

DISCUSSION GUIDE

“Read This Watch That: Episode #1 - THE FOURTH STALL & HOLES

1) Both “Holes” and The Fourth Stall have a lot of characters that exist in a “moral grey area.” This means that sometimes they are demonstrating good morals and values, and other times... not so much. Or maybe they’re doing bad things (ex. stealing money) but for a good reason (ex. to help their sick mother pay rent).

Q: Can you think of other characters from books or movies that are “good guys,” “bad guys,” or “good” AND “bad guys”? Can you think of other examples of things the characters in “Holes” and The Fourth Stall do that are hard to define as “good” or “bad”?



2) The Fourth Stall is a parody of famous dark detective stories. It takes elements from famous classic films and books and exaggerates them to make it funny, like The Stinky Cheese Man parodies famous fairy tales. For example, everyone in these stories always has a nickname, like Mac, Staples... and Kitten.

Q: Can you think of other parodies?

3) The Fourth Stall also features a lot of allusions to famous gangster stories (like The Godfather... check out the cover of the two books!).

Q: What is an allusion?

Can you think of other stories have allusions to other works?

4) Stanley Yelnats in “Holes” is falsely accused of committing a crime.

Q: Can you think of a time you were accused of something you didn’t do? How did you handle it? Did you learn anything from the experience?

5) Stanley Yelnats and his family are very interested in their ancestors.

Q: Do you know any interesting stories from your family history? If not, go home and ask your parents!

6) In The Fourth Stall, Mac is very good at finding unexpected allies to help him solve his cases. One adult who works on his side is the janitor.

Q: Who are some of the unexpected kid allies he makes?

Of all the kid allies, who is your favorite? (Besides Kitten, obviously).