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## Analysis Of The Holden Character In The Catcher In The Rye

As imperfect humans, I think most of us are afraid of change even if we don't show it. Change is without a doubt, inevitable. It's going to happen and there's nothing you can do about it. J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye" puts us in the person of view of Holden, the main character. Within Holden's two-day journey, it becomes known very quick that Holden isn't the typical perfect protagonist. Instead he is a troubled protagonist, that really doesn't have any answers for life. Holden has many problems in life including the death of his brother Allie. Holden is afraid of change and it is very obvious due to the way he acts to certain aspects of life.

In J.D Salinger's novel, The Catcher In The Rye, the character that we get to follow is Holden. Holden was living in Pencey Prep (the school) and was failing all but one of his classes which was English. Holden complains about a lot in his life but something that really got to him was his brother Allie. Allie had died 3 years before the timeline of the book. Allie had died of leukemia. Holden believed that Allie was the only person who deeply understood him. The same night that Allie died, Holden did not deal with it so well. He began to break all of the windows in the garage with his bare hands. He ended up breaking his own hand because of this. Allie's death is the possibility the reason why Holden is so afraid of change, it is what created the fear to begin with. Holden had felt that Allie was smart for his age, Holden claims that "he was two years younger than I was, but he was about fifty times as intelligent".

Holden sees change in a way that's different from most people. The way it is for him is that the more a person grows mentally, the closer you will be to dying. Holden's fear of change came from the death of his brother and because of it he believes that once a person starts to grow up it will sooner or later lead to your death. This is why Holden is so hesitant to grow up in the novel. Holden talking about the ducks disappearing in winter with the cab driver is also a good example of how Holden is afraid of change, "you know those ducks in that lagoon right near Central Park South? That little lake? By any chance, do you happen to know where they go, the ducks, when it gets all frozen over? Do you happen to know, by any chance?". Although Holden does not directly say it, it is very obvious that he is afraid of a simple change like the ducks going away in the winter. Holden is so bothered by change and this just represents how he feels about life. He doesn't want things to change he wants everything to remain the same. He doesn't want anything to go away like the ducks do.

In the novel, it is obvious that Holden is terrible with change. Holden being terrible with change has led to many things. Holden is stubborn, depressed, not mature and he is terrible with people. There are times when Holden does not even know somebody and he will call them phonies. An example of this is the character Jane. Although Holden never admits that he has a crush on Jane, it is very obvious that he was crushing on her. He just simply did not know what to do. Holden could have told her his true feelings for her even when Stradlater was dating her but he never did. He was always so afraid to even if he doesn't admit it. I personally think it's because he doesn't want the relationship to change. He is afraid of his own feelings because he doesn't want his feelings to interfere with the relationships he has with people. It's clear that he is lying about not calling Jane because he didn't feel like it when he says "the only reason I didn't do it

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was because I wasn't in the mood". Holden is just too afraid to admit that he doesn't want his relationships to change.

Holden starts to experience change when he goes home and talks to Phoebe, he tells her about this fantasy he's been having. Holden, wearing his red hunting hat was in a field of rye, where children were playing a game. Holden would run over and catch them before they reached the cliff and fell off. The cliff can be a symbol for growing up, or adulthood which is what Holden is against. When the children are playing the game, the rye is tall and they probably aren't paying attention to where they're going. Holden's job would be to catch them and prevent them from becoming adults and thus preserving their life. Holden then goes to his old English teacher, Mr. Antolini. Mr. Antolini gives Holden basically the same advice old Spencer gives him. He tells Holden to find himself and ultimately grow up. These events are the rising action to the scene where Holden gives Phoebe his red hunting hat. This symbolizes the fact that he has grown up and accepted change, and is now making Phoebe the next 'catcher in the rye'. Holden ultimately accepts change and lets out his feelings by crying after all of this time and finally becomes an adult ("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. Holden accepts change and releases his feelings after a number of events push him into changing, such as his conversation with Phoebe, Mr. Antolini and the image of Phoebe on the carousel. These events are the rising action to the climax, where Holden starts to cry and releases his feelings after giving Phoebe the red hunting hat.