

# Catcher in the Rye Study Guide Questions

## Chapter 1

1. What does Holden mean when he says that his brother D.B. is out in Hollywood "being a prostitute"?
2. Where is Holden as the story begins?
3. Where and what is Pencey Prep?
4. How did Holden let the fencing team down?
5. Why was Holden being kicked out of Pencey Prep?
6. What kind of health does Holden appear to be in?

## Chapter 2

1. Who is Mr. Spencer and why does Holden visit him?
2. What did Spencer do that particularly annoyed Holden?
3. What does Holden give us as the reason for "leaving" Elkton Hills?

## Chapter 3

1. What does Holden mean, "I'm quite illiterate, but I read a lot"? Give examples of what he reads.
2. Who is Ackley? Describe him.
3. What does Ackley do that annoys Holden?

## Chapter 4

1. Who is Stradlater? Why does Holden refer to him as a "secret slob"? What does he look like?
2. What point does Holden try to make about people when he talks about Stradlater and the "commas" and Ackley's description of the basketball player?
3. Why did it make Holden nervous that Stradlater was going out with Jane Gallagher?

## Chapter 5

1. Who is Allie, and why is his baseball mitt so special to Holden?
2. Why did Holden's parents want to have him psychoanalyzed?

## Chapter 6

1. What do Holden and Stradlater fight over?
2. Holden says that he is a "pacifist". What is that, and is he?

## Chapter 7

1. Why does Holden suddenly decide to visit Ackley's room?
2. Where does Holden then decide to go?
3. What is his final good-bye to Pencey Prep?
4. Why do you think Holden was crying as he left?

## Chapter 8

1. What does Holden mean when he says, "Mothers are all slightly insane"?
2. What are some of the lies Holden tells Mrs. Morrow? Do you think he's as sorry for them as he stated?

## Chapter 9

1. Holden calls other people phony. In what way is he one?

## Chapter 10

1. Who is Phoebe, and what is Holden's opinion of her?
2. What evidence is there that shows us that Holden probably doesn't look as old as he says he looks?

## Chapter 11

1. What was the past relationship like between Holden and Jane?

## Chapter 12

1. What do Holden and the cab driver talk about?
2. Why does Holden leave Ernie's?

## Chapter 13

1. Previously Holden stated he was a "pacifist". Does his description of how he would deal with the "glove thief" support this, or is he just "yellow"?

## Chapter 14

1. Does Holden have any guilt feelings about Allie? Do you feel this is abnormal in any way, or normal?
2. What made Holden cry?
3. What evidence shows us that Holden might have made a good actor?

## Chapter 15

1. What is the point that Holden tries to make about people when he elaborates about the suitcases of the nuns and of his former roommate?
2. How does Holden treat the nuns?
3. Why does Holden think it spoils a conversation if someone asks what religion he is?

## Chapter 16

1. Who does Holden make a date with? Why does he call her up if he thinks she's a phony?
2. How does Holden treat little kids? Give an example.
3. Does Holden know his way around the city? What does this tell us about him?

### **Chapter 17**

1. How do Holden's feelings for women compare to his feelings for men?
2. How does Holden feel about actors? How does he feel about The Lunts?
3. What is Holden's point about the difference between men owning a car and men owning a horse?
4. How does Holden describe a boy's school when talking to Sally?
5. Why does Holden want to take off with Sally now instead of after college? What's the difference in his eyes?

### **Chapter 18**

1. What is Holden's opinion of the Christmas show at Radio City?
2. Why did Holden think the woman who cried through the movie was a phony?

### **Chapter 19**

1. Why did Holden get mad at Luce for calling his (Luce's) old girlfriend the "Whore of New Hampshire"?
2. Who was Luce to Holden?

### **Chapter 20**

1. How does Holden "act" again in this chapter?
2. What happens to Holden at the Wicker Bar?
3. What happens to Phoebe's record?
4. Where does Holden go right after he leaves the bar?
5. What information does Holden finally tell us about Allie's funeral?
6. What does Holden say about Allie that contradicts all his other statements about being an atheist?
7. After he leaves the park, where does Holden go?

### **Chapter 21**

1. What does Holden find so intriguing about Phoebe's note- book?

### **Chapter 22**

1. Why did it depress Holden when an "old guy" told him that his days at Pencey were the happiest days of his life?
2. What does it tell us about Holden when Phoebe states, "You don't like anything that's happening"?
3. Why does Holden think about James Castle when Phoebe asks him to name one thing that he likes a lot? Why does he deny really knowing James? What does it tell us about Holden when he says, "Just because somebody's dead, you don't just stop liking them, for God's sake---especially if they were a thousand times nicer than the people you know that're alive and all"?
4. What does Holden tell Phoebe he'd like to be?

### **Chapter 23**

1. Who is Mr. Antolini?
2. How does Phoebe cover for Holden when their parents come home?
3. In talking with her parents how does Phoebe "sound" like Holden?
4. What does Phoebe do that makes Holden cry?
5. What does Holden give to Phoebe?

### **Chapter 24**

1. Why did Holden fail his speech class?
2. How does Holden feel physically while he talks to Mr. Antolini?
3. What does Holden say about him hating people, such as Ackley and Stradlater?
4. What does Antolini's quote mean, "The mark of the immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mark of the mature man is that he wants to live humbly for one"?
5. How does Antolini upset and scare Holden?

### **Chapter 24**

1. Later, after he has had time to think about it, what does Holden think about Antolini?
2. Why does the article on hormones upset Holden?
3. What strange feeling does Holden start to have when he steps off of curbs?
4. Why does he keep repeating, "Allie, don't let me disappear"?
5. What does Holden decide he must do next? Where does he first go?
6. With all the bad language that Holden uses, why was he so upset that curse words were written on a school wall?
7. How does Holden treat the two small boys in the museum?
8. Why is it so important to Holden that Phoebe not be mad at him? Relate this to his past, and Allie.
9. What does Holden mean when he states, "The thing with kids is, if they want to grab for the gold ring, you have to let them do it, and not say anything. If they fall off, they fall off, but it's bad if you say anything to them"?
10. What is the carrousel symbolic of?

### **Chapter 25**

1. At the conclusion, where is Holden?
2. What was the past relationship like between Holden and Jane?

### **Chapter 26**

1. What does Holden mean when he says, "Don't ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody."?