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## J.D. Salinger's The Catcher In The Rye

J.D. Salinger's novel *The Catcher In The Rye*, a banned book in most American high schools and libraries which takes place in the late 1940's taught readers about teen angst and alienation in which Salinger puts bad situations to a good ending. In this piece of literature Phoebe Caulfield and the protagonist Holden Caulfield is the most recognized true relationship. Phoebe Caulfield is the most important secondary character because she conveys the theme of preserving innocence which helps Holden realize that he wants to become the "catcher in the rye" which is saving young innocent children from adulthood.

Although protecting children's innocence is impossible, it allows adolescents to learn to let go because as they grow they become closer to maturity. In the end of this novel, Holden let's Phoebe go towards maturity to take a chance in life even though she might get hurt. Towards the ending of the novel, Holden realizes that "All the kids kept trying to grab for the gold ring, and so was old Phoebe, and [he] was sort of afraid she'd fall off the goddam horse, but [ he] didn't say anything or do anything. 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 to them. If they fall off, they fall off, but it's bad if you say anything to them" (Salinger 273-274). At this point Holden sees Phoebe and children as maturing individuals who must be allowed to live their own lives and take their own risks and fall out childhood.

He finally sees that children have to take risks to learn how to mature, and adults must let them. Holden understands that growing up is a way of life and it is bad for him to try and prevent it. When Phoebe rides the carousel, Holden realizes that there are times when kids want to try to grab the gold ring, symbolically taking a chance in life, and he must allow her the freedom to do that, even though she may fall. That realization is a big step for Holden. All things considered, the relationship between Holden and Phoebe seems healthy and normal for caring siblings. It is in flux, as is everything in life, and Holden may regret that. But he shows he has grown when he realizes that Phoebe can't stay 10 years old forever.

The Ring that Phoebe reaches for is, in a literal sense, like monkey bars. When we are young we can't reach them. As we grow older over the years we grow closer and closer to being able to reach them. This can metaphorically be related to us reaching for maturity. a very literal image depicting holden holding himself back and letting phoebe go on the carousel by herself Holden's Realization - the ring is what makes Holden realize that he has to let Phoebe grow up. He also realizes at this moment that he himself has to mature and he has to move on from the death of his brother Allie. this brings us to the cleansing symbol. The Carousel The Carousel represents life in the sense that life goes round and round. The horses on the carousel go up down as does life. This can be related to maternity and how as we grow up we have to accept new responsibility, just like Holden realizes he does.

The sight of Phoebe on the carrousel is a kind of epiphany (a clarity of insight). It is one of those moments that he would like to keep forever. On the carrousel, there is movement, but the carousel never actually goes anywhere: just round and round with Phoebe in her blue coat. It is beautiful, and, for a moment, even Holden feels joy. "No, you're not. Go on. I'll wait for ya. Go on," Holden begins to contemplate the idea of being a Catcher in the Rye. Phoebe is

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threatening to fall off the 'cliff' by saying she's too big to enjoy the ride anymore. He saves her by encouraging her to ride it. She remains a child for a little bit longer. When all the kids are reaching for the gold ring, Holden feels, "If they fall off they fall off, but it's bad if you say anything to them" and just have to let them "fall" out of childhood. Holden understands that growing up is a way of life and it is bad for him to try and prevent it- a turn in his character. I felt so damn happy all of sudden, the way old Phoebe kept going around and around. I was damn near bawling, I felt so damn happy, if you want to know the truth. I don't know why. It was just that she looked so damn nice, the way she kept going around and around, in her blue coat and all. God, I wish you could've been there."

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