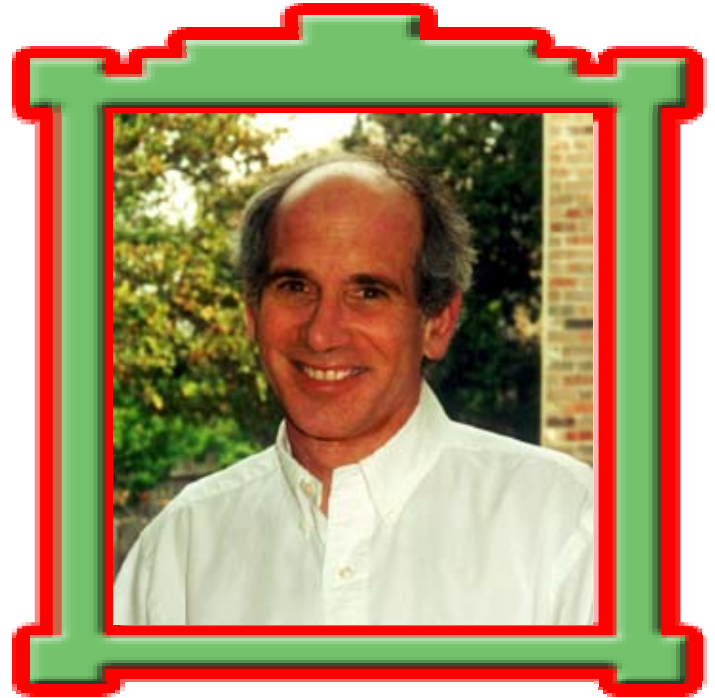


## LOUIS SACHAR

“I enjoyed school and was a good student, but it wasn't until high school that I really became an avid reader. J.D. Salinger and Kurt Vonnegut were the authors who first inspired me. Some of my other favorite authors include E.L. Doctorow, Margaret Atwood, E.B White, Richard Price and Kazuo Ishiguro.”



Louis Sachar was born in East Meadow, New York, moved to Southern California when he was nine, and now lives in Austin, Texas. Louis's first book for children, *Sideways Stories from Wayside School* was accepted for publication during his first week of law school. Although Louis graduated and passed the bar exam, he opted to be a full-time writer for children rather than a lawyer. Louis met his wife, Carla, when he was a visiting author at a school in Texas. She was a counselor at the same school. They have a daughter, Sherre. Louis likes to play chess, cards, ski, play the guitar (and sing loudly), but mostly he likes spending time with Carla and Sherre.

Born: East Meadow, New York, 20 March 1954.

Education: University of California, Berkeley, B.A. 1976; University of California, San Francisco, J.D. 1980.

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# Holes

By Louis Sachar

## About This Book

Stanley Yelnats, a hard-working, law-abiding, unlucky kid, is falsely arrested for stealing a pair of sneakers and is sentenced to a summer at Camp Green Lake. The "Camp" turns out to be a juvenile detention center in the middle of the desert where a cruel warden forces the boys to dig holes all day in search of treasure. Over the course of the summer, Stanley makes new friends, defeats new enemies, and discovers an ancient curse on his family. Sometimes funny, sometimes serious, this book deals with issues ranging from fate to friendship.

## Discussion Questions:

1. This book is really made up of two stories: Stanley's summer and the story of his great-great-grandfather in the Wild West. How does the author relate the stories and switch between them? What other stories do you know that can be broken up into several smaller tales?
2. Stanley begins the story overweight and unpopular at school. How does he change during the course of the book in order to fit in with a group? When he goes back to school in the fall, how do you think his classmates will view him?
3. Is Stanley a hero? How about his great-great-grandfather? What's the difference between a hero and just a good person? About the nature of love?
4. Each camper at Camp Green Lake has a nickname. Discuss how the nicknames reflect on the boys' personalities; for example, why is Stanley called "Caveman?" How can a person's name change the way others see them and the way they see themselves?
5. When does Stanley begin to show courage? What brave things does he do? Discuss how courage can be very personal. An action that is courageous for one person might not be for another. What brave risks have you taken in your life that remind you of Stanley's adventure?
6. Zero is Stanley's first true friend; discuss how their friendship develops. When Stanley finds out that Zero actually stole the sneakers, he isn't mad; actually, he's glad. Do you think this is an appropriate response? How would you respond if you and a friend were in a similar situation?
7. The Warden is a really nasty lady. What other evil women can you think of in books, movies, or fairy tales? How does the Warden compare to some of these witches and evil queens? How does the author create such a vile villain?

Resources referenced:

kidsreads.com, teenreads.com, bookrags.com, teachingbooks.com, multcolib.org, barnesandnoble.com,  
And MPL Staff.