Holes by Louis Sachar

Chapters 4 and 5

Understanding Quotes ("Quote Analysis")

An author can describe important events in a story by telling you about them:

“He checked Stanley's backpack and allowed him to keep it. Then he led Stanley outside into the blazing heat “ (p.14).

Sometimes what a character says (and how he says it) is just as important as what happens. It can tell us what the person talking is really like, and what has happened in the past or will happen in the future.

You can learn a lot from a quote by explaining it in four parts, called a "quote analysis:"

1. Write the quote and the page it comes from. Put it in quotation marks.
2. Explain who said those words, and to whom they were talking.
3. Paraphrase the quote. *That means put it in different words that mean the same thing. Don't use quotation marks because quotation marks mean you are writing exactly the words that were said.*
4. Explain what this quote tells you about this character or the plot of the story. What kind of person would say these things? Why would they say it? What would they have to know, or be thinking about, to say it?

Example:

Quote: “If it makes you feel better to call me Mom, Theodore, go ahead and call me Mom.”

Characters: Mr. Pendanski says this to one of the boys.

Paraphrase: If you want to call me Mom, it's okay with me.

What does it tell you? Mr. Pendanski wants them to feel comfortable with him. He doesn't want to scare them.

Your Turn!

Mr. Sir is a different kind of person than Mr. Pendanski. Analyze this quote from him: "Whenever you speak to me, you must call me by my name. Is that clear?" (p. 13)

Write the quote:

Who does he say it to, and when and where?

Paraphrase the quote:

What does it say about Mr. Sir?

Tall Tales:

In some ways, the story HOLES is like a tall tale. In "tall tales," things are extreme. Good is very, very good and bad is very, very bad. Things don't change -- a rule is a rule.

1. What is "the one rule" at Camp Green Lake?
2. Who is probably a very, very bad character?