

Holdens vision of the  
nature of childhood  
and adulthood.



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Holdens vision of the nature of childhood and adulthood. As we read the book, we clearly see the journey to adulthood that Holden is on, and we witness him on a path trying to discover what realm he belongs to.

Holden leaves Pencey to be able to experience the realm of the adult world. He goes out, on his own, trying to figure out what will happen when he is out there and what it will really be like. It is obvious that he is confused in what he's doing to the point where he does a lot of wrongs things that end up hurting people around him. However, it seems as though everything he does, only leads him to discover that he is on his way of becoming an adult. By committing wrong doings, suffering from them, and recovering from it all is what leads him into adulthood.

Holden was a confused teenager, who wasn't sure of his faith, and did not apply himself to school. In the book, Holden wanted to pray when he was in bed, but admitted that he was sort of an atheist. He also insults the bible, in a blasphemous way, which can be considered a sin. He believed in Jesus, because of his leadership, but disliked the disciples because they were simply followers. When it came to school, he was surrounded by phonies, and used that as an excuse to not even try. He didn't like his environment; how was he going to care about school if he didn't like it. His getting the ax at school was not only hurting him, but also hurting his family.

Holden acted very self-destructive. When he was in the hotel with the bellboy Maurice, and the prostitute Sunny, instead of giving them what they wanted he kept antagonizing, until he was hit and on the floor. After Maurice

??? roughed him up a little bit???, Holden practically visualized killing Maurice in a very dramatic way. It??™s almost a sign that tells us how he doesn??™t mind seeing people suffer. The second step to Holden??™s path to adulthood was suffering. Holden is very alienated from the world and many unsuccessful attempts to communicate with different people.

When Holden left Pencey and got on a train to New York, when he got there he felt like giving ??? Somebody a buzz. [He leaves his] bags right outside the booth so that [he] can watch them, but as soon as [he] is inside, [he cannot] think of anyone to call up.??? He is dieing to call someone, and he even makes a list of people to call, but he lacks the self-confidence and self-esteem that is needed to be able to interact with people at that kind of level. Therefore he suffers from being isolated by the rest of society. When can also see that Holden has a weak grasp at life.

It doesn??™t even seem that he cares, and the only thing stopping him from ending his life is his sister Phoebe. In chapter 23, page 156, he says, ??? I started thinking how old Phoebe would feel if I got pneumonia and died. It was a childish way to think, but I couldn??™t stop myself.

??? You can tell how he is hurting inside and he starts to question the whole purpose of existing. Phoebe is the only comfort he has in realizing all the pain in the adult world. After all the pain and after all the mistakes, Holden finally gets to see why he is here. In chapter 25, Holden says, ??? I felt so damn happy all of a sudden, the way old Phoebe kept going around and around. I was damn near bawling. I felt so damn happy, if you want to know the truth.

I don't know why. It was just that she looked so damn nice, the way she kept going around and around, in her blue coat and all. God, I wish you could've been there. Holden here realizes that Phoebe was worth living for.

He is comforted by her childish ways and realizes that he cannot change the way people are. He understands that he misses his childhood, and wants to stay in that world forever, but nothing ever stays the same. Holden had to go through a lot to be able to understand the way life works. People today can closely relate because it takes a lot of tries to figure it all out. The road to adulthood and redemption isn't easy, and it is a long process to reach maturity. Not all of us want to get there, and want to stay in the happy realm of childhood, but eventually everyone moves up to the realm of real life: adulthood.