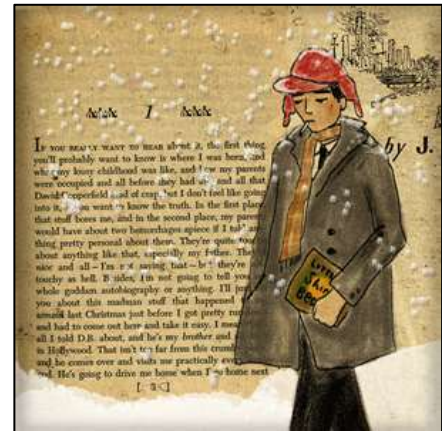


Alex G. (8th Grade)
April 23, 2011
4* English

The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger
a book review by Alex G.

The Catcher in the Rye, first published in 1945, is one of the best modern novels I have ever read. Allow me to elaborate. Some individuals would rather spend their afternoons with a laptop roaring in their laps, updating their statuses on the ever-popular Facebook, or playing a multiplayer online game with millions of others, but this modern teenager would rather read a book. The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger makes you turn the pages slowly, enjoying every word.



Are teenagers today really that different than teenagers from the mid-forties? If you eliminate modern forms of communication and technology, are the school, family and friend problems and pressures so different? Teenagers from past decades have struggled with the same obstacles. Adolescents struggle with: school, grief, social situations and growing up. If you open the pages of this book, you will discover how Holden Caulfield, a teenager, struggles to reach adulthood. Teenagers from the last sixty years can relate to Holden's character.

The book is about a very lost adolescent boy growing up. Holden Caulfield lives in New York City and has attended several preparatory schools in his academic career. The Caulfields are wealthy family who live in an apartment in New York. Holden has a younger sister named Phoebe and an older brother named D.B. Holden also has a brother named Allie who died of leukemia. Holden's grief for Allie is weaved throughout the story.

Holden's journey into adulthood begins when he is expelled from Pencey Prep for failing four out of five subjects. He must return home and explain his most recent failure to his parents. He leaves school on Saturday, planning to return home on Wednesday, when Christmas Break begins. From Saturday to

Wednesday, Holden plans to spend the nights in cheap hotels and do as he pleases during the day. Between Saturday and Wednesday you learn about what goes on in Holden's mind through his unfolding past.

J.D. Salinger has done a great job of capturing New York City in the 1940s. He creates many vivid pictures of New York: Central Park, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, seedy hotels, hole-in-the-wall bars and the grimy subway. J.D. Salinger also creates very believable and memorable characters. A memorable character is Stradlater because he has the charm to attract desirable girlfriends and he is very good-looking. Also, Phoebe was memorable because she dressed nicely and is sensitive and compassionate.

The best part of The Catcher in the Rye is when Holden wishes he could save children who are playing in a field of rye, from falling off the cliff. This is a significant and heart-warming part of the story that I will abstain from spoiling.

“The mark of the immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mature man wants to live humbly for one.” This quote really defines the book. It represents how Holden finally matures through the book and realizes that he can't save all the children but needs to focus on saving himself. He also pushes through the most difficult part of his grieving process and has a much anticipated epiphany about school. If you enjoy spending an afternoon reading about a relatable teen rather than playing a mindless game of Mario Kart or Tweeting about the meaningless sandwich you just made, you will surely find an afternoon well spent with this novel.

Apply Mr. Harrison's [Reading Workshop Rubric](#) to Alex's review:

Out of 10, how did Alex do with the row entitled “Persuasive Purpose Achieved”? _____
Why specifically did you award that score to Alex? Where were her persuasive attempts?

Out of 10, how did Alex do with the row that focuses on the *five story elements*? _____
Why did you award that score to Alex? Which elements were discussed the best?

Out of 10, how did Alex do with the row entitled “Polished Final Product”? _____
Why did you award that score to Alex?