



## LIKE IT OR NOT?

WRITE A REVIEW OF *HOLES*, THE MOVIE

**GRADE LEVEL:** 5–8     **SUBJECT:** Language Arts     **DURATION:** Two 40-minute class periods, one homework assignment  
**NATIONAL STANDARDS:** Language Arts, Standard 4: Communication skills, Standard 5: Communication strategies, Standard 6: Applying knowledge  
**MATERIALS:** Sample movie reviews from various print media, background information about *Holes* at [www.holes.com](http://www.holes.com)  
*Use this lesson to have students write a review of Holes, the movie.*

**DESCRIPTION**

The aim of a movie review is to help readers decide if they should go see a particular film. Movie reviews are short essays expressing the reviewer's personal opinion about a particular movie. An effective movie review is informative and enjoyable to read, and highlights important parts of the movie without giving the whole story away.

**OBJECTIVES**

- To understand the components of a story and how it is retold through film
- To clearly express personal opinion in writing
- To support personal opinion with facts and details

**ADAPTATIONS**

For younger students, focus the lesson on answering three important questions for a book or movie review:

1. What is the movie about?
2. What is the movie's theme?
3. Did I like it or not, and why?

**ASSESSMENT**

Design a five-point rubric to assess students on their ability to clearly express a written opinion of the movie. Focus on the degree to which the students back up their opinion with specific examples.

**EXTENSIONS**

- Allow access to a video camera for students to film their review in a mock-televised format.
- Ask a local reporter who has reviewed *Holes* to visit the class. Prepare students for the visit by having them write questions for the guest. Guide a class discussion comparing the review written by the reporter to the ones written by the students.
- Publish a few of the reviews in the school newspaper.

**PROCEDURES**

1. Prior to the lesson, ask students to bring in movie reviews from various sources.
2. Discuss the purpose of a movie review and elements of an informative and well-written review. Remind students that a review is a type of persuasive writing that includes an opinion supported by facts and details.
3. Define and review literary terms that are potentially useful such as plot, characters, setting, and theme.
4. Discuss the elements that students may want to examine, such as credible characters and special effects.
5. Instruct students to write a three to five-paragraph review of *Holes*. It might be beneficial to designate extra classroom time, or assign this writing piece as homework.

**USEFUL RESOURCES**

Sample movie reviews can be found at the following web sites:

[www.filmcritic.com](http://www.filmcritic.com)

[www.suntimes.com/index/ebert.html](http://www.suntimes.com/index/ebert.html)

[www.rottentomatoes.com](http://www.rottentomatoes.com)

PBS Kids offers student-written movie reviews: [www.pbskids.org/zoom/reviews](http://www.pbskids.org/zoom/reviews)