

Character analysis of holden caulfield essay



**ASSIGN
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Holden Exposed In the novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, by: JD Salinger, the protagonist, Holden Caulfield, is a seventeen year old boy telling a story of around last Christmas when he spent his weekend in New York.

Holden is a very opinionated character. He is a character that has been related to by teenagers over the last 60 years. Holden learns throughout the book that childhood innocence can not be protected forever. Everybody needs to grow up at one time or another. This is a great lesson to be learned by readers. At some point in every successful person's life they realized that the needed to mature and become a responsible, functioning adult.

Holden Caulfield is a character that is unique in many ways; he also has many weaknesses, such as his irresponsibility, his loneliness, and his extremely depressed state. Holden proves to the readers of the novel his true level of irresponsibility. In the first chapter of the novel, after being asked Mr. Spencer how his parents would respond to him being kicked out of school he said, "This is about the fourth school I've gone to" (9).

Holden is irresponsible in the way that without his parents there to guide him, he gets no work done. This causes him to flunk out of his fourth school. Holden also explains to his readers the fact that he is failing four of his five classes. The only class he is passing is English, and he doesn't have a very good grade there.

Holden also was responsible for the foils of the fencing team. Holden was supposed to bring the foils to and from the match, but Holden leaves the foils on the subway in New York. This causes his entire fencing team to forfeit the match. Holden blames the lost foils on his team getting on the

wrong subway on the way to the arena. He needed to get up and look at the map to find the right stop.

He claims that he got distracted by the map, thus causing him to forget the equipment. Holden is a very lonely child. He has trouble maintaining a relationship with anybody. At one point in the novel, Holden's roommate, Ward Stradlater asks Holden to write a descriptive composition for him. He was supposed to write the composition about a room but instead he recalled a memory of his younger brother Allie. His brother used to sit in right field during his baseball games and write poems in green ink.

Holden's brother died of cancer a couple years back. Holden's brothers, Allie and D. B. and his sister Phoebe were the only people he kept in good touch with.

Them, and his childhood friend Jane Gallagher. While Holden is away at boarding school he hardly ever gets to talk to any of his friends. Holden is forced to make friends with phonies. Holden considers everybody at the prep schools he attends phonies.

After Holden gets kicked out of Pencey Prep, He heads for New York. While in New York Holden has an encounter with a prostitute. He asks for the prostitute to come up to his room. Once the prostitute, Sunny, gets there she immediately begins to get undressed.

This is when Holden interrupted with, "don't you feel like talking for a while" (95)? Holden just wanted to talk, but he had nobody to talk to. The best he could do was talk to a prostitute. Being lonely for so long left Holden

depressed. Holden had trouble dealing with all the phonies in his life. At one point in the novel, Holden begins talking aloud to Allie.

Holden does this when he gets “ very depressed”(98). When he gets very depressed like this, Holden thinks of a time when he and Bobby Fallon were going to Lake Sedebego to shoot things with their BB guns. Allie overheard Holden and Bobby talking and asked if he could go with. Holden told Allie he was a child and couldn't come. So now when he gets depressed he tells Allie to get his bike and meet him at Bobby's house.

After Holden's encounter with Sunny, he talks about committing suicide. Holden states, “ I felt like jumping out the widow. I probably would have done it too” (104)! As all readers can see, Holden has a problem. That is probably why he is telling the story of *The Catcher in the Rye* from a facility in California. Holden Caulfield is a unique character in many ways.

Throughout the novel Holden exposes many weaknesses.

He shows his great level of irresponsibility, his extreme loneliness, and his own form of childhood depression. Holden is a very significant character in American literature. Holden has been relating with teenagers for over 50 years. Many lessons can be learned from Holden also. These lessons have been observed and taught well over the years, making this book a great American classic.