

Chapters 35—41

Standards Focus: Imagery

“Zero’s face looked like a jack-o’-lantern that had been left out too many days past Halloween – half rotten, with sunken eyes and a drooping smile.” Chapter 35, p. 155

Isn’t it easy to picture what Zero looks like? Louis Sachar uses vivid images to help the reader imagine not only what Zero looks like, but also what a dire situation Zero is in. We can easily imagine Zero because most of us have seen jack-o’-lanterns that are ready for the compost heap.

Vivid descriptions, including the use of metaphors and similes, are some of the tools writers use to create vivid imagery in their writing. In this selection from *Holes*, Louis Sachar uses a simile to describe Zero. He links together two items to create a clear picture for the reader.

Good readers try to visualize as they read. They imagine the pictures the author creates. This helps readers better understand what they are reading, and it also makes reading more enjoyable – like having a movie running inside your head!

Look at some of the other imagery in this section of the novel.

1. Big Thumb.

- a. How does a rock formation turn into encouragement for the boys as they travel?

- b. What meaning does Big Thumb have? _____

2. “Unlike the eastern shore, where Camp Green Lake was situated, the western shore did not slope down gradually. It was as if they had been walking across the flat bottom of a giant frying pan” (p. 164). Why is this an appropriate image for the lake? _____

3. “After focusing on Big Thumb for so long, it was as if the rock had absorbed his energy and now acted like a kind of giant magnet pulling him toward it” (p. 170). What does this image mean? _____

Name _____ Period _____

4. "He wiped the dirt off of it and realized it was an onion....
'Here, eat this.'
'What is it?' Zero whispered.
'A hot fudge sundae'" (p. 172)

How could an onion be a hot fudge sundae? What does this image mean? _____

Reread these additional passages. Good readers use their imaginations while they read; they also make connections between what they read and what they already know or have experienced. As you read these passages, try to picture the images as clearly as you can.

5. Chapter 8 contains vivid descriptions of the yellow-spotted lizard. Read over the descriptions again. What part of the descriptions make the lizard most frightening? Why?

6. In Chapter 9 Stanley relaxes in the wreck room. Reread the description of the room. What image can you picture most clearly? Why? _____

7. In the beginning of Chapter 23, Green Lake and the Fourth of July celebration are described. Reread the description. Can you imagine the scene? Why? _____

Setting as Character

8. In the last section, you explored the importance of Big Thumb as part of the setting and as a character in the novel. What things happen in this section with Big Thumb? What happens to Stanley's conflict with nature? _____

