

Catcher in the Rye Essay Prompts and Instructions

Choose one of the following prompts and using the text and class activities we have completed, write an essay that addresses one of the key concepts of the novel. Be sure to include references to the text to demonstrate your understanding of the prompt and how the prompt relates to the text. The essay should be at least 2 pages long and no more than 3.

1. Many novels and plays focus on individuals involved in a struggle to find themselves or to seek a purpose in life. Sometimes the effort pays off; sometimes it doesn't. Focusing on Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, write an essay in which you ***explain Holden's search or struggle throughout the novel, assess to what extent it succeeds, and analyze how it contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.***
2. Salinger weaves a variety of symbols into *The Catcher in the Rye*, including (but not limited to) the red hunting hat, the ducks in Central Park, and Allie's mitt. ***Analyze the meaning and significance of one symbol that Salinger uses in the book. Find three scenes in the novel that mention the symbol and how it contributes to the overall themes in the novel.***
3. Critic David D. Galloway said, "Wherever Holden turns, his craving for truth seems to be frustrated by the phoniness of the world." ***Analyze Holden's use of the word "phony."*** What does the word mean in the context of the book, and does Holden offer any alternative to phoniness? Is Holden himself guilty of being a phony? How does Salinger want readers to judge ideas about phoniness?
4. Consider Holden's ideas about childhood and adulthood. ***Are childhood and adulthood are as separate as Holden thinks they are? If so, which category would he fit in?***
5. *Catcher in the Rye* is one of the most controversial texts taught in schools. It has been put on and off the ban lists multiple times. ***Write an essay arguing to either ban the book from the curriculum or keep it in the classroom. Identify and explain at least three reasons why this book is/is not important to read and should/should not be kept in the curriculum.***
6. Typically characters grow and develop as the novel progresses. Analyze the transitions that Hold goes through in the novel. Does he change from the beginning to the end? If so, analyze three ways in which Holden changes. If not, analyze how Holden stayed the same throughout the novel.

Name _____ Per. _____

Catcher in the Rye Essay Rubric

Formatting

Heading includes name, period, and date _____/1
Title is relevant and centered _____/1
Paper is double spaced with a readable font _____/1
Paper is 2-3 pages long _____/2

Content

Introductory Paragraph

Effectively introduces the novel, including the title and author of the book,
thesis that thoughtfully responds to the prompt _____/5

Body Paragraphs

First Body Paragraph: _____/10
Topic sentence supports the thesis
Quotes and specific details support the topic sentence
Integrates ideas into a unified paragraph

Second Body Paragraph: _____/10
Topic sentence supports the thesis
Quotes and specific details support the topic sentence
Integrates ideas into a unified paragraph

Third Body Paragraph: _____/10
Topic sentence supports the thesis
Quotes and specific details support the topic sentence
Integrates ideas into a unified paragraph

Conclusion Paragraph

Effectively summarizes the main points of the essay,
creating a thought-provoking response to the prompt _____/5

Conventions

Effectively uses transitions to move from one idea to the next _____/1
Sentences easily flow from one idea to the next in a concise way _____/1
Specific, relevant, logical, varied, formal word choice _____/1
Capitalization, spelling, italics, apostrophes, commas are correct _____/1
Conventional errors do not distract from the overall content of the essay _____/1

Overall Essay Score _____/50