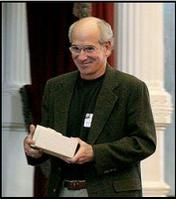
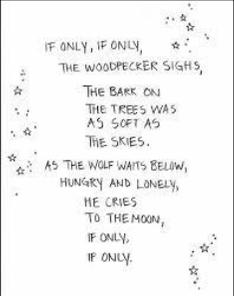


Topic	Key information	Self-testing activities						
<p>Context – facts about Louis Sachar, the author</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Born in New York, USA in 1954. Studied Economics at University. He volunteered at a primary school when he was a student. His first book was called '<i>Sideways Stories from Wayside School</i>'. Sachar wrote this book at nighttime, while he worked in the daytime at a clothing factory. He didn't make enough from his books to begin with, so also trained as a lawyer. Louis is married to Carla, who works in a primary school as a counsellor. In 2003, his book '<i>Holes</i>' was made into a Disney film and '<i>Sideways Stories from Wayside School</i>' was developed as a TV show. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What links can you make between Sachar's life and the story of 'Holes'? Where can you see that Sachar has used his own knowledge to help him write the book? Can you identify any lessons we can take from Sachar's life and career? Can you make links between Sachar's life and the big ideas below? <table border="1" data-bbox="1727 482 2491 625"> <thead> <tr> <th>Big Idea</th> <th>Link</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Perspectives</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relationships</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Big Idea	Link	Perspectives		Relationships	
Big Idea	Link							
Perspectives								
Relationships								
<p>Themes</p>  	<p>The Power of Fate to Determine Events Stanley always believes that he is unlucky and in the wrong place at the wrong time, but do the events in the book prove that it is actually fate that decides what happens to him?</p> <p>The Benefits of Friendship The benefits of forming solid friendships are clearly shown in 'Holes', but Stanley also learns to watch out for false friends.</p> <p>The Destructive Nature of Cruelty Sachar shows what cruelty can lead to and the impact it can have on individuals. A cycle of violence and cruelty is shown to pass through many decades and several generations at Green Lake and at the camp that replaces it.</p> <p>The Importance of History in Everyday Life Three stories from separate times in history are combined in <i>Holes</i> to create one story and to create a theme of the importance of history and how it can be passed down through story and song.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you believe in fate, or can you decide what happens to you in your own life? You read a book in year 7 called 'The Alchemist'. What did this book have to say about fate? What are the similarities and differences between how fate is presented in 'The Alchemist' and in 'Holes'? What can we learn about how to treat others from this book? Can you think of any stories or songs your families have taught you? What have you learnt from them? There are lots of links in 'Holes' to the big idea of power. Which characters use their power well? Which don't? <p>Key words:</p> <p>Protagonist – main character</p> <p>Scapegoat – someone who is blamed for something which is not their fault</p> <p>Fate – when what happens in your life was decided for you by the bigger force of fate</p> <p>Curse – a sort of spell, designed to inflict harm or punishment on someone</p>						

Key characters

Stanley Yelnats



The novel's protagonist, Stanley has a lot of bad luck. Non-violent and generally kind, he has a difficult time in school. Through his experiences he becomes physically stronger and more self-confident. He befriends Zero, another boy at the camp and through this friendship he succeeds in turning things around for himself and his family.

X-Ray

X-Ray is the leader of the group of boys that Stanley joins. Although he is small and cannot see well, he manages to take charge and have the other boys follow his orders.



Squid, Armpit, Magnet and **Zigzag** are some of the other boys in the group.

Zero



Zero becomes friends with Stanley. He is the best digger and generally thought to be stupid by the counsellors. In truth, Zero is very smart, although he has never been taught how to read. Zero has suffered many hardships in his life, even more than Stanley, but he never completely desponds and always shows incredible strength and willpower.

The Warden



The Warden is the ultimate symbol of authority. She rewards only those who do what she wants and uses her power to threaten everyone else. She has a very unusual type of red nail polish!

Sam, Kate, Charles Walker, Elya Yelnats and **Madame Zeroni** were all alive in a different historical period (around 1890).

Key quotations

"It was all because of his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather!"

"If only, if only, the woodpecker sighs, / The bark on the tree was just a little bit softer. / While the wolf waits below, hungry and lonely, / He cries to the moo-oo-oon, / If only, if only."

"This isn't a Girl Scout Camp."

"The Warden owns the shade."

"Excuse me..."

Self-testing activities

- Which character do you like most and why?
- Can you explain which character has the most impact on Stanley and why that is?
- Can you choose a quotation and explain what you think it means in your own words?
- Can you choose a quotation and explain how it relates to the rest of the novel?
- Why do you think certain quotations are repeated again and again?
- How do you feel reading the contextual information below? Can you make links to recent events?
- Can you do some further research into the Jim Crow Laws and the Civil Rights movement of the USA?

Context – Jim Crow Laws

In the book, some of the people in the town of Green Lake do not approve of a relationship which takes place between a black man and a white woman. At the time this relationship took place, the Jim Crow Laws were in force in the Southern States of the USA.



What were the Jim Crow laws?

Jim Crow laws were based on race. They enforced segregation between white people and black people in public places such as schools, transportation, restrooms, and restaurants. They also made it almost impossible for black people to vote. Most Jim Crow laws were put in place in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Many of them lasted until the Civil Rights Act of 1964, after a long series of protests by the African American community.