Dear Teacher,

Thank you for participating in the Holes Writing Workshop. Your class will have the unique opportunity to become part of a virtual classroom that connects thousands of students across the nation. We hope this interactive experience will inspire your students to embrace the writing process and motivate them to become better writers.

The Holes Writing Workshop Educator’s Guide includes:
- An easy three-step approach to prepare for the workshop
- An agenda
- A pre-workshop lesson plan and student handouts
- Valuable writing resources
- Details on the follow-up writing contest

These materials will help you prepare for this event and will hopefully make this experience truly enjoyable and edifying for your students.

We would appreciate any suggestions or comments you might have on the Holes Writing Workshop and on the accompanying educational materials after attending the event. Please email us at holes@walden.com.

Best wishes,

Walden Media

**IMPORTANT DATES**

- **OCTOBER 30th - NOVEMBER 12th**: Step 1: Preparation
- **NOVEMBER 13th**: Step 2: Holes Writing Workshop
- **NOVEMBER 14th - DECEMBER 4th**: Step 3: Holes Fictional-Memoir Writing Contest
- **DECEMBER 5th**: Submission deadline for writing contest
- **JANUARY 15, 2004**: Winners announced
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SUBMISSION INFORMATION
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– Character Study
7..........STUDENT HANDOUT: Turn & Talk Worksheet
8..........STUDENT HANDOUT: Holes Fictional-Memoir Writing Contest
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NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS
The Holes Writing Workshop and its extended activities correlate to the following NCTE/IRA Standards:

• Standard 4: Communication Skills
  Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

• Standard 5: Communication Strategies
  Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

• Standard 6: Applying Knowledge
  Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

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HOLES WRITING WORKSHOP AGENDA

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2003

1. WELCOME TO THE HOLES WRITING WORKSHOP: Moderated by Willow Bay

2. DIGGING THE FIRST HOLE: CREATING MEMORABLE CHARACTERS: Willow Bay introduces Holes author and screenwriter Louis Sachar and Holes director Andrew Davis, who will discuss character development.

3. VIDEO CLIP: D-Tent Boys Screen Test

4. TURN & TALK #1: The moderator will prompt students to turn to their neighbors and discuss the first Turn & Talk topic: “Write down one characteristic of each of the boys shown in the video clip.” See the Turn & Talk Worksheet.

5. POLL: The moderator will prompt students to applaud for their favorite D-Tent character. Poll results will be revealed at the end of the event.

6. VIDEO CLIP: Digging the First Hole

7. YOU’RE TO DIG ONE HOLE EVERY DAY: WRITE! WRITE! WRITE!: Louis Sachar and Andrew Davis discuss writing and peer revising.

8. VIDEO CLIP: Bully

9. TURN & TALK #2: The moderator will prompt students to turn to their neighbors and discuss the second Turn & Talk topic: “Write down three of the writing tips that Louis Sachar and Andrew Davis discussed.” See the Turn & Talk Worksheet.

10. HOLES FICTIONAL-MEMOIR WRITING CONTEST: Louis Sachar introduces this follow-up writing event. Pre-selected questions from students will be asked throughout the workshop. See the question submission flyer for more details on how your students can participate!

DURATION: 85 MINUTES

USEFUL REFERENCES

Check out these useful references for further information on writing:

BOOKS

Graves, Donald H. Writing: Teachers & Children at Work, 20th Anniversary Edition. (Exeter: Heinemann, 2003). This is the 20th anniversary edition of a book that is a classic. See also Graves' web site: www.donaldgraves.org/index.asp


WEB SITES

National Writing Project
The mission of the National Writing Project is to improve the teaching of writing and to improve learning in the nation’s schools.
www.writingproject.org

HOLES IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON DVD AND VIDEO.
STEP 1: PREPARATION

OBJECTIVES:
• To introduce the book *Holes* to students
• To investigate character traits

TEACHER PREP
(Ideally to be completed at least one week prior to the workshop)

1. Read *Holes* aloud with your class. Direct students’ attention to chapters 5 and 9, which describe the D-Tent boys.

2. Discuss the characters in *Holes*. Focus on the various personalities of the D-Tent boys.

3. Turn & Talk moments will take place during the writing workshop. Students will be asked to turn to their neighbors and discuss a question posed to them on their Turn & Talk Worksheet and reiterated on the theatre screen. To familiarize your students with these interactive learning opportunities, use the following prompt:

   a. Prompt: Can you think of at least three adjectives that describe Stanley’s character? Take a moment to think about your adjectives and write them down. Then turn to the person sitting next to you and share your thoughts. Discuss quietly. You have two minutes.

   b. Review the Turn & Talk Worksheet to prepare yourself and your students for completing these exercises during the workshop.

4. Use the lesson, *Zero The Hero, Trout The Lout – Character Study*, found in the back of this guide to examine the character traits of the D-Tent boys.

   a. Copy the worksheet chart onto the blackboard and fill it in with the students. Use Trout Walker as an example.

   b. Instruct students to think about the character of Trout Walker. Then work toward the topic of character traits. Start with a problem or idea, and then discover the solution or answers along the way. Where in the story do these character traits reveal themselves?

5. Go over the agenda of the *Holes* Writing Workshop with your students.

STEP 2: *HOLES* WRITING WORKSHOP

OBJECTIVES:
• To acquire writing and revising tips from an award-winning author and director
• To practice critical listening and viewing skills
• To practice note taking

TEACHER PREP
(To be completed the day before the *Holes* Writing Workshop)

1. Ask your class what they hope to take away from this event. What do they hope to learn (writing tips, examples of revising, etc.)? Write their responses on the blackboard.

2. Review the student-prep steps below with your class.

3. Make copies of the *Holes* Writing Workshop Turn & Talk Worksheet to bring to the theatre. Encourage students to bring a notebook and pen to jot down writing tips from Louis Sachar and Andrew Davis.

4. Take notes on what to ask your students back at school about the writing class.

STUDENT PREP

1. Bring a notebook and pen or pencil to the theatre.

2. Watch and listen for helpful writing tips.

3. Take notes on tips given by Louis Sachar on how to write and revise.

4. Look for ways in which Louis Sachar and Andrew Davis collaborated and revised the writing in the book to adapt it into a screenplay.

5. Ask yourself how you can use these tips and examples in your own writing.
TEACHER PREP
(To be completed after attending the Holes Writing Workshop)

1. Discuss: After attending the Holes Writing Workshop, ask your students what they took away from the event. What were three writing tips the students felt were helpful in considering their own writing? Name some examples of revising that Sachar had to do in order to make his book into a movie.

We hope that you and your class will participate in the Fictional-Memoir Writing Contest. The following pages outline the writing process involved in entering the contest. In addition to encouraging your students to participate in this event, we suggest that you follow up on the writing workshop with alternative writing activities such as scriptwriting and conducting interviews.

2. Plan: Before your students begin writing their fictional memoirs, review Louis Sachar’s writing tips. Next, define the word “prequel,” and review the Holes Fictional-Memoir Writing Contest guidelines. Remind students that the Character Study worksheet they completed prior to attending the theatre event may be a useful reference as they write. Have students organize their thoughts and plan out their ideas before writing their drafts. (This process is also known as “prewriting” or “webbing.”)

3. Draft: After organizing and planning their ideas, have students write their first draft.

4. Peer Revising: Once students have completed their draft, divide the class into groups of two or three students for peer revising. Have each student read his or her story aloud to this small group. Provide each student with two or three copies of the Peer Revising handout. Allow students time to take their peer revisions into consideration and work on their stories some more.

5. Edit: Once they have completed their revisions, define and review editing skills. Check for misspellings and proper use of capitalization, punctuation, verb tense, and other grammatical issues.

6. Publish: Have students type or neatly hand-write a final version of their memoir. This will be the version that they feel is worthy to be published and read by everyone.
TO ENTER

• The writing event is only open to those students who have attended the Holes Writing Workshop.

• Choose the top three student stories with your class. (Only three story entries per class.)

• Entries must be no more than one 8 1/2 x 11 page and no longer than 500 words.

• Entries must be the original work of the entrant.

• Both handwritten and typed stories will be accepted.

• All entries must be postmarked no later than Friday, December 5, 2003.

• Walden Media will select a group of 30 stories based on originality (50%) and writing skills (50%). From this group, Louis Sachar will choose the five finalists, one from each grade level (grades 4 through 8).

• Winners will be notified the week of January 15, 2004.

Send the top three stories and a cover sheet to: Holes Fictional-Memoir Writing Contest c/o Walden Media, LLC 294 Washington Street, 7th Floor Boston, MA 02108

Remember to include a cover sheet with the first name and last initial of the three students submitting stories, along with their grade, school, the school address, the school telephone number, and an email address where you (the teacher) can be reached during the day.

PUBLICATION OF WINNERS’ STORIES

The top five stories – one chosen from each grade level by Louis Sachar – will be published on the official Holes Writing Workshop homepage at www.walden.com/holes_workshop.html. (For other ideas on how to publish your students’ work, please see the Useful References.)

GRAND-PRIZE WINNERS

The grand-prize winners will each receive an autographed copy of the Holes book, DVD, soundtrack, and movie poster.
**WHAT IS A CHARACTER STUDY?**
A character study is a short piece of writing that reveals or shows something important about a person or fictional character. Think about the different characters in *Holes*. Some are likeable, and some are not so likeable. Choose one main character from *Holes* to diagram in the chart below.

**INSTRUCTIONS**
Write the name of the character you choose in the center. (Draw a picture of the character if you like.) Then think of four character traits of this character (for example: loyal, brave, hostile). Write the four traits in the oval shapes. Find two instances in the book or movie when the character displayed each trait. Whenever possible, look for exact quotations by the character to use as proof. Write these examples in the rectangles.

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TURN & TALK NOTES #1: D-TENT BOYS SCREEN TEST VIDEO
DIRECTIONS
Write down one characteristic of each of the boys shown in the video clip.

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<td>Magnet</td>
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ADDITIONAL NOTES: ________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

TURN & TALK NOTES #2: LOUIS SACHAR AND ANDREW DAVIS QUESTION AND ANSWER
DIRECTIONS
Write down three writing tips that Louis Sachar and Andrew Davis discussed.

1. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

Turn to your neighbor and discuss how you could apply at least one of these writing tips to your own work.
We know how Stanley Yelnats ended up at Camp Green Lake (because of his “dirty-rotten-no-good-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather”). But did you ever wonder how the rest of the boys of D-Tent found themselves digging holes?

Well, now is your chance to figure it out on your own!

**THE EVENT**
Write a story of up to 500 words in length that tells how one of the D-Tent boys ended up digging holes at Camp Green Lake. Here’s how:

**First,** choose one of the boys from D-Tent: X-Ray, Armpit, Magnet, Zigzag, Squid, Twitch, or Barfbag.

**Second,** go back to *Holes* the book, and search for clues about the character that will help you write your story. If you can’t find any clues about your character’s past, then think about his personality, the way he looks in your imagination, and why he was given his nickname. Use the worksheet *Zero the Hero, Trout the Lout – Character Study* as a reference.

**Third,** take the clues you’ve found from the book, mix in your imagination, and WRITE! Begin your story by writing to the following prompt:

Everybody calls me [insert D-Tent boy’s nickname], but my real name is [insert D-Tent boy’s real name]. This was my life before Camp Green Lake.

**Finally,** revise and edit your story using the writing tips given by Louis Sachar during the *Holes* Writing Workshop. Check your spelling and grammar.

**THE PRIZE**
You will help choose the top three stories from your class. The authors of those stories will be eligible to win one of five grand prizes. The five grand-prize winners will receive an autographed copy of the *Holes* book, DVD, soundtrack, and movie poster. The five finalists’ stories will be published online at the *Holes* Writing Workshop official homepage: www.walden.com/holes_workshop.html.

The Sponsor of this event will select a group of 30 stories based on originality (50%) and writing skills (50%). From this group, Louis Sachar will choose the five finalists, one from each grade level (grades 4 through 8).
Divide into groups of 2-3 people. Read through and familiarize yourself with the revision questions below. Then read your stories aloud to each other and take some time to fill out a peer revising form for each person.

**THE GOOD STUFF**
1. What did I like about the story? Explain.

2. Which part should definitely stay in the story? Explain.


**THE STUFF TO REVISE**
4. Were there any confusing parts in the story? If so, what were they?

5. Were there parts that seemed unnecessary or too long? If so, what were they?

6. Were there parts that needed more details or explanation? If so, what were they?