

## ***The Catcher in the Rye Study Questions***

### **Chapters 1-4**

1. Who is Holden Caulfield?
2. Where is Holden as he narrates the story?
3. Why wasn't Holden at the big football game?
4. Why wouldn't Holden be back to Pencey after Christmas vacation?
5. What "dirty trick" did Mr. Spencer pull on Holden?
6. Who was Robert Ackley?
7. Who was Stradlater?
8. Identify Jane Gallagher.
9. Why doesn't Holden go down to see Jane?



### **Chapters 5-9**

1. About what did Holden write Stradlater's composition?
2. Why did Holden tear up the composition he had written for Stradlater?
3. Why did Stradlater hit Holden?
4. Where did Holden decide to go?
5. Who did Holden meet on his train ride? Why did Holden lie to her about Ernie?

### **Chapters 10-13**

1. Who is Phoebe?
2. Identify Bernice, Marty and Laverne.
3. Describe Holden's relationship with Jane Gallagher.
4. Why did Holden have to leave Ernie's?
5. What do we learn about Holden from his diversion about his gloves being stolen at Pencey?
6. What was the "big mess" Holden got into when he got back to the hotel after being at Ernie's?

### **Chapters 14-17**

1. Why did Maurice hit Holden?
2. Holden said he felt like committing suicide. Why didn't he?

3. Identify Sally Hayes.
4. Why did Holden check out of the hotel, and where did he go?
5. Who did Holden meet at the "little sandwich bar" after he locked his bags at the station? What did they talk about?
6. What record did Holden get for Phoebe? Why?
7. What made Holden "not so depressed anymore" on his way to the record store?
8. Why didn't Holden like actors?
9. Why did Holden like the museum so much?
10. What did Holden think of "George something--"?
11. How did Holden's feelings for Sally change from the beginning of the date to the end?

### **Chapters 18-21**

1. What did Holden think of the show at Radio City?
2. Why did Holden call Carl Luce even though he didn't like him much?
3. What did Holden and Luce discuss?
4. Why did Holden go home so early (before Wednesday)?
5. What was Phoebe's reaction when she first saw Holden? What was her reaction when she found out that he had been expelled?

### **Chapters 22-26**

1. What was Holden's reply when Phoebe asked him why he "got the ax again"?
2. Identify James Castle.
3. Why did Holden go to Mr. Antolini's house?
4. Why did Holden leave Mr. Antolini's home before morning?
5. What advice did Mr. Antolini give Holden?
6. How did Phoebe surprise Holden? What was Holden's reaction?
7. Why did Holden sit on the bench in the rain even though it was coming down in buckets?
8. How did Holden explain his catcher in the rye daydream?

## ***The Catcher in the Rye Vocabulary***

### **Chapters 1 - 4**

1. . . . my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything personal about them.
2. The whole team ostracized me the whole way back on the train.
3. Do you have any particular qualms about leaving Pencey?
4. . . . he made us have compulsory study hall in the academic building . . . .
5. I started groping around in front of me, like a blind guy, but without getting up or anything.
6. I was pretty sadistic with him quite often.
7. It was very ironical. It really was. "I'm the one that's flunking out of the goddam place, and you're asking me to write you a goddam composition," I said.
8. All I need's an audience. I'm an exhibitionist.

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| ___ 1. hemorrhages   | A. Getting pleasure from inflicting pain on others |
| ___ 2. ostracized    | B. One who likes to show off and get attention     |
| ___ 3. qualms        | C. Bursting of blood vessels                       |
| ___ 4. compulsory    | D. Meaning the opposite of what is expressed       |
| ___ 5. groping       | E. Shunned; excluded; left out                     |
| ___ 6. sadistic      | F. Reaching blindly                                |
| ___ 7. ironical      | G. Feelings of doubt                               |
| ___ 8. exhibitionist | H. Required; must be done                          |

### **Chapters 5 - 9**

1. If you knew Stradlater, you'd have been worried, too. . . . He was unscrupulous.
2. It partly scared me and it partly fascinated me.
3. I'm not too tough. I'm a pacifist if you want to know the truth.
4. My grandmother'd just sent me a wad about a week before. I have this grandmother that's quite lavish with her dough.
5. It's not a paradise or anything, but it's as good as most schools. Some of the faculty are pretty conscientious.
6. Well, a bunch of us wanted old Ernie to be president of the class. I mean he was the unanimous choice.
7. . . . I don't want to stay at any hotels on the East Side where I might run into some acquaintances of mine. I'm traveling incognito.

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| ___ 1. unscrupulous  | A. Attentive to duty; diligent                              |
| ___ 2. fascinated    | B. In disguise  |
| ___ 3. pacifist      | C. Having no moral code; unprincipled                       |
| ___ 4. lavish        | D. Generous or liberal in giving or spending                |
| ___ 5. conscientious | E. Held the attention of; captivated                        |
| ___ 6. unanimous     | F. One who opposes the use of force under any circumstances |
| ___ 7. incognito     | G. Showing or based on total agreement                      |

### **Chapters 10 - 13**

1. The band was putrid. Buddy singer. Very brassy, but not good brassy--corny brassy.
2. . . . the whole summer long we played tennis together almost every morning and golf almost every afternoon. I really got to know her quite intimately.
3. . . . old Ernie turned around on his stool and gave this very phony, humble bow.
4. One thing I have, it's a terrific capacity. I can drink all night and not even show it, if I'm in the mood.
5. He got stinking, but I hardly didn't even show it. I just got very cool and nonchalant.
6. Do you mind getting me my frock?

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| ___ 1. putrid     | A. Ability to contain, absorb, receive and hold   |
| ___ 2. intimately | B. Rotten   |
| ___ 3. humble     | C. Showing a lack of concern; casual indifference |
| ___ 4. capacity   | D. Coat; cloak                                    |
| ___ 5. nonchalant | E. Privately, personally, very closely            |
| ___ 6. frock      | F. Lowly; unpretentious                           |

### Chapters 14 - 17

1. . . . I'm sort of an atheist. I like Jesus and all, but I don't care too much for most of the other stuff in the Bible.
2. . . . He picked them at random. I said He didn't have time to go around analyzing everybody.
3. He was always saying snotty things about them, my suitcases for instance. He kept saying they were too new and bourgeois.
4. She'd hand in her basket and then go someplace swanky for lunch. That's what I liked about those nuns. You could tell, for one thing, that they never went anywhere swanky for lunch. It made me so damn sad when I thought about it, their never going anywhere swanky for lunch or anything.
5. . . . he was one of the biggest bores I ever met. He had one of those very raspy voices, and he never stopped talking, practically.
6. He was with some gorgeous blonde, and the two of them were trying to be very blasé and all, like as if he didn't even know people were looking at him.

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| ___ 1. atheist   | A. Smug, conventional, materialistic                  |
| ___ 2. random    | B. Grating  |
| ___ 3. bourgeois | C. A person who believes there is no God              |
| ___ 4. swanky    | D. Having done something so much as to be bored by it |
| ___ 5. raspy     | E. Expensive and showy                                |
| ___ 6. blasé     | F. Haphazardly; by chance                             |

### Chapters 18 - 21

1. Jane said he wasn't a show-off. She said he had an inferiority complex.
2. The bartender was a louse, too.
3. He kept telling her she had aristocratic hands.
4. . . . I was careful as hell not to get boisterous or anything. I didn't want anybody to notice me . . . .
5. All of them swimming around in a goddam pot of tea and saying sophisticated stuff to each other and being charming and phony.
6. I have this one stupid aunt with halitosis that kept saying how *peaceful* he looked lying there.

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| ___ 1. inferiority   | A. Noisy and unruly                          |
| ___ 2. louse         | B. Of an upper class; distinguished          |
| ___ 3. aristocratic  | C. Bad smelling breath                       |
| ___ 4. boisterous    | D. Strong feelings of inadequacy             |
| ___ 5. sophisticated | E. A person regarded as mean or contemptible |
| ___ 6. halitosis     | F. Worldly wise; refined                     |

### Chapters 22 - 26

1. All they did with the guys that were in the room with him was expel them. They didn't even go to jail.
2. She gets headaches quite frequently.
3. And if the boy digresses at all, you're supposed to yell. "Digression!" at him as fast as you can.
4. Holden . . . One short, faintly stuffy, pedagogical question. Don't you think there's a time and place for everything?
5. Or you may end up in some business office, throwing paper clips at the nearest stenographer.
6. You'll learn from them--if you want to. Just as someday, if you have something to offer, someone will learn something from you. It's a beautiful reciprocal arrangement.

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| ___ 1. expel        | A. Strays temporarily from the main topic |
| ___ 2. frequently   | B. Characteristic of teaching or teachers |
| ___ 3. digresses    | C. Interchangeable; complimentary         |
| ___ 4. pedagogical  | D. Often                                  |
| ___ 5. stenographer | E. One who takes shorthand notes          |
| ___ 6. reciprocal   | F. Push out by force                      |