

Name: _____ Period _____

The Catcher in The Rye Pre-reading Internet Activity

DIRECTIONS: Use the links that appear below each question to answer the questions.

Note: The novel is set in 1949, when the narrator is 16.

Part 1: Book Review

→ Read this modern book review. Write down 3 interesting points that make the novel sound worthwhile.

<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/jun/21/review-salinger-catcher-rye>

1.

2.

3.

Part 2: History

→ Review a few facts about WWII. No notes required.

<http://www.historynet.com/world-war-ii>

- Dates (September 1, 1939 – September 2, 1945)
- Location
- Casualties

→ Read this paragraph to learn about the Red Scare (1950-56).

McCarthyism is the practice of making accusations of subversion or treason without proper regard for evidence. The term has its origins in the period in the United States known as the Second Red Scare, lasting roughly from 1950 to 1956 and characterized by heightened political repression against communists, as well as a campaign spreading fear of their influence on American institutions and of espionage by Soviet agents. During the McCarthy era, thousands of Americans were accused of being communists or communist sympathizers and became the subject of aggressive investigations and questioning before government or private-industry panels, committees and agencies. The primary targets of such suspicions were government employees, those in the entertainment industry, educators and union activists.

→ The Lavender Scare (of 1953). Watch the documentary's 3 min trailer to learn about attitudes towards LGBT+ people at the time.

<http://www.thelavenderscare.com/>



→ Explain how WWII, the Red Scare, and the Lavender Scare might have affected the thinking of a teenager in 1949.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Part 3: Social criticism

→ Read this discussion of the 1950s, and the various social movements and changes that took place. List 3 faults of American society in the 1940s and 50s that you think a teen-ager in 1949 might be aware of.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-macaray/everything-began-in-the-1950s_b_1503464.html

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Part 4: Slang in the 1940s

→ Read both lists of words. What are 3 interesting slang words and their definitions from the 1940s?

<http://1940s.org/history/on-the-homefront/forties-slang-40s>

<http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/slang/1940s-slang.html>

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Part 5: Education

→ Explore the culture of “prep schools” in the 1940s. What did you notice?

- Scroll down to see all: http://www.ehow.com/info_7925512_preparatory-schools-1940s.html
- A teacher’s bulleted list of info: <https://lewishonorsenglish2.wikispaces.com/Prep+Schools-Period+6>
- Pictures:
<https://www.google.com/search?q=1940+preparatory+schools&espv=2&biw=1280&bih=709&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi195Cmgc7LAhXKkx4KHbaHBqIQsAQILw&dpr=1>

- 1.

2.

3.

Part 6: Making a Mind Movie

→ Watch this 15 min film, made in 1949, to learn what the world looked like. No notes required.

“Mighty Manhattan, New York’s Wonder City 1949”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCq0VYEaf6c>

- Buildings – museums, hospitals
- Bridges
- Cars & Traffic
- People, Fashion & Hairstyles
- Zoo – especially cages
- Attitudes shown in narrator’s explanations

Part 7: Reflection

→ Using the information you’ve just learned, discuss whether or not you would enjoy life in 1949. Focus on what they had (and not what they didn’t have, like computers, cell phones, facebook, etc.) Make reference to at least **FIVE** things you learned. Write at least 1 well-developed paragraph.