

## *The Catcher in the Rye Study Material*

### **Catcher in the Rye Character Analysis Chapter 3**

**Directions:** Read the following quotes closely and analyze the characters in **bold**. What is being said about their personalities through **direct characterization** and **indirect characterization**?

<b>QUOTE</b>	<b>CHARACTER ANALYSIS</b>
1. "If I'm on my way to the store to buy a magazine, even, and somebody asks me where I'm going, I'm liable to say I'm going to the opera" (16)	<b>HOLDEN</b> <i>Holden is a compulsive liar and like to play psychological games with people in which he silently chuckles at their ignorance of the truth</i>
2. "You should see old Ossenburger. He probably just shoves them in a sac and dumps them in the river....Old Ossenburger Memorial Wing, in the new dorms" (17)	<b>OSSENBURGER</b> <i>A money hungry and immoral character who is praised for his financial success and phoniness</i>
3. "He was a senior, and he'd been at Pencey the whole four years and all, but nobody ever called him anything except "Ackley." Not even Herb Gale, his own roommate, ever called him 'Bob' or even 'Ack.' If he ever gets married, his own wife'll probably call him 'Ackley.'" (19)	<b>ACKLEY</b> <i>A minor flat character unworthy of respect or admiration; he is an annoyance to most people and for that reason, is almost pitiable</i>
4. "I didn't look up from my book. With a guy like Ackley, if you looked up from your book you were a goner" (20)	<b>ACKLEY</b> <i>He is quite annoying and yet lonely and attention hungry because he is shunned by most people. He'll take what he can get when it comes to friends</i>
5. "I started groping around in front of me, like a blind guy, but without getting up or anything. I kept saying, 'Mother darling, why won't you give me your hand?' ...I know it annoyed hell out of old Ackley. He always brought out the old sadist	<b>HOLDEN</b> <i>Holden is somewhat of a hypocrite, ranting about how childish and annoying Ackley is while all the time he is quite</i>

in me” (22)	<i>immature and irritating himself. The difference is, Holden acts this way on purpose. He chooses when to push people away</i>
6. “He was always keeping tabs on who Stradlater was dating even though he hated Stradlater’s guts” (23)	<b>ACKLEY AND STRADLATER</b> <i>Ackley is a loser, Stradlater is worshiped, popular, and envied by those like Ackley.</i>
7. “Look. Suppose, for instance, Stradlater was wearing a tie or something that you liked. Say he had a tie on that you liked a helluva lot—I’m just giving you an example, now. You know what he’d do? He’d probably take it off and give it to you. He really would. Or—you know what he’d do? He’d leave it on your bed or something. But he’d give you the goddam tie” (25)	<b>STRADLATER</b> <i>Stradlater is liked in a superficial sort of way for almost being too nice, and too perfect</i>
8. “old Stradlater barged in, in a big hurry. He was always in a big hurry. Everything was a very big deal. He came over to me and gave me these two playful as hell slaps on both cheeks—which is something that can be very annoying” (25)	<b>STRADLATER</b> <i>He is a bit condescending and doesn’t respect Holden or take him seriously enough to treat him like a “man”</i>
9. “‘How’s a boy Ackley?’ he said to Ackley. He was at least a pretty friendly guy, Stradlater. It was partly a phony kind of friendly, but at least he always said hello to Ackley and all” (26)	<b>STRADLATER</b> <i>Stradlater is superficial, friendly, and so nice and phony that Holden is irritated by him but still likes him</i>
10. “He always walked around in his bare torso because he thought he had a damn good build” (26)	<b>STRADLATER</b> <i>A bit conceited and definitely a flat character</i>

## The Catcher in the Rye (Indirect Character Analysis)

In the novel, Holden is constantly facing situations where he is in some way or another “rejected” by another human being when sending a subliminal cry for help. Completed chart is below.

<u>PERSON</u>	<u>SITUATION: HOW DID HE/SHE “REJECT” HOLDEN?</u>	<u>POSSIBLE REASONS WHY CHARACTER “REJECTED” HOLDEN</u>	<u>WHAT WAS THE EFFECT ON HOLDEN; DID THIS EVENT LEAD TO ANY OTHER TRAUMATIZING EVENT?</u>
<b>1. STRADLATER</b>	Holden’s personally touching composition about Allie’s baseball glove is not appreciated; he is instead made fun of and censured	<i>STRADLATER IS AN INNOCENT BYSTANDER OF HOLDEN’S ANGER; HE DOESN’T KNOW ANY BETTER AND DOESN’T REALLY CARE</i>	<i>DEVASTATED, HE LOSES TRUST IN A PERSON HE ALMOST THOUGHT WAS HIS FRIEND</i>
<b>2. STRADLATER</b>	Holden attempts to talk about how important Jane is to him but his feelings are overlooked. Stradlater further crushes Holden by disrespecting Jane, first thinking her name is “Jean” and then taking her on a “parked” date in Ed Banky’s car	<i>STRADLATER IS AN INNOCENT BYSTANDER OF HOLDEN’S ANGER; HE DOESN’T KNOW ANY BETTER AND DOESN’T REALLY CARE</i>	<i>DEVASTATED, HE LOSES TRUST IN A PERSON HE ALMOST THOUGHT WAS HIS FRIEND</i>
<b>3. JANE</b>	An unanswered question lingers with the reader: does a possible rejection from the past haunt Holden; Jane seems to be the girl he cannot have	<i>JANE HAS SO MANY ISSUES OF HER OWN, SHE IS UNINTERESTED IN HOLDEN AS A ROMANTIC PARTNER AND NEVER REALLY HAS A CHANCE TO ALLOW A RELATIONSHIP TO BLOSSOM</i>	<i>HE FEELS INSECURE AND NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR HER</i>
<b>4. MRS. MARROW (EARNEST’S MOTHER)</b>	Holden asks her to have a drink with him on the train but she turns the offer down	<i>HOLDEN IS TOO YOUNG FOR HER, ON A TRAIN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT (OBVIOUSLY A KID WITH ISSUES), AND HIS NOSE IS SEVERELY BLEEDING STILL WHICH FORCES HER TO FEEL MORE “MATERNAL” THAN “SEXY”</i>	<i>HE GETS TURNED DOWN BY A WOMAN HE IS ATTRACTED TO WHICH CAUSES HIM TO FEEL INADEQUATE</i>

<b>5. CAB DRIVER #1</b>	Holden asks if driver wants to have a drink with him but is refused. He then asks “where the ducks go”.	<i>CAB DRIVER IS ON THE JOB AND REALISTICALLY DOESN'T HAVE TIME. PLUS, HE DOESN'T KNOW HOLDEN</i>	<i>HOLDEN WAS JUST TRYING TO MAKE A FRIEND; HIS ATTEMPT LEAVES HIM LONELY AND REJECTED AGAIN</i>
<b>6. FAITH CAVENDISH</b>	Holden asks her out but is refused because the date is too last minute. She tries to reschedule but Holden is uninterested.	<i>HOLDEN OBVIOUSLY SOUNDS TOO YOUNG FOR HER AND INEXPERIENCED; SHE TELLS HIM IT'S TOO LATE AND IS PARTIALLY TELLING THE TRUTH</i>	<i>ANOTHER FAILED ATTEMPT AT FEMAL COMPANY FOR HOLDEN; HE IS LEFT DISAPPOINTED IN HIMSELF AND IN WOMEN IN GENERAL</i>
<b>7. 3 WOMEN AT THE LAVENDER ROOM</b>	All three women allow Holden to buy them drinks and they briefly dance with him, but are indifferent about his company	<i>HOLDEN IS TOO YOUNG AND NOT FAMOUS</i>	<i>THIS IS ANOTHER REASON FOR HOLDEN TO LOOSE FAITH IN WOMEN AND HUMAN DECENCY AS WELL</i>
<b>8. CAB DRIVER #2</b>	Holden asks if driver wants to have a drink with him but is refused. He then asks “where the ducks go” and the offended driver replies with the “fish” metaphor.	<i>CAB DRIVER IS ON THE JOB AND REALISTICALLY DOESN'T HAVE TIME. PLUS, HE DOESN'T KNOW HOLDEN</i>	<i>HOLDEN WAS JUST TRYING TO MAKE A FRIEND; HIS ATTEMPT LEAVES HIM LONELY AND REJECTED AGAIN</i>
<b>9. ERNIE THE PIANO PLAYER</b>	Holden asks the waiter to ask Ernie if he'd join Holden for a drink but figures the waiter never delivered the message when Ernie doesn't show.	<i>HOLDEN IS JUST A KID AND NO ONE TO PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO IN THE CROWDED CLUB</i>	<i>HOLDEN LIKES AND RESPECTS ERNIE BUT IS STILL ANNOYED BY THE FACT THAT A)ERNIE PLAYS TO APPEAL TO A PHONY CROWD AND B)ERNIE WON'T GIVE HIM THE TIME OF DAY</i>
<b>10. SUNNY THE PROSTITUTE</b>	Holden tries to have a civilized and interesting conversation with Sunny but she doesn't respond to his social courtesy.	<i>SUNNY HAS A JOB TO DO AND SHE'S WORKING TRYING TO MAKE MONEY</i>	<i>HOLDEN DOESN'T JUST WANT SEX; HE WANTS COMPANIONSHIP AND WHEN HE REALIZES THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION—THAT SUNNY WON'T BE HIS “FRIEND”—IT DEPRESSES HIM AND MAKES HIM FEEL LONELY</i>

<b>11. JANE</b>	Holden calls Jane. When her mother answers the phone, he quickly hangs up.	<i>JANE DOESN'T REJECT HOLDEN, SHE JUST WASN'T AVAILABLE AT THAT POINT IN TIME</i>	<i>HOLDEN DOESN'T REALIZE THIS IS NOT HER FAULT. HE HAD FINALLY GATHERED ENOUGH COURAGE TO CALL HER AND AFTER ALL OF THE SUSPENSE SHE DIDN'T ANSWER THE PHONE. HE FEELS LIKE HIS EFFORTS WERE WASTED AND, HE DOESN'T REALLY LIKE HER MOM</i>
<b>12. ICE SKATING LITTLE GIRL</b>	Holden asks the little girl to have hot chocolate with him; she refuses, responding by saying "[she has] to meet her friend."	<i>SHE IS SPOOKED BY HIM BECAUSE HE IS A STRANGER</i>	<i>HE SEES CHILDREN AS BEAUTIFUL, LOVING, INNOCENT, AND HARMLESS. HE FEELS REJECTED BY THE BEAUTIFUL, LOVING, INNOCENT, AND HARMLESS CHILD WHO MAKES HIM FEEL UNWORTHY</i>
<b>13. SALLY</b>	Holden tries to talk to Sally about how depressed he is. She doesn't comprehend his feelings. When he admits that something is wrong with him, instead of caring, she simply agrees.	<i>SALLY KNOWS HOLDEN HAS ISSUES. SHE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT HIS PERSONAL STRUGGLES, SHE JUST WANTS HIM TO TAKE HER ON A NORMAL DATE AND LIKE HER</i>	<i>HOLDEN FEELS COMPLETELY MISUNDERSTOOD AND DEVASTATED THAT SALLY DOES NOT CARE ABOUT HIS TROUBLES</i>

**How many people have accepted Holden's "cry for help" but it ended badly? Completed chart below.**

<u><b>PERSON</b></u>	<u><b>SITUATION: HOW DID HE/SHE "ACCEPT" HOLDEN SITUATION: HOW DID.</b></u>	<u><b>POSSIBLE REASONS WHY THE EXPERIENCE TURNED OUT NEGATIVE</b></u>	<u><b>EFFECT ON HOLDEN</b></u>
<b>14. NUNS</b>	They accept his donation, chat with and have breakfast with him. He enjoys their company and brief conversation.	<i>HOLDEN BLOWS SMOKE IN THEIR FACE BY ACCIDENT</i>	<i>HE FEELS TERRIBLE, UNETHICAL, AND CONSIDERS GIVING THEM MORE MONEY TO MAKE UP FOR HIS SHORTCOMINGS</i>

<b>15. SALLY</b>	Sally goes on a date with Holden even though she is phony and clearly not too interested in him.	<i>HOLDEN IS NOT TRULY INTERESTED IN SALLY, AS A MATTER OF FACT, SHE GETS ON HIS NERVES AND HE FINALLY TELLS HER THIS ON THE DATE</i>	<i>HE IS DISAPPOINTED NOT ONLY IN SALLY, BUT IN HUMANKIND IN GENERAL. HE IS COMING FACE TO FACE WITH "PHONY" AT ITS WORST STAGE. SALLY HAYES.</i>
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**How many people have recognized Holden's problems and attempted to reach out to him, yet, it he rejected their help? Completed chart below**

<b><u>PERSON</u></b>	<b><u>SITUATION: HOW DID HE/SHE "REACH OUT" TO HOLDEN</u></b>	<b><u>SITUATION: HOW DID HOLDEN "REJECT" THIS HIS/HER HELP?</u></b>	<b><u>WHY DOES HE "REJECT" THIS HELP?</u></b>
<b>16. MR. SPENCER</b>	Has a talk with Holden and gives him a dose of reality while trying to explain to him that the "Game of Life" has rules that must be followed.	<i>HOLDEN DECIDES TO MENTALLY TUNE OUT THE MESSAGE AND THEN LIE ABOUT HAVING SOMEWHERE TO GO</i>	<i>HOLDEN IS TOO IMMATURE TO HEAR THE TRUTH FROM SOMEONE WHOSE ADVISE IS TOO CLOSE TO HIS OWN INNER CONCIENCE. HE DOESN'T WANT TO HEAR THAT HE IS "WRONG"</i>
<b>17. LILLIAN SIMMONS</b>	Asks Holden to join her and her date for a drink at Ernie's.	<i>HOLDEN LIES ABOUT HAVING SOMEWHERE TO GO RATHER THAN SHARE A DRINK WITH HER ON HER INVITE</i>	<i>HE WANTS TRUE COMPANIONSHIP AND FIRENDSHIP; HE DOESN'T THINK LILLIAN IS WORTH SPENDING TIME WITH BECAUSE HE KNOWS SHE IS "PHONY"</i>