

Holes

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The novel Holes tells a story about a young boy who goes through several trials in his young life. Through the awful situations that he experiences, he becomes helpless and regards himself lowly. However, the story reveals that no matter how awful a situation is, and no matter how inevitable bad things are, we can still do something about it. The novel is an inspirational story about Stanley Yelnats and his journey in finding his belief in himself and a better life. Stanley has a tough life. He belongs to a poor family and they also believe that no good thing is ever going to happen to them.

He is often teased in his school because he is overweight. Stanley does not fight back because somehow he believes that what other people say about him is true. Even the smaller children in his school tease Stanley and his teachers allow it since they find it amusing. Stanley is weak and he is a pushover. There is another story quite similar to Stanley's tale. It tells about a boy who has not experienced an entirely happy day in his life. He experiences an awful tragedy and has never had a taste of luxury. His story is inspiring too. He goes through a lot of difficult times that it made him believe that he does not deserve to be happy.

He does not give himself a chance to amount to anything and he never stands up to defend himself. This poor boy is named James Henry Trotter and his story is entitled James and the Giant Peach. Profile of the curses in James' life There are a lot of sad and bad things that happened to James even in his young age. One can actually consider them as curses since it prevented him from leading a happy life. Every day in James' life, his luck seems to get from bad to worse.

Curse #1 - James' parents are shopping one day when a rhinoceros who escaped from the zoo eats them up in broad daylight. James becomes an orphan. Curse #2 - The lovely house by the seaside that they own has been sold and he gets sent away. He does not have any relatives left other than his two aunts who live in a horrible and sad place up on a hill. Curse #3 - James has been sent to live with his Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker who are really horrible people. They are as ugly as they are mean. (Dahl 3) Curse #4 - James is tasked with difficult chores all day and he does not get fed very well. He becomes thin and weak and he's always being insulted by his aunts. Curse #5 - When the peach tree in their home bears a magical fruit - James was not even allowed to be near it.

Instead, he was given more chores than he had before. Similarities of Stanley and James' curses James and Stanley lead tough lives. They are both too young to experience these events but they cannot seem control their lives at all. They are pretty much helpless on their own and believe that sometimes they deserve what they get. No matter how mean people gets toward them they do not fight back. They both just let things happen. James gets bullied around by his aunts a lot but he never declines them when he's told to do chores. They push him around to do the things they do not want to do as if he's their servant.

They do not let James play with other children nor allow him to go to school. James is unable to fight for himself because nobody ever showed him how to. Much like Stanley - James does not have a role model to learn from. He's not taught on how to stand up for himself. He feels that he has nowhere and no one else to go to so he endures the maltreatment he receives. Just like

James, Stanley does not talk back or fight back. He does not really do anything about it, although he could - he just lets these things or events happen. It may be said that he is powerless, given that he is such an easy target to so many people.

He is prey to bullying because he does not fight for himself. (Greene 51) Stanley has very little chance to stand up for himself. He gets so used to being pushed around and being poor that he does not believe that he deserves anything better. Even being sentenced to be sent to Camp Green Lake does not seem so bad to Stanley. In fact, he makes himself feel better by imagining that it is just like a regular summer camp where rich children unlike him go to during vacation. He does not do anything to help make the situation better; he just blames his "no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather" and their family's inherited curse. (Sachar 36)

James has the power to reverse his so-called curse. Much like Stanley's curse, his curse is unconventional; all he has to do is stand up for himself and believe in his own abilities. Prescriptions for Removing Curses Even if the easiest way seems to be giving up and letting fate take its course, Stanley and James eventually emerge as heroes and not mere victims. They realize their worth as human beings and fight for what they believe in. They grow confidence and belief strong enough to face their battles. Stanley removes his curse by acknowledging to himself that he is needed.

He helps his friend Zero from certain death by risking his own life. He rises up to the occasion which calls for him to be brave and strong. In reality, Stanley does not even notice how he's lifting the curse slowly and by himself. He spends the day helping Zero as his ancestor should have helped

his ancestor ages ago - by teaching him and by being his only friend. James helps himself too. He slowly gains self-esteem and regards himself better as a person. He makes friends with the wonderful characters he met and he fulfills his dream to go to the city. He takes himself out of the cursed life he lived in for so long.

There are a lot of times when we can simply give up and let fate just take its course. Sometimes it is also easier to blame the bad situations we encounter to things we cannot control - things like curses. It is almost always easy just to be a victim instead of a fighter. However, the stories of James and Stanley teach us that we can rise above these situations and succeed. Their stories show that no one and nothing, not even a curse, can doom us unless we let it take over our lives or we give it a power to run our lives. And we all have an equal right to happiness and a better life - we just have to be strong and brave enough to take it.