



# TEACHER PAGE

## GET THE SCOOP

### STANLEY'S STORY

**GRADE LEVEL:** 5–8

**SUBJECT:** Language Arts

**DURATION:** Two 40-minute class periods and additional class

time or homework

**NATIONAL STANDARD:** Language Arts, Standard 4: Communication skills

**MATERIALS:** Local and/or national newspapers

*Use this lesson to increase awareness of the five W's plus H rule of journalistic reporting, and to better understand the newspaper as an information medium.*

### DESCRIPTION

Imagine if Stanley's story were true – that a Camp Green Lake really did exist, that he was wrongly accused of stealing the sneakers, and that he found his family's fortune in the desert. The story of Stanley Yelnats would most definitely make newspaper headlines.

### OBJECTIVES

- To recall facts, characters, and events from *Holes*
- To understand the content and structure of a news story – the five W's and H of a news story (who, what, when, where, why, and how)
- To paraphrase, summarize, and organize information in writing

### ADAPTATIONS

- For younger students, read a short newspaper article aloud in class. A human interest or feature story might work best. Read the story once, and then go over the story with students, picking out the five W's and the H as you read. For homework, have students bring in newspaper articles with the 5 W's and H highlighted in their articles.
- Talk about what you might include in a news story about Stanley. Ask students to write the categories Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How on a piece of notebook paper, and fill in details from *Holes* under each category header.

### ASSESSMENT

Design a five-point rubric and assess students on meeting the requirements of the assignment: interviewing two people for their story, covering the five Ws and H, and clarity of language. Assess students on their understanding of the distinction between each of the five W's and H, their clear understanding of the novel as shown via participation as interviewers and interviewees and creativity and skill in adapting a fictional piece, to a factual writing format.

### USEFUL RESOURCES

*Creative Interviewing: The Writer's Guide to Gathering Information by Asking Questions* (3rd Edition), by Ken Metzler, Allyn & Bacon, 1996.

*Associated Press Guide to News Writing (Study Aids/On-the-Job Reference)*, by Rene J. Cappon, Arco Publishing, 2000.

Newspaper Writing 101 – writing tips for novice journalists: [www.freep.com/jobspage/academy/writing.htm](http://www.freep.com/jobspage/academy/writing.htm)

### EXTENSIONS

For older or more advanced students, expectations for quality writing should be higher. Instruct these more advanced students to engage in peer reviews, critiquing each other's work and offering constructive criticism, and assess their review process in grading the assignment.

### PROCEDURES

1. Students should work independently to write a news story of approximately 500-words about Stanley's arrest, trial, time at Camp Green Lake and release.
2. Instruct students to recall details from the movie and use mock interviews with classmates as background information for the story.
3. Review with students the elements of a good news story. These include an attention-getting headline, a well-written lead, a story that informs, and details and information that are credited to sources, such as specific documents or individuals. Review the five W's and H of a news story.
4. Instruct students to interview at least two classmates posing as different characters in *Holes* or as witnesses to an event in the story. Remind students to take notes, to write down who said what, and to confirm the spelling of names. Review the difference between paraphrasing someone's remarks and directly quoting their words.
5. Allow students time to draft, write, and revise their story before turning in a final copy.