil was interesting. He slammed his shovel into the ground and pried up another piece of earth. After a while, he noticed X-Ray had come by and was watching him dig. "Hey, Caveman, let me talk to you a second," X-Ray said. Stanley put down his shovel and stepped up out of his

hole. "Say, listen," said X-Ray. "If you find something else, give it to me, okay?" Stanley wasn't sure what to say.

X-Ray was clearly the leader of the group, and Stanley didn't want to get on his bad side. "You're new here, right?" said X-Ray. "I've been here for almost a year. I've never found anything. You know, my eyesight's not so good. No one knows this, but you know why my name's X-Ray?" Stanley shrugged one shoulder. "It's pig latin for Rex. That's all. I'm too blind to find anything." Stanley tried to remember how pig latin worked. "I mean," X-Ray went on, "why should you get a day off when you've only been here a couple of days? If anybody gets a day off, it should be me. That's only fair, right?"

"I guess," Stanley agreed. X-Ray smiled.

"You're a good guy, Caveman." Stanley picked up his shovel. The more he thought about it, the more he was glad that he agreed to let X-Ray have anything he might find. If he was going to survive at Camp Green Lake, it was far more important that X-Ray think he was a good guy than it was for him to get one day off. Besides, he didn't expect to find anything anyway. There probably wasn't anything "of interest" out there, and even if there was, he'd never been what you could call lucky. He slammed his blade into the ground, then dumped out another shovelful of dirt.

It was a little surprising, he thought, that X-Ray was the leader of the group, since he obviously wasn't the biggest or the toughest. In fact, except for Zero, X-Ray was the smallest. Armpit was the biggest. Zigzag may have been taller than Armpit, but that was only because of his neck. Yet Armpit, and all the others, seemed to be willing to do whatever X-Ray asked of them.

As Stanley dug up another shovelful of dirt, it occurred to him that Armpit wasn't the biggest. He, the Caveman, was bigger. He was glad they called him Caveman. It meant they accepted him as a member of the group. He would have been glad even if they'd called him Barf Bag. It was really quite remarkable to him. At school, bullies like Derrick Dunne used to pick on him. Yet Derrick Dunne would be scared senseless by any of the boys here. As he dug his hole, Stanley thought about what it would be like if Derrick Dunne had to fight Armpit or Squid. Derrick wouldn't stand a chance. He imagined what it would be like if he became good friends with all of them, and then for some reason they all went with him to his school, and then Derrick Dunne tried to steal his notebook . . . "Just what do you think you're doing?" asks Squid, as he slams his hands into Derrick Dunne's smug face. "Caveman's our friend," says Armpit, grabbing him by the shin collar.

Stanley played the scene over and over again in his mind, each time watching another boy from Group D beat up Derrick Dunne. It helped him dig his hole and ease his own suffering. Whatever pain he felt was being felt ten times worse by Derrick.

12

Again, Stanley was the last one to finish digging. It was late afternoon when he dragged himself back to the compound. This time he would have accepted a ride on the truck if it was offered. When he got to the tent, he found Mr. Pendanski and the other boys sitting in a circle on the ground. "Welcome, Stanley," said Mr. Pendanski.

"Hey, Caveman. You get your hole dug?" asked Magnet. He managed to nod.

"You spit in it?" asked Squid. He nodded again.

"You're right," he said to X-Ray. "The second hole's the hardest."

X-Ray shook his head. "The third hole's the hardest," he said.

"Come join our circle," said Mr. Pendanski. Stanley plopped down between Squid and Magnet. He needed to rest up before taking a shower. "We've been discussing what we want to do with our lives," said Mr. Pendanski. "We're not going to be at Camp Green Lake forever. We need to prepare for the day we leave here and join the rest of society."

"Hey, that's great, Mom!" said Magnet.

"They're going to finally let you out of here?" The other boys laughed.

"Okay, José," said Mr. Pendanski. "What do you want to do with your life?"

"I don't know," said Magnet.

"You need to think about that," said Mr. Pendanski. "It's important to have goals. Otherwise you're going to end up right back in jail. What do you like to do?"

"I don't know," said Magnet.

"You must like something," said Mr. Pendanski.

"I like animals," said Magnet.

"Good," said Mr. Pendanski. "Does anyone know of any jobs that involve animals?"

"Veterinarian," said Armpit.

"That's right," said Mr. Pendanski.

"He could work in a zoo," said Zigzag.

"He belongs in the zoo," said Squid, then he and X-Ray laughed.

"How about you, Stanley? Any ideas for José?" Stanley sighed. "Animal trainer," he said. "Like for the circus, or movies, or something like that."

"Any of those jobs sound good to you, José?" asked Mr. Pendanski. "Yeah, I like what Caveman said. About training animals for movies. I think it would be fun to train monkeys." X-Ray laughed. "Don't laugh, Rex," said Mr. Pendanski. "We don't laugh at people's dreams. Someone is going to have to train monkeys for the movies."

"Who are you kidding, Mom?" asked X-Ray. "Magnet's never going to be a monkey trainer."

"You don't know that," said Mr. Pendanski. "I'm not saying it's going to be easy. Nothing in life is easy. But that's no reason to give up. You'll be surprised what you can accomplish if you set your mind to it. After all, you only have one life, so you should try to make the most of it."

Stanley tried to figure out what he'd say if Mr. Pendanski asked him what he wanted to do with his life. He used to think he wanted to work for the F.B.I., but this didn't seem the appropriate place to mention that. "So far you've all done a pretty good job at messing up your lives," said Mr. Pendanski. "I know you think you're cool." He looked at Stanley. "So you're Caveman, now, huh? You like digging holes, Caveman?" Stanley didn't know what to say. "Well, let me tell you something, Caveman. You are here on account of one person. If it wasn't for that person, you wouldn't be here digging holes in the hot sun. You know who that person is?"

"My no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grand-father." The other boys howled with laughter. Even Zero smiled. It was the first time Stanley had ever seen Zero smile. He usually had such an angry expression on his face. Now he had such a huge smile it almost seemed too big for his face, like the smile on a jack-o'-lantern. "No," said Mr. Pendanski. "That person is you, Stanley. You're the reason you are here. You're responsible for yourself. You messed

up your life, and it's up to you to fix it. No one else is going to do it for you— for any of you." Mr. Pendanski looked from one boy to another. "You're all special in your own way," he said. "You've all got something to offer. You have to think about what you want to do, then do it. Even you, Zero. You're not completely worthless." The smile was now gone from Zero's face. "What do you want to do with your life?" Mr. Pendanski asked him. Zero's mouth was shut tight. As he glared at Mr. Pendanski, his dark eyes seemed to expand. "What about it, Zero?" asked Mr. Pendanski. "What do you like to do?"

"I like to dig holes."

Task one: Can you add anything you have retrieved or interpreted about Mr Pendanski to the information you gathered in task one?

Mr Sir

Mr Pendanski

The Warden

Task two: Using your prediction skills, think about what might happen next in the story. Remember to use information from the text to support your opinions.

To make a prediction using evidence from a text

How will the plot of this story develop? What do you think will happen next? Make a prediction supporting your opinion with evidence from the text.

Predict 

Year 6 - Task three – reading focus (40 minutes)

Read the rest of chapter 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 of the book Holes.



13

All too soon Stanley was back out on the lake, sticking his shovel into the dirt. X-Ray was right: the third hole was the hardest. So was the fourth hole. And the fifth hole. And the sixth, and the . . . He dug his shovel into the dirt. After a while he'd lost track of the day of the week, and how many holes he'd dug. It all seemed like one big hole, and it would take a year and a half to dig it. He guessed he'd lost at least five pounds. He figured that in a year and a half he'd be either in great physical condition, or else dead.

He dug his shovel into the dirt. It couldn't always be this hot, he thought. Surely it got cooler in December. Maybe then they froze. He dug his shovel into the dirt. His skin had gotten tougher. It didn't hurt so much to hold the shovel. As he drank from his canteen he looked up at the sky. A cloud had appeared earlier in the day. It was the first cloud he could remember seeing since coming to Camp Green Lake. He and the other boys had been watching it all day, hoping it would move in front of the sun. Occasionally it got close, but it was just teasing them.

His hole was waist deep. He dug his shovel into the dirt. As he dumped it out, he thought he saw something glisten as it fell onto the dirt pile. Whatever it was, it was quickly buried. Stanley stared at the pile a moment, unsure if he'd even seen it. Even if it was something, what good would it do him? He'd promised to give anything he found to X-Ray. It didn't seem worth the effort to climb out of his hole to check it out. He glanced up at the cloud, which was close enough to the sun that he had to squint to look at it. He dug his shovel back into the earth, scooped out some dirt, and lifted it over his dirt pile. But instead of dumping it there, he tossed it off to the side. His curiosity had gotten the better of him.

He climbed up out of his hole and sifted his fingers through the pile. He felt something hard and metallic. He pulled it out. It was a gold tube, about as long and as wide as the second finger on his right hand. The tube was open at one end and closed at the other. He used a few drops of his precious water to clean it. There seemed to be some kind of design on the flat, closed end. He poured a few more drops of water on it and rubbed it on the inside of his pants pocket. He looked again at the design engraved into the flat bottom of the tube. He could see an outline of a heart, with the letters K B etched inside it. He tried to figure out some way that he wouldn't have to give it to X-Ray. He could just keep it, but that wouldn't do him any good. He wanted a day off. He looked at the large piles of dirt near where X-Ray was digging. X-Ray was probably almost finished for the day. Getting the rest of the day off would hardly do him much good. X-Ray would first have to show the tube to Mr. Sir or Mr. Pendanski, who would then have to show it to the Warden. By then X-Ray might be done anyway. Stanley wondered about trying to secretly take the tube directly to the Warden. He could explain the situation to the Warden, and the Warden might make up an excuse for giving him the day off, so X-Ray wouldn't suspect.

He looked across the lake toward the cabin under the two oak trees. The place scared him. He'd been at Camp Green Lake almost two weeks, and he still hadn't seen the Warden. That was just as well. If he could go his entire year and a half without seeing the Warden, that

would be fine with him. Besides, he didn't know if the Warden would find the tube "interesting."

He looked at it again. It looked familiar. He thought he'd seen something like it, somewhere before, but couldn't quite place it. "What you got there, Caveman?" asked Zigzag. Stanley's large hand closed around the tube. "Nothin', just, uh . . ." It was useless. "I think I might have found something."

"Another fossil?"

"No, I'm not sure what it is."

"Let me see," said Zigzag. Instead of showing it to Zigzag, Stanley brought it to X-Ray. Zigzag followed. X-Ray looked at the tube, then rubbed his dirty glasses on his dirty shirt and looked at the tube again. One by one, the other boys dropped their shovels and came to look. "It looks like an old shotgun shell," said Squid.

"Yeah, that's probably what it is," said Stanley. He decided not to mention the engraved design. Maybe nobody would notice it. He doubted X-Ray could see it. "No, it's too long and thin to be a shotgun shell," said Magnet.

"It's prob'ly just a piece of junk," said Stanley.

"Well, I'll show it to Mom," said X-Ray. "See what he thinks. Who knows? Maybe I'll get the day off."

"Your hole's almost finished," said Stanley.

"Yeah, so?" Stanley raised and lowered his shoulder. "So, why don't you wait until tomorrow to show it to Mom?" he suggested. "You can pretend you found it first thing in the morning. Then you can get the whole day off, instead of just an hour or so this afternoon." X-Ray smiled.

"Good thinking, Caveman." He dropped the tube into his large pocket on the right leg of his dirty orange pants.

Stanley returned to his hole. When the water truck came, Stanley started to take his place at the end of the line, but X-Ray told him to get behind Magnet, in front of Zero. Stanley moved up one place in line.

14

That night, as Stanley lay on his scratchy and smelly cot, he tried to figure out what he could have done differently, but there was nothing he could do. For once in his unlucky life, he was in the right place at the right time, and it still didn't help him.

"You got it?" he asked X-Ray the next morning at breakfast. X-Ray looked at him with half-opened eyes behind his dirty glasses. "I don't know what you're talking about," he grumbled. "You know . . ." said Stanley.

"No, I don't know!" X-Ray snapped. "So just leave me alone, okay? I don't want to talk to you." Stanley didn't say another word.

Mr. Sir marched the boys out to the lake, chewing sunflower seeds along the way and spitting out the shells. He scraped the ground with his boot heel, to mark where each boy was supposed to dig. Stanley stamped down on the back of the blade of the shovel, piercing the hard, dry earth. He couldn't figure out why X-Ray snapped at him. If he wasn't going to produce the tube, why did he make Stanley give it to him? Was he just going to keep it? The tube was gold in color, but Stanley didn't think it was real gold.

The water truck came a little after sunrise. Stanley finished his last drop of water and stepped up out of his hole. At this time of day, Stanley sometimes could see some distant hills or mountains on the other side of the lake. They were only visible for a short while and would soon disappear behind the haze of heat and dirt. The truck stopped, and the dust cloud drifted past it. X-Ray took his place at the front of the line. Mr. Pendanski filled his canteen. "Thanks, Mom," X-Ray said. He didn't mention the tube. Mr. Pendanski filled all the canteens, then climbed back into the cab of the pickup. He still had to bring water to Group E. Stanley could see them digging about two hundred yards away. "Mr. Pendanski!" X-Ray shouted from his hole. "Wait! Mr. Pendanski! I think I might have found something!"

The boys all followed Mr. Pendanski as he walked over to X-Ray's hole. Stanley could see the gold tube sticking out of some dirt on the end of X-Ray's shovel. Mr. Pendanski examined it and took a long look at its flat bottom. "I think the Warden is going to like this." "Does X-Ray get the day off?" asked Squid.

"Just keep digging until someone says otherwise," Mr. Pendanski said. Then he smiled. "But if I were you, Rex, I wouldn't dig too hard."

Stanley watched the cloud of dust move across the lake to the cabin beneath the trees. The boys in Group E were just going to have to wait. It didn't take long for the pickup to return. Mr. Pendanski stepped out of the cab. A tall woman with red hair stepped out of the passenger side. She looked even taller than she was, since Stanley was down in his hole. She wore a black cowboy hat and black cowboy boots which were studded with turquoise stones. The sleeves on her shirt were rolled up, and her arms were covered with freckles, as was her face. She walked right up to X-Ray. "This where you found it?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Your good work will be rewarded." She turned to Mr. Pendanski. "Drive X-Ray back to camp. Let him take a double shower, and give him some clean clothes. But first I want you to fill everyone's canteen."

"I just filled them a little while ago," said Mr. Pendanski. The Warden stared hard at him.

"Excuse me," she said. Her voice was soft.

"I had just filled them when Rex— "

"Excuse me," the Warden said again. "Did I ask you when you last filled them?"

"No, but it's just— "

"Excuse me." Mr. Pendanski stopped talking. The Warden wiggled her finger for him to come to her. "It's hot and it's only going to get hotter," she said. "Now, these fine boys have been working hard. Don't you think it might be possible that they might have taken a drink since you last filled their canteens?" Mr. Pendanski said nothing. The Warden turned to Stanley. "Caveman, will you come here, please?" Stanley was surprised she knew his name. He had never seen her. Until she stepped out of the truck, he didn't even know the Warden was a woman. He nervously went toward her. "Mr. Pendanski and I have been having a discussion. Have you taken a drink since Mr. Pendanski last filled your canteen?" Stanley didn't want to cause any trouble for Mr. Pendanski. "I still got plenty left," he said.

"Excuse me."

He stopped. "Yeah, I drank some."

"Thank you. May I see your canteen please." Stanley handed it to her. Her fingernails were painted dark red. She gently shook the canteen, letting the water swish inside the plastic container. "Do you hear the empty spaces?" she asked.

"Yes," said Mr. Pendanski.

"Then fill it," she said. "And the next time I tell you to do something, I expect you to do it without questioning my authority. If it's too much trouble for you to fill a canteen, I'll give you a shovel. You can dig the hole, and the Caveman can fill your canteen." She turned back to Stanley. "I don't think that would be too much trouble for you, would it?"

"No," said Stanley.

"So what will it be?" she asked Mr. Pendanski. "Do you want to fill the canteens or do you want to dig?"

"I'll fill the canteens," said Mr. Pendanski.

"Thank you."

15

Mr. Pendanski filled the canteens. The Warden got a pitchfork out of the back of the pickup. She poked it through X-Ray's dirt pile, to see if anything else might have been buried in there as well. "After you drop off X-Ray, I want you to bring back three wheelbarrows," she said.

X-Ray got in the pickup. As the truck pulled away, he leaned out the wide window and waved. "Zero," said the Warden. "I want you to take over X-Ray's hole." She seemed to know that Zero was the fastest digger. "Armpit and Squid, you will keep digging where you have been," she said. "But you're each going to have a helper. Zigzag, you help Armpit. Magnet will help Squid. And Caveman, you'll work with Zero. We're going to dig the dirt twice. Zero will dig it out of the hole, and Caveman will carefully shovel it into a wheelbarrow. Zigzag will do the same for Armpit, and the same with Magnet and Squid. We don't want to miss anything. If either of you find something, you'll both get the rest of the day off, and a double shower. "When the wheelbarrows are full, you are to dump them away from this area. We don't want any dirt piles to get in the way."

The Warden remained at the site for the remainder of the day, along with Mr. Pendanski and Mr. Sir, who showed up after a while. Occasionally Mr. Sir would leave to take water to the other groups of campers, but otherwise he and the water truck stayed parked there. The Warden saw to it that nobody in Group D was ever thirsty. Stanley did as he was told. He carefully looked through all the dirt dug up by Zero, as he shoveled it into a wheelbarrow, though he knew he wouldn't find anything. It was easier than digging his own hole. When the wheelbarrow was full, he took it a good distance away before dumping it.

The Warden couldn't keep still. She kept walking around, looking over the boys' shoulders, and sticking her pitchfork through the dirt piles. "You're doing fine, just fine," she told Stanley. After a while, she told the boys to switch places, so that Stanley, Zigzag, and Magnet dug in the holes, and Zero, Armpit, and Squid shoveled the excavated dirt into the wheelbarrows.

After lunch, Zero took over the digging again, and Stanley returned to the wheelbarrow. "There's no hurry," the Warden said several times. "The main thing is not to miss anything." The boys dug until each hole was well over six feet deep and wide. Still, it was easier for two boys to dig a six-foot hole than it was for one boy to dig a five-foot hole. "All right, that's enough for today," the Warden said. "I've waited this long, I can wait another day." Mr. Sir drove her back to her cabin.

"I wonder how she knew all our names," Stanley said as he walked back to the compound.

"She watches us all the time," said Zigzag. "She's got hidden microphones and cameras all over the place. In the tents, the Wreck Room, the shower."

"The shower?" asked Stanley. He wondered if Zigzag was just being paranoid.

"The cameras are tiny," said Armpit. "No bigger than the toenail on your little toe." Stanley had his doubts about that. He didn't think they could make cameras that small. Microphones, maybe. He realized that was why X-Ray didn't want to talk to him about the gold tube at breakfast. X-Ray was afraid the Warden might have been listening. One thing was certain: They weren't just digging to "build character." They were definitely looking for something. And whatever they were looking for, they were looking in the wrong place.

Stanley gazed out across the lake, toward the spot where he had been digging yesterday when he found the gold tube. He dug the hole into his memory.

16

As Stanley entered the Wreck Room, he could hear X-Ray's voice from all the way across the room. "See what I'm saying," X-Ray said. "Am I right, or am I right?" The other bodies in the room were little more than bags of flesh and bones, dumped across broken chairs and couches. X-Ray was full of life, laughing and waving his arms around as he talked. "Yo, Caveman, my man!" he called out. Stanley made his way across the room. "Hey, slide on over, Squid," said X-Ray. "Make room for the Caveman." Stanley crashed on the couch. He had looked for a hidden camera in the shower. He hadn't seen anything, and he hoped the Warden hadn't either. "What's the matter?" asked X-Ray. "You guys tired or something?" He laughed.

"Hey, keep it down, will you," groaned Zigzag. "I'm trying to watch TV." Stanley glanced uncertainly at Zigzag, who was staring very intently at the busted television screen.

The Warden greeted the boys at breakfast the next morning and went with them to the holes. Four dug in the holes, and three tended to the wheelbarrows. "Glad you're here, X-Ray," she said to him. "We need your sharp eyes."

Stanley spent more time pushing the wheelbarrow than digging, because he was such a slow digger. He carted away the excess dirt and dumped it into previously dug holes. He was careful not to dump any of it in the hole where the gold tube was actually found. He could still see the tube in his mind. It seemed so familiar, but he just couldn't place it. He thought that it might have been the lid to a fancy gold pen. K B could have been the initials of a famous author. The only famous authors he could think of were Charles Dickens, William Shakespeare, and Mark Twain. Besides, it didn't really look like the top of a pen.

By lunchtime the Warden was beginning to lose her patience. She made them eat quickly, so they could get back to work. "If you can't get them to work any faster," she told Mr. Sir, "then you're going to have to climb down there and dig with them." After that, everyone worked faster, especially when Mr. Sir was watching them. Stanley practically ran when he pushed his wheelbarrow. Mr. Sir reminded them that they weren't Girl Scouts.

They didn't quit digging until after every other group had finished. Later, as Stanley sat sprawled across an understuffed chair, he tried to think of a way to tell the Warden where the tube was really found, without getting himself or X-Ray into trouble. It didn't seem possible. He even thought about sneaking out at night and digging in that hole by himself. But the last thing he wanted to do after digging all day was to "dig at night, too. Besides, the shovels were locked up at night, presumably so they couldn't be used as weapons.

Mr. Pendanski entered the Wreck Room. "Stanley," he called as he made his way to him.

"His name's Caveman," said X-Ray.

"Stanley," said Mr. Pendanski.

"My name's Caveman," said Stanley.

"Well, I have a letter here for someone named Stanley Yelnats," said Mr. Pendanski. He turned over an envelope in his hands. "It doesn't say Caveman anywhere."

"Uh, thanks," Stanley said, taking it. It was from his mother.

"Who's it from?" Squid asked. "Your mother?" Stanley put it in the big pocket of his pants.

"Aren't you going to read it to us?" asked Armpit.

"Give him some space," said X-Ray. "If Caveman doesn't want to read it to us, he doesn't have to. It's probably from his girlfriend." Stanley smiled.

He read it later, after the other boys had gone to dinner.

Dear Stanley,

It was wonderful to hear from you. Your letter made me feel like one of the other moms who can afford to send their kids to summer camp. I know it's not the same, but I am very proud of you for trying to make the best of a bad situation. Who knows? Maybe something good will come of this. Your father thinks he is real close to a breakthrough on his sneaker project. I hope so. The landlord is threatening to evict us because of the odor. I feel sorry for the little old lady who lived in a shoe. It must have smelled awful!

Love from both of us,

"What's so funny?" Zero asked. It startled him. He thought Zero had gone to dinner with the others.

"Nothing. Just something my mom wrote."

"What'd she say?" Zero asked.

"Nothing."

"Oh, sorry," said Zero.

"Well, see my dad is trying to invent a way to recycle old sneakers. So the apartment kind of smells bad, because he's always cooking these old sneakers. So anyway, in the letter my mom said she felt sorry for that little old lady who lived in a shoe, you know, because it must have smelled bad in there." Zero stared blankly at him. "You know, the nursery rhyme?" Zero said nothing. "You've heard the nursery rhyme about the little old lady who lived in a shoe?"

"No." Stanley was amazed. "How does it go?" asked Zero.

"Didn't you ever watch Sesame Street?" Stanley asked. Zero stared blankly. Stanley headed on to dinner. He would have felt pretty silly reciting nursery rhymes at Camp Green Lake.

17

For the next week and a half, the boys continued to dig in and around the area where X-Ray had supposedly found the gold tube. They widened X-Ray's hole, as well as the holes Armpit and Squid had been digging, until the fourth day, when all three holes met and formed one big hole.

As the days wore on, the Warden became less and less patient. She arrived later in the morning and left earlier in the afternoon. Meanwhile, the boys continued to dig later and later. "This is no bigger than it was when I left you yesterday," she said after arriving late one morning, well after sunrise. "What have you been doing down there?"

"Nothing," said Squid. It was the wrong thing to say. At just that moment, Armpit was returning from a bathroom break.

"How nice of you to join us," she said. "And what have you been doing?"

"I had to . . . you know . . . go." The Warden jabbed at Armpit with her pitchfork, knocking him backward into the big hole. The pitchfork left three holes in the front of his shirt, and three tiny spots of blood. "You're giving these boys too much water," the Warden told Mr. Pendanski.

They continued to dig until late afternoon, long after all the other groups had finished for the day. Stanley was down in the big hole, along with the other six boys. They had stopped using the wheelbarrows. He dug his shovel into the side of the hole. He scooped up some dirt, and was raising it up to the surface when Zigzag's shovel caught him in the side of the head. He collapsed. He wasn't sure if he passed out or not. He looked up to see Zigzag's wild head staring down at him. "I ain't digging that dirt up," Zigzag said. "That's your dirt."

"Hey, Mom!" Magnet called. "Caveman's been hurt." Stanley brought his fingers up the side of his neck. He felt his wet blood and a pretty big gash just below his ear. Magnet helped Stanley to his feet, then up and out of the hole. Mr. Sir made a bandage out of a piece of his sack of sunflower seeds and taped it over Stanley's wound. Then he told him to get back to work. "It isn't nap time."

When Stanley returned to the hole, Zigzag was waiting for him. "That's your dirt," Zigzag said. "You have to dig it up. It's covering up my dirt." Stanley felt a little dizzy. He could see a small pile of dirt. It took him a moment to realize that it was the dirt which had been on his shovel when he was hit. He scooped it up, then Zigzag dug his shovel into the ground underneath where "Stanley's dirt" had been.

Year 6 - Task four – reading focus (1 hour or more)

Task one: Over the last five chapters, Stanley has made a significant discovery. Use the main points and what you know about the characters' appearance to create a comic book strip to retell this part of the story.

To summarise the main events of chapters

Retell in pictures, Stanley finding the golden tube and the events after his discovery.

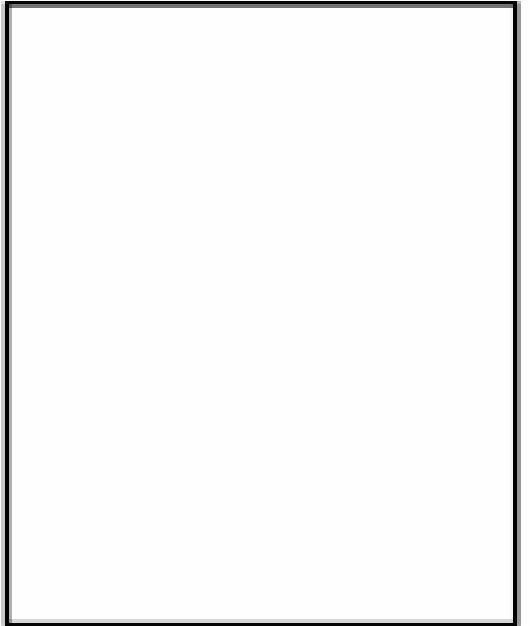
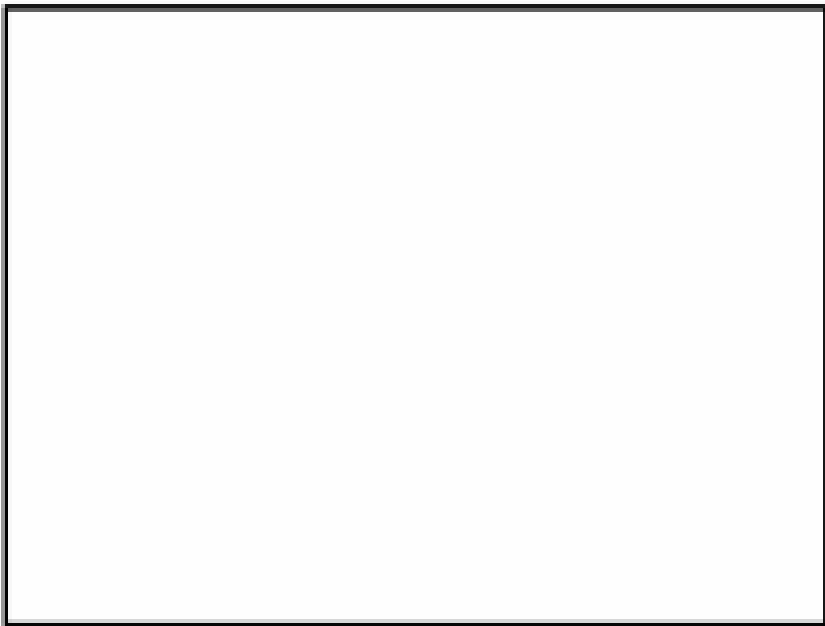
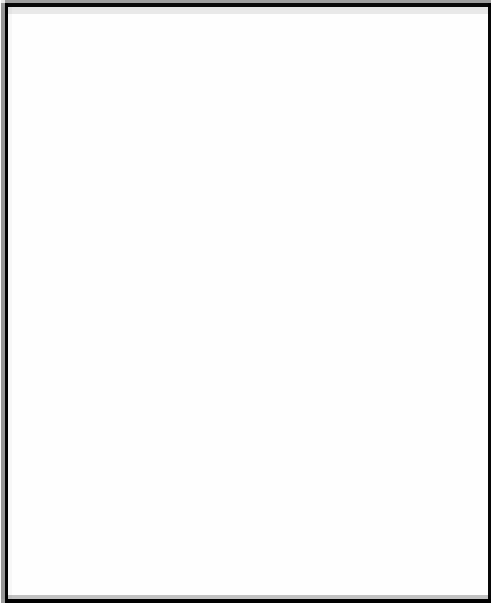
Summarise



Here is an example to help you.

Think about the setting and any speech you might want to include.

What will your characters look like?



Read the rest of chapter 18, 19, 20 and 21 of the book
Holes.



18

The next morning Mr. Sir marched the boys to another section of the lake, and each boy dug his own hole, five feet deep and five feet wide. Stanley was glad to be away from the big hole. At least now he knew just how much he had to dig for the day. And it was a relief not to have other shovels swinging past his face, or the Warden hanging around.

He dug his shovel into the dirt, then slowly turned to dump it into a pile. He had to make his turns smooth and slow. If he jerked too quickly, he felt a throbbing pain just above his neck where Zigzag's shovel had hit him. That part of his head, between his neck and ear, was considerably swollen. There were no mirrors in camp, but he imagined he looked like he had a hard-boiled egg sticking out of him. The remainder of his body hardly hurt at all. His muscles had strengthened, and his hands were tough and callused. He was still the slowest digger, but not all that much slower than Magnet.

Less than thirty minutes after Magnet returned to camp, Stanley spat into his hole. After his shower, he put his dirty clothes in his crate and got out his box of stationery. He stayed in the tent to write the letter so Squid and the other boys wouldn't make fun of him for writing to his mother.

Dear Mom and Dad,

Camp is hard, but challenging. We've been running obstacle courses, and have to swim long distances on the lake. Tomorrow we learn...

He stopped writing as Zero walked into the tent, then returned to his letter. He didn't care what Zero thought. Zero was nobody.

... to rock climb. I know that sounds scary, but don't worry,

Zero was standing beside him now, watching him write. Stanley turned, and felt his neck throb. "I don't like it when you read over my shoulder, okay?" Zero said nothing.

I'll be careful. It's not all fun and games here, but I think I'm getting a lot out of it. It builds character. The other boys...

"I don't know how," said Zero.

"What?"

"Can you teach me?" Stanley didn't know what he was talking about.

"Teach you what, to rock climb?" Zero stared at him with penetrating eyes.

"What?" said Stanley. He was hot, tired, and sore.

"I want to learn to read and write," said Zero. Stanley let out a short laugh. He wasn't laughing at Zero. He was just surprised. All this time he had thought Zero was reading over his shoulder. "Sorry," he said. "I don't know how to teach." After digging all day, he didn't have the strength to try to teach Zero to read and write. He needed to save his energy for the people who counted.

"You don't have to teach me to write," said Zero. "Just to read. I don't have anybody to write to."

"Sorry," Stanley said again. 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. He finished his letter. He barely had enough moisture in his mouth to seal and stamp the envelope. It seemed that no matter how much water he drank, he was always thirsty.

19

He was awakened one night by a strange noise. At first he thought it might have been some kind of animal, and it frightened him. But as the sleep cleared from his head, he realized that the noise was coming from the cot next to him. Squid was crying. "You okay?" Stanley whispered. Squid's head jerked around. He sniffed and caught his breath.

"Yeah, I just . . . I'm fine," he whispered, and sniffed again.

In the morning Stanley asked Squid if he was feeling better.

"What are you, my mother?" asked Squid. Stanley raised and lowered one shoulder. "I got allergies, okay?" Squid said.

"Okay," said Stanley.

"You open your mouth again, and I'll break your jaw."

Stanley kept his mouth shut most of the time. He didn't talk too much to any of the boys, afraid that he might say the wrong thing. They called him Caveman and all that, but he couldn't forget that they were dangerous, too. They were all here for a reason. As Mr. Sir would say, this wasn't a Girl Scout camp. Stanley was thankful that there were no racial problems. X-Ray, Armpit, and Zero were black. He, Squid, and Zigzag were white. Magnet was Hispanic. On the lake they were all the same reddish brown color— the color of dirt.

He looked up from his hole to see the water truck and its trailing dust cloud. His canteen was still almost a quarter full. He quickly drank it down, then took his place in line, behind Magnet and in front of Zero. The air was thick with heat, dust, and exhaust fumes. Mr. Sir filled their canteens. The truck pulled away. Stanley was back in his hole, shovel in hand, when he heard Magnet call out. "Anybody want some sunflower seeds?" Magnet was standing at ground level, holding a sack of seeds. He popped a handful into his mouth, chewed, and swallowed, shells and all.

"Over here," called X-Ray. The sack looked to be about half full. Magnet rolled up the top, then tossed it to X-Ray.

"How'd you get them without Mr. Sir seeing you?" asked Armpit.

"I can't help it," Magnet said. He held both hands up, wiggled his fingers, and laughed. "My fingers are like little magnets." The sack went from X-Ray to Armpit to Squid.

"It's sure good to eat something that doesn't come from a can," said Armpit. Squid tossed the sack to Zigzag. Stanley knew it would come to him next. He didn't even want it. From the moment Magnet shouted, "Anybody want some sunflower seeds," he knew there would be trouble. Mr. Sir was sure to come back. And anyway, the salted shells would only make him thirsty. "Coming your way, Caveman," said Zigzag. "Airmail and special delivery . . ."

It's unclear whether the seeds spilled before they got to Stanley or after he dropped the bag. It seemed to him that Zigzag hadn't rolled up the top before throwing it, and that was the reason he didn't catch it. But it all happened very fast. One moment the sack was flying

through the air, and the next thing Stanley knew the sack was in his hole and the seeds were spilled across the dirt. "Oh, man!" said Magnet.

"Sorry," Stanley said as he tried to sweep the seeds back into the sack.

"I don't want to eat dirt," said X-Ray. Stanley didn't know what to do.

"The truck's coming!" shouted Zigzag. Stanley looked up at the approaching dust cloud, then back down at the spilled seeds. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time. What else is new? He dug his shovel into his hole, and tried to turn over the dirt and bury the seeds. What he should have done, he realized later, was knock one of his dirt piles back into his hole. But the idea of putting dirt into his hole was unthinkable.

"Hello, Mr. Sir," said X-Ray. "Back so soon?"

"It seems like you were just here," said Armpit.

"Time flies when you're having fun," said Magnet. Stanley continued to turn the dirt over in his hole.

"You Girl Scouts having a good time?" asked Mr. Sir. He moved from one hole to another. He kicked a dirt pile by Magnet's hole, then he moved toward Stanley. Stanley could see two seeds at the bottom of his hole. As he tried to cover them up, he unearthed a corner of the sack. "Well, what do you know, Caveman?" said Mr. Sir, standing over him. "It looks like you found something." Stanley didn't know what to do. "Dig it out," Mr. Sir said. "We'll take it to the Warden. Maybe she'll give you the rest of the day off."

"It's not anything," Stanley muttered.

"Let me be the judge of that," said Mr. Sir. Stanley reached down and pulled up the empty burlap sack. He tried to hand it to Mr. Sir, but he wouldn't take it. "So, tell me, Caveman," said Mr. Sir. "How did my sack of sunflower seeds get in your hole?"

"I stole it from your truck."

"You did?"

"Yes, Mr. Sir."

"What happened to all the sunflower seeds?"

"I ate them."

"By yourself."

"Yes, Mr. Sir."

"Hey, Caveman!" shouted Armpit. "How come you didn't share any with us?"

"That's cold, man," said X-Ray.

"I thought you were our friend," said Magnet. Mr. Sir looked around from one boy to another, then back to Stanley. "We'll see what the Warden has to say about this. Let's go."

Stanley climbed up out of his hole and followed Mr. Sir to the truck. He still held the empty sack. It felt good to sit inside the truck, out of the direct rays of the sun. Stanley was surprised he could feel good about anything at the moment, but he did. It felt good to sit down on a comfortable seat for a change. And as the truck bounced along the dirt, he was able to appreciate the air blowing through the open window onto his hot and sweaty face.

It felt good to walk in the shade of the two oak trees. 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. They had to step around holes to get to the cabin door. Stanley was surprised to see so many around the cabin. He would have expected the Warden to not want the campers digging so close to her home. But several holes were right up against the cabin wall. The holes were closer together here as well, and were of different shapes and sizes.

Mr. Sir knocked on the door. Stanley still held the empty sack. "Yes?" the Warden said, opening the door.

"There's been a little trouble out on the lake," Mr. Sir said. "Caveman will tell you all about it." The Warden stared at Mr. Sir a moment, then her gaze turned toward Stanley. He felt nothing but dread now. "Come in, I suppose," said the Warden. "You're letting the cold out."

It was air-conditioned inside her cabin. The television was going. She picked up the remote and turned it off. She sat down on a canvas chair. She was barefoot and wearing shorts. Her legs were as freckled as her face and arms. "So what is it you have to tell me?" Stanley took a breath to steady himself.

"While Mr. Sir was filling the canteens, I snuck into the truck and stole his sack of sunflower seeds."

"I see." She turned to Mr. Sir. "That's why you brought him here?"

"Yes, but I think he's lying. I think someone else stole the sack, and Caveman is covering up for X-Ray or somebody. It was a twenty-pound sack, and he claims to have eaten them all by himself." He took the sack from Stanley and handed it to the Warden.

"I see," the Warden said again.

"The sack wasn't full," said Stanley. "And I spilled a lot. You can check my hole."

"In that room, Caveman, there's a small flowered case. Will you get it for me, please?" She pointed to a door. Stanley looked at the door, then at the Warden, then back at the door. He slowly walked toward it. It was a kind of dressing room, with a sink and a mirror. Next to the sink he saw the case, white with pink roses. He brought it back out to the Warden, and she set it on the glass coffee table in front of her. She unclasped the latch and opened the case. It was a makeup case. Stanley's mother had one similar to it. He saw several bottles of nail polish, polish remover, a couple of lipstick tubes, and other jars and powders.

The Warden held up a small jar of dark-red nail polish. "You see this, Caveman?" He nodded. "This is my special nail polish. Do you see the dark rich color? You can't buy that in a store. I have to make it myself." Stanley had no idea why she was showing it to him. He wondered why the Warden would ever have the need to wear nail polish or makeup. "Do you want to know my secret ingredient?" He raised and lowered one shoulder. The Warden opened the bottle. "Rattlesnake venom." With a small paintbrush she began applying it to the nails on her left hand. "It's perfectly harmless . . . when it's dry." She finished her left hand. She waved it in the air for a few seconds, then began painting the nails on her right hand. "It's only toxic while it's wet."

She finished painting her nails, then stood up. She reached over and touched Stanley's face with her fingers. She ran her sharp wet nails very gently down his cheek. He felt his skin tingle. The nail on her pinkie just barely touched the wound behind his ear. A sharp sting of pain caused him to jump back. The Warden turned to face Mr. Sir, who was sitting on the fireplace hearth. "So you think he stole your sunflower seeds?"

"No, he says he stole them, but I think it was— " She stepped toward him and struck him across the face. Mr. Sir stared at her. He had three long red marks slanting across the left side of his face. Stanley didn't know if the redness was caused by her nail polish or his blood.

It took a moment for the venom to sink in. Suddenly, Mr. Sir screamed and clutched his face with both hands. He let himself fall over, rolling off the hearth and onto the rug. The Warden spoke softly. "I don't especially care about your sunflower seeds." Mr. Sir moaned. "If you must know," said the Warden, "I liked it better when you smoked."

For a second, Mr. Sir's pain seemed to recede. He took several long, deep breaths. Then his head jerked violently, and he let out a shrill scream, worse than the one before. The Warden turned to Stanley. "I suggest you go back to your hole now." Stanley started to go, but Mr. Sir lay in the way. Stanley could see the muscles on his face jump and twitch. His body writhed in agony. Stanley stepped carefully over him. "Is he— ?"

"Excuse me?" said the Warden. Stanley was too frightened to speak. "He's not going to die," the Warden said. "Unfortunately for you."

21

It was a long walk back to his hole. Stanley looked out through the haze of heat and dirt at the other boys, lowering and raising their shovels. Group D was the farthest away. He realized that once again he would be digging long after everyone else had quit. He hoped he'd finish before Mr. Sir recovered. He didn't want to be out there alone with Mr. Sir. He won't die, the Warden had said. Unfortunately for you.

Walking across the desolate wasteland, Stanley thought about his great-grandfather— not the pig stealer but the pig stealer's son, the one who was robbed by Kissin' Kate Barlow. He tried to imagine how he must have felt after Kissin' Kate had left him stranded in the desert. It probably wasn't a whole lot different from the way he himself felt now. Kate Barlow had left his great-grandfather to face the hot barren desert. The Warden had left Stanley to face Mr. Sir. Somehow his great-grandfather had survived for seventeen days, before he was rescued by a couple of rattlesnake hunters. He was insane when they found him. When he was asked how he had lived so long, he said he "found refuge on God's thumb." He spent nearly a month in a hospital. He ended up marrying one of the nurses. Nobody ever knew what he meant by God's thumb, including himself.

Stanley heard a twitching sound. He stopped in mid-step, with one foot still in the air. A rattlesnake lay coiled beneath his foot. Its tail was pointed upward, rattling. Stanley backed his leg away, then turned and ran. The rattlesnake didn't chase after him. It had rattled its tail to warn him to stay away. "Thanks for the warning," Stanley whispered as his heart pounded. The rattlesnake would be a lot more dangerous if it didn't have a rattle.

"Hey, Caveman!" called Armpit. "You're still alive."

"What'd the Warden say?" asked X-Ray.

"What'd you tell her?" asked Magnet.

"I told her I stole the seeds," said Stanley.

"Good going," said Magnet.

"What'd she do?" asked Zigzag.

Stanley shrugged one shoulder. "Nothing. She got mad at Mr. Sir for bothering her." He didn't feel like going into details. If he didn't talk about it, then maybe it didn't happen. He went over to his hole, and to his surprise it was nearly finished. He stared at it, amazed. It didn't

make sense. Or perhaps it did. He smiled. Since he had taken the blame for the sunflower seeds, he realized, the other boys had dug his hole for him. "Hey, thanks," he said.

"Don't look at me," said X-Ray. Confused, Stanley looked around— from Magnet, to Armpit, to Zigzag, to Squid. None of them took credit for it. Then he turned to Zero, who had been quietly digging in his hole since Stanley's return. Zero's hole was smaller than all the others.

Task one: Can you add anything you have retrieved or interpreted about the Warden or Mr Sir from these chapters to the information you gathered in task one?

Mr Sir

Mr Pendanski

The Warden

Task two: In your opinion, why did Stanley take the blame for taking the sunflower seeds?

Year 6 - Task six – writing focus (1 hour)

The chapters you have read this week has provided us with lots of information about the adults at Camp Green lake. We are now going to use what we know to create a poem about one of these characters.

Read my poem about Stanley Yelnats:

Stanley

'Caveman'

Loyal, unlucky, brave and kind

Only son of failed inventor and last in a long line of other Stanleys

Lover of all food, Clyde Livingston and Baseball

Who believes in friendship, helping others and protecting his family

Who wanted freedom from Camp Green Lake, justice – he was innocent and water, lots and lots of water

Who used his shovel to dig holes, his hand to write letters and his education to teach others to read

Who fears the warden, Derrick Dunn and digging yet another hole!

Who said "I stole a pair of sneakers."

Yelnats

I have used the following structure to create my poem:

- First name of the character or Title e.g Mr or The
- Nickname if they have one – be creative you could make one up
- Family or job role
- 3 things the character loves – lover of.....
- 3 things the character believes in – who believes in.....
- 3 things the character wants – who wanted
- 3 things the character uses throughout the story – who used.....
- 3 things the character fears – who fears
- 1 thing the character said – an important or memorable quote – who said.....
- Last name

Task one: select one of the three adults – The Warden, Mr Pendanski or Mr Sir

Task two: Read back through the information you have retrieved and interpreted about this character

Task three: Write your poem. Think about how you could publish your finished poem – could you include a border, drawings of things you have mentioned in your poem or a drawing of your character.

Please send your poems to Y6teachers@shirleyschools.co.uk we would love to read them and share them on our 'Star learning page'.