

Teacher's Rationale

School: Arrowhead

Teacher: Stoffel

Title: The Catcher in the Rye

Grade or Course: English 10, Honors 10 English

Approximate date(s) a book will be used:

Semester 1

Semester 2

This book will be (check one or more):

studied by the whole class but students have option to choose a different text.

studied by small groups.

placed on a reading list.

placed in a classroom library.

recommended to individual students.

part of a larger study of (explain):

other (explain):

Ways in which the book is especially appropriate for student in this class:

Coming-of-age narrative—Holden Caulfield's teenage angst is a feeling that most students can relate to with their own lives. Salinger addresses the stresses of teen's life by having Holden face the trials of school, family life, friends, and the opposite sex.

Intra/Interpersonal relationships—family, friends, teachers, etc.

Relative to students' lives—addresses realities of society that are still seen today.

Ways in which the book is especially pertinent to the objectives of this course or unit:

Throughout the course of this book, Salinger examines literature's most classic conflicts: man versus self and man versus man. In addition, Salinger recognizes the themes consistent in the students' lives. These themes include: alienation as a form of self-protection; the painfulness of growing up; the phoniness of the adult world. Along with those themes, *The Catcher in the Rye* discusses relationships, intimacy, and sexuality; loneliness; lying and deception.

State Standards addressed:

A.12.2b – universal themes of literature such as initiation, love and duty, heroism, illusion and reality, salvation, death and rebirth

A.12.3a – examine, explain, and evaluate various perspectives concerning individual, community, national, and world issues reflected in literary texts

A.12.3b – develop and articulate points of view on individual, community, national, and world issues reflected in literary texts

A.12.3d – identify philosophical assumptions and basic beliefs and underlying selected texts

Special problems that might arise in relation to the book and some planned activities that handle this problem:

Crude Language – address the appropriateness of usage and why author chooses to have character use crude language

Adult situations – discussing the realities teens face in life

Some other appropriate books an individual student might read in place of this book:

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Catch 22 by Joseph Heller

Lord of the Flies William Gerald Golding

Summary of the book:

Since his debut in 1951 as *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden Caulfield has been synonymous with "cynical adolescent." Holden narrates the story of a couple of days in his sixteen-year-old life, just after he's been expelled from prep school, in a slang that sounds edgy even today and keeps this novel on banned book lists. It begins,

"If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them."

His constant wry observations about what he encounters, from teachers to phonies (the two of course are not mutually exclusive) capture the essence of the eternal teenage experience of alienation.

Reviews and/or awards of the book or author: