

# [Holes – author’s use of sub plots and their effectiveness essay sample](https://assignbuster.com/holes-authors-use-of-sub-plots-and-their-effectiveness-essay-sample/)

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In the book Holes, the author, Louis Sachar has effectively made use of sub-plots throughout the book to indirectly help the readers in understanding the plot and enhance their understanding of the story and literally help the readers ‘ fill in the holes’ left unfilled by the writer. In this essay, I shall look at two of the sub-plots mentioned in the book and show how they help the readers and hence are effective.

First, I will look at the sub plot of Kate Barlow and Sam. This Sub-Plot helps us to understand why Kate Barlow became an outlaw. We are told that Kate was a schoolteacher whom Charles Walker, the son of the richest person in the county, asked to marry, but she refused and he was greatly offended by this. Kate, on the other hand was in love with an onion seller, Sam who was a Negro and was killed because he and Kate were seen kissing and by the laws, this was illegal. Because of this Kate went mad and became on of the most feared outlaws in the west, she kissed every man who she killed and looted. This sub plot shows us why Kate Barlow became and outlaw and why she was called “ Kissin’ Kate Barlow”. We can also see the connection between Stanley’s great grandfather being robbed by Kate Barlow and this sub-plot because Kate Barlow robbed him for his treasure however, she didn’t kiss him or kill him, but she left him stranded in the middle of wasteland.

This also helps us to see what Stanley’s great grandfather meant by, “ I found refuge on God’s Thumb”. Later on in the book, when Zero and Stanley run away from the camp, they found Sam’s boat and found some almost empty jars of spiced peaches. Stanley had long believed that some of the mountains that could be seen from the lake formed the shape of a thumb, and so, he and Zero set out to find God’s Thumb. They found the mountains and climbed up them and as they were very steep, this wasn’t easy.

On the way, Zero fell sick and so Stanley had to carry him up the mountain. Funnily, without knowing, he had lifted of the so-called ‘ curse’ that had been put on his family by madam Zeroni. It is later revealed to us that Zero’s real name was Hector Zeroni and he was a descendant of Madam Zeroni, and so without knowing, Stanley had fulfilled the promise made to Madam Zeroni by his great-great grandfather who had been unable to fulfill it. Also, Sam’s secret onion field is shown to us and we are able to see how exactly Stanley’s great grandfather had survived on the Thumb of God by eating the wild onions that grew there. Even though this sub plot is complex, it is still logically linked up with the various events in the book and helps the readers to fill in many holes in the plot and so, it is very effective.

Now, I will look at sub-plot of Kate Barlow and Charles Walker and his wife, Linda Miller. Here, we are told that twenty years later, Kate Barlow returned to Green Lake, when it had all dried up. She was still insane as she had been for twenty years. Charles Walker and his wife burst into Kate’s log cabin one day and tortured her and told her to give them all the loot. She refused to do so and all that they knew was that the loot was buried somewhere in the huge wasteland. Kate was killed by a yellow spotted lizard leaving it up to Walker and his wife to dig out the treasure. All that Kate told them was, “ I sure hope you like to dig, because you’re going to be digging for a long time. You and your children and their children can dig for the next hundred years and you’ll never find it.”

This is a very important sub plot, as it tells us why the camp was made where it was and why the campers were made to dig holes everyday and it also proves what Kate Barlow said about having to dig for a very long time and not find the loot, is true. Firstly, the warden was related to Linda Miller and so, she formed the camp exactly where Kate Barlow had lived. She made the campers dig holes everyday, as it was the best way to dig out the treasure in the least amount of time and it was a good disguise as well because neither the authorities, nor the campers knew why they were digging, they were only told that they were digging for character building, and they were instructed that if they ever found anything, they were to give it either to the warden or Mr. Sir.

This sub-plot also helps us to understand why all of a sudden the Warden was so delighted when X-Ray gave her the empty lipstick container with the initials ‘ KB’ on it. She gave him the day off and a double shower and told the others to dig around X-Ray’s hole and she gave them all m ore water. However, she didn’t know that the container had not been found by X-Ray, but by Stanley. With time, the Warden became impatient and this shows us how greedy she was. This sub plot is very effective as it answers so many of the questions in our minds and without it, it would be very hard for us to understand what is happening in the actual plot of the book and we would left wondering about many different issues which are all cleared in this sub-plot.

The two sub-plots are very closely linked as they both have the same base, Kate Barlow. Events in the first sub plot can be linked up with events in the second sub-plot and many different connections can be seen. For example, in the first sub plot, we see that Charles Walker asked Kate Barlow to marry him and when she refused, he spread false news and propaganda about her in the whole town.

Kate Barlow went mad and became an outlaw and looted hundreds, and in the second sub-plot, we again see Kate Barlow and Charles Walker, this time with his wife as they both come to rob Kate Barlow of her loot and again, as before Kate refuses and dies a laughing death, leaving the two spell bounded. We also see that even after 20 years, Kate’s love for Sam has still not died because even though she is mad, she still shows a lot of love for Sam even though he is dead. Words and phrases from the first sub-plot are repeated again in the second one, e. g. Sam says, “ I can fix that” in the first sub plot and in the second sub-plot, the same phrase is repeated again in Kate’s imagination.

I’m sure that after reading this far, you will definitely agree with me that sub plots are very effective and important in any story. They are a good way of helping readers understand the plot of a book and enhance their knowledge of what is happening so that they may be able to trace connections between different sub-plots as well as sub-plots and the main plot. Sub-plots are like pieces of a huge jigsaw puzzle, the plot. The readers have the job of fitting them in the right place in order to be able to completely understand the plot and have no questions or doubts left in their minds about the story. They may seem confusing at first, but later on, they all seem to join up and fill in the blanks in the story.

Sub-plots are like different stories within the main plot and they help us understand why things happen in the book, or why different characters say things when they do, and so, to conclude, I would like to say that the sub-plots in the book have very effectively been used as they answer questions that may arise in the reader’s mind whilst reading and they give us a better understanding of the actual plot and enable us to be able to link the stories in the sub-plots and the actual plot of the book and be able to clearly see the connections in between, and surely without them, even after finishing the book, we would be left wondering about various issues and it would be up to us to bridge up the distance between different events and fill in the holes entirely on our own, which would definitely be a tiring and confusing job!