
Holden Caulfield and the Immaturity in Expressed in the Catcher in the Rye by J.d. Salinger

The Catcher in the Rye

Holden Caulfield should not be allowed to reach an emancipated status due to his imbalanced thoughts, reckless way in life, and bouts of depression. Mr. Caulfield does not have a steady lifestyle and is not mature enough to make his own decisions as an adult should. He is concerned with trivial items and does not care about his future. He is also unconcerned about his finances and is very impulsive; he does not care about the consequences of his actions.

Mr. Caulfield is still a child, no matter how adult he would like to seem. His actions and thoughts show him to be reckless and take unnecessary risks. He needs guidance to help him along, and needs to be shown how to behave and to conform to social norms as an average citizen should. He is very reckless, not recognizing danger when it is right in front of him, and antagonizing others, causing a situation to go from bad to worse. "You're a dirty moron...and in about two years you'll be on of those scraggy guys that come up to you on the street and ask for a dime for coffee." (103) This is a perfect example of how Mr. Caulfield does not perceive danger and further incites the ire of others, even when they have the upper hand. He clearly does not understand that he can be hurt if he says things like this and that his actions have consequences.

Mr. Caulfield is strangely interested in the most trivial of things. He is interested in where the ducks of central park go in the winter. He almost obsessively seeks the answer to this question. He goes as far as to ask a random cab driver his question. His mind is devoted to finding the answer to this plight, but he refuses to use his intelligence on the subjects in school? He refuses to touch his textbooks and excel in his studies, and doesn't care about his future. His ridiculous idea of a job is being a catcher of the rye, "I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all." (173) such ridiculous sentiments are something only seen in a child, not an adult.

Holden is wholly unconcerned with is life. He does not think things through or acknowledge the consequences of his action. He doesn't understand repercussions of everything he does and is financially incapable in purchasing, which all adults should be able to do. He is also, at moments, having bouts of depression. "Somebody, some girl in an awful-looking hat, for instance, comes all the way to New York ... Radio City Music Hall; it makes me so depressed I

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can't stand it. I've bought the whole three of them a hundred drinks if only they hadn't told me that." (50) His fixation on trivial things also shows his immaturity in understanding. Overall Holden Caulfield is more child than adult, no matter how much he claims to not be immature.

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