

Catcher in the Rye
Questions
Chapters 11-17

1. In chapter 11, Holden focuses on Jane. Give at least two reasons why Holden likes her.
2. On p. 80, Holden explains why he wants to leave the hotel. How is his reason for wanting to leave the hotel similar to his reason for wanting to leave Pencey (p. 51)? What do you think Holden is hunting for?
3. On p. 81-83, Holden and Horowitz (the cab driver) have a lengthy conversation about the ducks in Central Park.
 - a. What distinction does Horowitz make between the ducks and the fish?
 - b. Is Holden more like the ducks or the fish? Why?
 - c. Which do you think Holden would prefer to be—a fish or a duck? Explain.
4. What does Holden confess on pp. 88-89? What explanation does he offer for this shortcoming in his character?
5.
 - a. What does Holden confess on p. 92?
 - b. How does the episode with Sunny (pp. 94-98) illustrate Holden's sexual naïveté?
6.
 - a. How is Holden's "fight" with Maurice (pp. 101-104) similar to his earlier fight with Stradlater (pp. 43-45)?
 - b. How does Holden's behavior during both of these fights support the confession he makes on pp. 88-89?
7. On pp. 106-107, Holden says, "I had no place to go," so he decides to go to Grand Central Station. Considering that Grand Central Station is both a hub of transportation and a place where transients go, why is Holden's decision to go there ironically appropriate?
8.
 - a. What is the song "Little Shirley Beans" (p. 114) about?
 - b. Why does Holden love the Museum of Natural History (p. 121)?
9. On p. 122, after Holden puts on his red hunting hat [remember, his brother Allie had red hair (p. 38)], he says, "Certain things they should stay the way they are." Explain how each of the following illustrates Holden's belief that "Certain things they should stay the way they are."
 - a. "Little Shirley Beans"
 - b. The Natural History Museum
 - c. The ducks and fish in Central Park
 - d. Jane Gallagher's keeping all her kings in the back row

10. How might Holden's desire to preserve the past be linked to his feelings toward Allie's death?
11. Why do you think Holden hates "dirty little goddam cliques" (p. 131)?
12. Why does Sally Hayes object to running away with Holden (p. 132-133)? Describe the nature of her objections.