

Problems in the catcher in the rye

Literature, American Literature



Coping is a very hard mechanism to get through during your lifetime.

Imagine losing your brother at a very young age; that is something not many people can get over easily. Growing up can be very difficult after going through a very traumatic experience at a very young age.

The protagonist in *The Catcher in the Rye*, by J. D. Salinger, portrays a teenager named Holden, who is trying to cope with his brother Allier's death. He is a teenager, but throughout the novel acts much younger than he actually is. He stays emotionally immature throughout most of his life, but later on realizes he needs to accept the good and the bad in the real world. This novel gives an example of a boy living in his own shell, when in reality he needs to start to mature and take on real problems. Holden believes he can hold on to his innocence and not transition to adulthood, but later realizes his time for youth is concluded.

Holden tends to isolate himself and resists society as much as possible. During a very popular football game that most of his school attended, Holden was ...standing way up on top of Thomsen Hill (Salinger 5). He tries his best to not be seen in situations like these. Ever since his brother had passed away, he disconnects from reality. Holden assumes everybody around him is dishonest and not worth his time. He considers the ...biggest reason [he] left Elkton Hills was because [he] was surrounded by phonies(17). He has a very hard time transitioning himself from childhood to adulthood, and believes society consists of lies and extortion. His grieving the death of his brother causes him to lose many opportunities. His immaturity comes prevalent to his teacher, Mr. Spencer, as Holden ...wished to hell hed stop calling [him] boy all the time(15). Holden's teacher

recognizes and emphasize his immaturity by calling him boy when he speaks to him. He views him as a child that can not do much for himself. Holden is a lover for escaping adulthood as much as he can, and many people notice.

Holden Caulfield slowly begins to realize he should develop into his own age, and not act like a child anymore. Some things forced him to change his viewpoint. Holden went to a certain museum numerous times in the novel because he liked how it never changed, and it always stayed the exact same every time he went. Later in the novel, ...a funny thing happened. When [he] got to the museum, all of a sudden [he] wouldnt have gone inside for a million bucks. It just didnt appeal to [him] (136). He realizes it is time for him to move on, and not stay focused on remaining with the same habits for the rest of his life. He understands his fantasy has to disappear, and he has to catch up with the real world. Moreover, Holden experiences a significant moment with his little sister Phoebe. She is with him at a park, and decides to go on the carousel while Holden watches blissfully. Phoebe does reach for a ring during a game played during her ride and Holden believes ...if [kids] want to grab for the golden ring, you have to let them do it, and not say anything. (232). When Holden grants Phoebe to reach for that ring, he makes it obvious he is no longer trying to preserve and protect her from actually falling from innocence. He realizes nobody can block a child from adulting. Even when Holden visits Phoebe's school, he sees many Fuck you signs, but realizes, [i]f you had a million years to do it in, you couldnt rub out even half the Fuck you signs in the world(222). He did try to rub the signs a bit, but then noticed that he can not take the cursing away from a child, and hit them with a chunk of purity and innocence. It is just overall impossible.

Overall, *The Catcher in the Rye*, deals with numerous events of Holden sticking with his innocence and having trouble letting go. Later on, he does realize adulthood is not a choice, and it does start coming to him. This should be classified as a coming of age novel due to Holden's shocking maturity and realization towards the conclusion of the novel. Salinger advises growing up as a very difficult manner. Holden is doubtlessly a realistic teenager. Even though it did take some time for him to transition to adulthood, he still did. Many children that go through a traumatic experience, experience what Holden does. They go through a similar change transitioning into a mature and steady adult in modern days. The author, J. D. Salinger, emphasizes and connects to society now by bringing up stress. Holden is stressed about his family and relationships, just as most people go through. He reminds people that they are maturing gradually. Nowadays, readers would find this novel very compelling due to similar stresses and dreadful experiences teenagers go through, just like Holden.