

ENGLISH: *CATCHER IN THE RYE*

“The Catcher in the Rye” informs and entertains the reader.” Do you agree?

“Certain things should stay the way they are,” says Holden. How does ‘Catcher in the Rye’ show that this attitude is in fact a disaster for Holden Caulfield?

The novel, *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, did more than inform and entertain the reader. Its protagonist was Holden Caulfield, a sixteen year old boy whose opinion on almost anything was negative. The book showed what happened to Holden, who he encountered, his ideas and opinions, where he went, and what happened in his past just in three days. It informed the readers what world Holden lived in and what Holden thought of it. Holden saw the world as being phony and very depressing. Whenever he went and almost everyone he met was judged by him. Though, when Holden met the two nuns at the train station, he didn't say a word against any of them. He viewed them with 'awe'.

The book did not entertain me. Sure it was happy at times but it was so depressing that halfway towards the end of the book, I felt that everything Holden saw can't be that bad. Since the book had only a one-man point of view, I regarded it as 'one lacking with information'. I wanted to see the world Holden lived in and what it actually was but Holden often judged those people he met, even those people whom he doesn't know very well i.e. the girls in the Lavender Room.

When I first read the *Catcher in the Rye*, I saw the world in Holden's eyes. How bad and destructive it really was and that every person out there who wore make-up or did their job very well was phony. But when I continued to read through the chapters, I stepped back and saw what really was happening. Holden was judging people he knew and the world out of hatred and regret. He didn't see it as it really was. He kept calling people 'bastards' and 'phonies' in his head. He never thought twice about another person except for those he accepted as family i.e. his mother and father; Phoebe; D.B.; his dead brother Allie; and Jane Gallagher, the girl he loved. But even those he loved and with whom he felt a sense of family were being pushed away and avoided by Holden. An example of that was when he decided to visit Phoebe but hid in Phoebe's closet when his parents arrived home. He avoided his parents because he got kicked out and he was ashamed of it, which was mentioned at the first chapter of the book.

At the end of the book, I, as a reader, felt nothing. I didn't feel any 'ending'. For me, nothing was resolved. Holden's viewpoint of the world slightly changed but it didn't make a turn for the better. Sure, Holden was seeing a psychoanalyst and finally he's going back to school the next year. He would have to grow up and be mature and change for Phoebe. Though, with all of that promised, I saw that Holden just became tired. He was tired of the fact that his attitude of wanting to have 'certain things should stay the way they are' didn't and wouldn't at all work out. This attitude was a disaster for Holden because there is a saying, 'The only permanent thing in this world is change.' Finally, he realized that change was inevitable so for this reason, he cracked-up and had to see a psychoanalyst. Even if he tried his hardest to protect Phoebe, he knew she will continue to grow up and leave innocence behind her because of the changes that would happen to her. He accepted that. He knew that Phoebe was far stronger than him and thus she would be alright. It was one of those rare times where he stated that he was happy.