Salinger’s depiction of Holden Caulfield is considered one of the most convincing portrayals of an adolescent in literature. Intelligent, sensitive, and imaginative, Holden desires acceptance into the adult world even though he is sickened and obsessed by what he regards as its ‘phonies,’ including his teachers, parents, and his older brother. For all his surface toughness, Holden is painfully idealistic and longs for a moral purpose in life. He tells Phoebe that he wants to be “the catcher in the rye”—the defender of childhood innocence—who would stand in a field of rye where thousands of children would not grow up.

Holden Caulfield, in The Catcher in the Rye, never realistically considers running away, for he realizes that flight cannot help him. At the critical moment his family may not be ready to grant him the salvation that he needs, but it is his only security. Later, Salinger more fully develops the contrast between squalor and love in the world and reintroduces various elements of his Caulfield family saga in his grand design of charting the story of the Glass family. The compassion, the satire, the heights of perfect love, the love of the family unit, and the use of brilliant conversational
language that characterized Salinger’s great novel, The Catcher in the Rye, will continue to set his fiction apart. IA Richards’ Concept of Four Kinds of Meaning. Deconstruction. Our Facebook Page. Salinger uses everything from comedy and obscenity to violence and death to get his point across. J.D. Salinger’s The Catcher in The Rye exemplifies the struggles a forlorn and confused youth can go through when trying to survive in society and find purpose and acceptance as an adult. J.D. Salinger was born in Manhattan in 1919, the son of a wealthy cheese importer. He grew up in a fashionable section of New York City, and spent his youth studying at various prep schools; after shuttling between several schools, his parents finally sent him to the Valley Forge Military Academy in 1934 (Phil