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The catcher in the rye: A teaching unit

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The catcher in the rye: A teaching unit

Abstract

The main goal of this unit is for students to critically think about the novel and the world around them. This unit is built on students responding to and exploring elements within the novel. With each discussion and experience, simply have the students write. The culmination of all their writing placed and bound together will create a journal.

As the students read, they are to highlight quotes they wish to discuss or respond to. This will allow the students to critically think about and process what they have read. It also teaches students how to pick out important concepts within literature. Having students choose what they think is important plays a large role in the affective domain. They will feel a connection with the literature.

The discussion questions and journal writing assignments included in this unit are to be used as starting points. I have chosen key themes, quotes, and ideas to address through discussion and writing. Expand on the questions given in every way possible. Many times your students' highlighted important/discussion quotes will feed into the discussion topics—Use this to your advantage!

Use the discussion questions, journal entries, and essays to introduce the students to major literary elements. The more acquainted students come with these terms, the better and more correctly they can analyze literature.

The final goal of this unit is to strengthen essay writing skills. As the students are writing their final essays, they will be able to look back and reflect on all they wrote for their journals. Using the journals, they will be able to effectively cite the novel and their own thoughts for support—an essential component to writing about literature. The better students can support their thesis, the more effective writers they will be.

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Subject Categories

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THE CATCHER IN THE RYE, A TEACHING UNIT.

By

Audrey Michelle Farrugia

A Senior Thesis Submitted to the

Eastern Michigan University

Honors Program

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation

with Honors in Elementary Education Language Arts/~~English Language and Literature~~

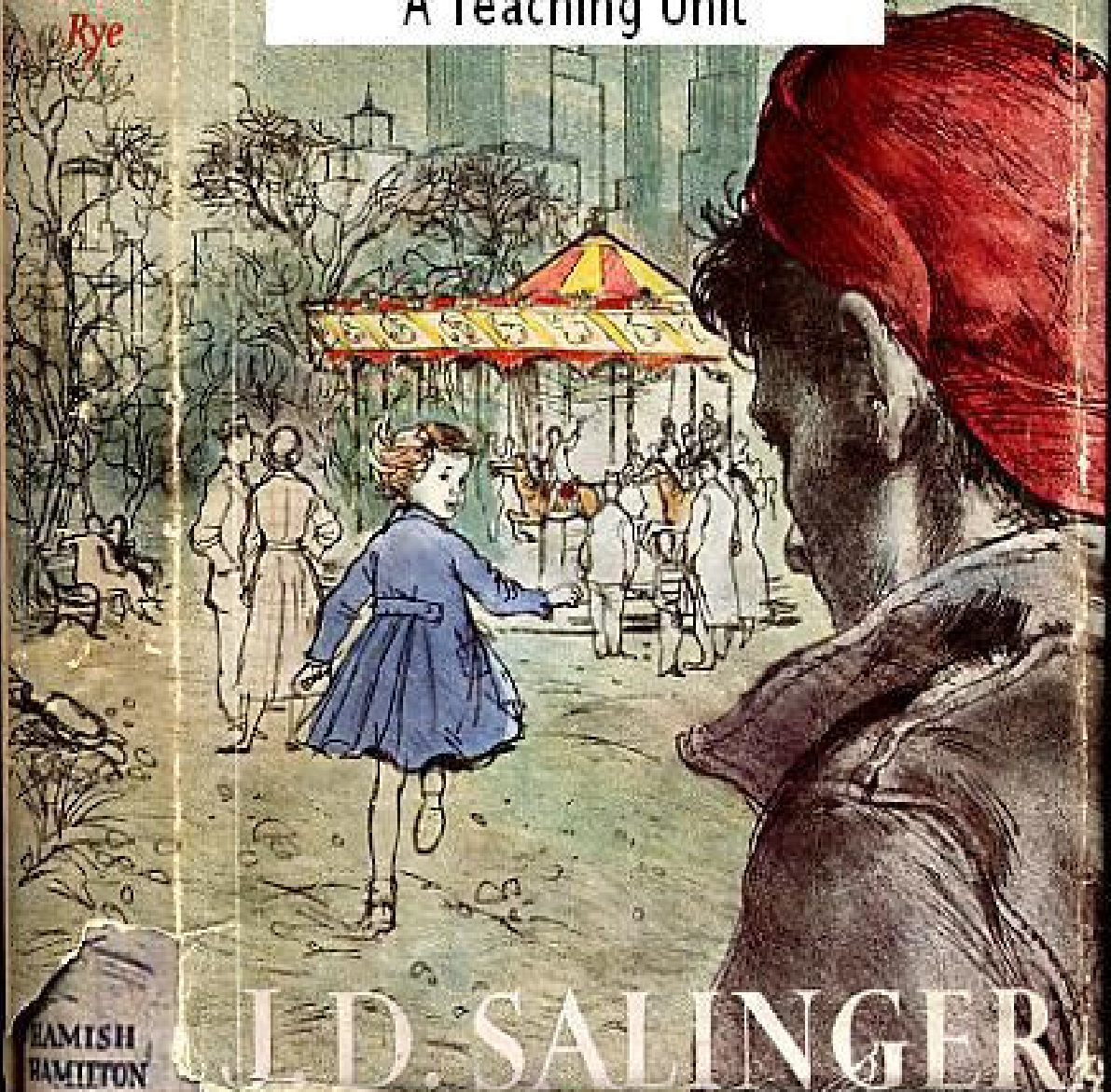
Approved at Ypsilanti, Michigan, on this date 29 April 2015

J.D.
SALINGER

*The
Catcher
in the
Rye*

The Catcher in the Rye

A Teaching Unit



RAMISH
HAMILTON

J.D. SALINGER

By: Audrey M. Farrugia

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Feel free to use the provided discussion questions, journal entries, and essays as you see fit, or create your own!

Audrey Farrugia

Dear Guardian,

In one week we will begin our unit on the novel The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger. This is the classic coming of age novel that explores such themes as home, family, school, and society. There are also some adult themes that are present in this novel such as depression, sexuality, and isolation. Profanity is used within this novel. I believe that I can handle teaching this novel to the children with the utmost respect and maturity.

In order to help you feel more comfortable and aware of what we are learning, I have made copies of the novel available for you to borrow and preview the material. I am also available for any questions, comments, or concerns that you may have. I encourage you to explore this novel and all it has to offer with your student. The students typically really enjoy and get a lot of this unit and the assignments that follow.

I am asking that you sign and return this letter so that I know you are aware of what we are doing in the class. If it is not signed and returned, your student will not be able to participate in the unit. I look forward to seeing/hearing from you!

Thank you,
Ms. Audrey

Signature

Date

Procedure

- Assign reading pages and the choosing of a quote for homework. This work is to be done by the students outside of class.
- When the literature period begins, discuss any questions or thoughts the students may have had on their readings or quotes. Use the discussion questions to ensure important points are covered.

**Let the students lead and carry the discussion. The teacher acts only as a facilitator to make sure students are on the right track.

- Assign journal assignment(s). Allow at least 15-20 minutes to begin the writing assignment. What the students do not finish is to be done for homework. Encourage the students to record any important information or thoughts in their journals, not just the journal assignments.
- Allow the students to share aloud any ideas they want to. This could include, but not be limited to: predictions, excerpts from their journals, feelings, and thoughts.
- Collect the journals as you see fit (my suggestion is at the end of each week). Respond to the students' writing and check in assignments on the grading page which is provided. DO NOT grade mechanics—only assess ideas and thoughts.

Students,

We will begin our unit on the novel The Catcher in the Rye shortly. Through our reading, writing, and discussion you will create a Catcher in the Rye journal.

Examples of assignments that will be included in the journal are: reactions to readings, comparison of themes to song lyrics, artwork, and more! Please read your first assignment, Chapter 1, pages 1-6 and highlight at least one quote you would like to discuss or write about. This is an exciting unit that most students really enjoy!

Good Luck, and if you have any questions, please see me!!!

Ms. Audrey

Reading Assignment Page

I will announce all reading assignments and when they are due.
In addition to reading the assigned pages, you must highlight at least one quote per reading you would like to discuss or write about.

Chapters	Pages
1	1-6
2-3	6-26
4-6	26-46
7-8	46-58
9-11	58-80
12-13	81-98
14-15	98-113
16-17	113-134
18-19	135-149
20-21	149-166
22	166-174
23-24	174-193
25	194-214

Author Information

It is important for students to be acquainted with the author they are reading. This will encourage interest and reading.

- Hand out background information on the author.
- Create an author bulletin board featuring information and pictures of the author.
- Display a list of other books/stories written by the author. *If at all possible, also have them available in the classroom library.
- Display a list of biographies or autobiographies written by or about the author.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION - BIOGRAPHY

J.D. SALINGER

Jerome David Salinger was born in New York City on January 1, 1919. His father, Sol Salinger, was Jewish and his mother, Marie Jillich, was of Scotch Irish descent. Since his parents were of different religious backgrounds, one Christian and the other Jewish, theistic belief was never really emphasized. Salinger had only one sibling, a sister named Doris, six years his senior. The family was upwardly mobile and moved several times during Salinger's childhood to increasingly affluent neighborhoods.

Salinger's academic career could best be described as mediocre, for he was never really inclined toward academics. He was particularly weak in mathematics. He attended a public school on the upper West Side in Manhattan and spent his summers at Camp Wigwam in Harrison, Maine. At camp, he was involved in the theater, even though off stage he was a quiet and solitary young boy. At the age of thirteen, Salinger was enrolled in the McBurney School, but within a year flunked out and was sent to the Valley Forge Military Academy in Pennsylvania. While he was there, he became interested in writing. He produced his earliest short stories before he graduated in 1936.

After graduating from high school, Salinger was briefly enrolled in Ursinus College, where he wrote a humorous column for the campus newspaper. His father took him out of college to go to Vienna and learn the ham business as an apprentice. On returning to New York, Salinger turned toward more serious writing. He enrolled in Whit Burnett's well-reputed course in short-story writing at Columbia University.

Salinger was first published in *Young Folks* and *The New Yorker*, with his first story appearing in 1940. In 1942, Salinger was drafted into the U.S. Army and performed intelligence services in World War II. In 1946, Salinger was discharged from the army and returned to New York, where he resumed his writing of short stories. Several were published in *Colliers*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Story*. *The Catcher in the Rye*, Salinger's only novel, was published in 1951. In 1953, his first collection of short stories, entitled *Nine Stories*, was published and included the well-known "A Perfect Day for Bananafish." *Franny and Zooey*, published in 1961, is really two separate stories about different members of the Glass family. Another collection of previously published short stories was released in 1963.

Upon his return to New York from the army, Salinger turned towards oriental philosophy and the emerging culture of the "beat" generation. Although he lived with his parents on Park Avenue, he spent the majority of his time in Greenwich Village, where he began to follow the principles of Zen. At the end of the 40s and into the 50s, Salinger spent time in Tarrytown and Westport. He finally settled in Cornish in the New Hampshire hills. In 1953, he met and married Claire Douglas.

Although they remained married and had two children, Matthew and Peggy, Salinger lived in almost total seclusion and self-imposed alienation away from his many followers.

Salinger became a devoted student of Advaita Vedanta Hinduism, which preaches the concept of the four 'asramas' or stages of life. According to the philosophy, a person must divide his/her life into four portions, devoted to studies, household duties, retirement to the forest for the sake of meditation, and spirituality, in that order.

Salinger's work is essentially autobiographical and based on his real life experiences. It is ironic, however, that Salinger suggests the need to connect with and understand one another in *The Catcher In the Rye*; yet in his private life, he sets himself apart from the world.

<http://pinkmonkey.com/booknotes/monkeynotes/pmCatcher09.asp>

Literary Concepts

Allusion

Foreshadowing

Apostrophe

Stream of Consciousness

Metaphor

Diction

Simile

Syntax

Static

Ambiguity

Dynamic

Literal

Hyperbole

Figurative

Unreliable Narrator

Connotation

Symbol

Fan Fiction

Cooperative Lesson Plan “The 1950’s”

Propose Statement:

The lesson is designed for students to explore what life was like for teenagers in the 1950's. The Catcher in the Rye follows a week in the life of a teenager in 1951. By allowing the students to learn more about the setting in the novel, a better understanding of the work and its message will take place.

Objective:

The student will investigate the lifestyles of teenagers in the 1950's.

Materials:

Colored Paper for Home team Groupings
Role Sheets for Home Team
Worksheet Readings for Home Team
Envelope with Lottery Numbers
Role Sheets for Expert Team
Worksheet and Readings for Expert Team

Groupings:

Students will randomly be placed into heterogeneous groups of four. More information on grouping can be found in the group composition section.

Opening/Anticipatory Set:

The teacher will ask the students why they think it is important to learn about and understand the setting of a piece of literature. The teacher will allow for several students to answer.

Objectives and Purpose:

The teacher will explain to the students that today we will work on a lesson to explore what life was like for teenagers, such as Holden Caulfield, in the 1950's. After the lesson is complete you will all have a better idea of the culture of the 1950's such as the clothes, music, movies, and politics of the time.

Cooperative Learning Components (with checks for understanding throughout):

Group Composition:

Home Team: Students will be randomly grouped heterogeneously into groups of four. Each home team will be an instructional team of teachers preparing to develop lessons to teach and explain a

certain component of life in the 1950's. Each Home Team will develop a 1950's nickname for their team. Each Home team will be responsible for developing a presentation to explain 1950's living to the class.

Expert Group: Within each Home Team, students will pick a number from the provided envelop. The number will correspond to the four expert groups they will break off in to:

Group 1: Entertainment

Group 2: Politics

Group 3: Fashion

Group 4: Technology

Each Expert Group will learn about one aspect of life in the 1950's. After researching their topics, they will return to their Home Team and teach their specific aspect to their Home Team.

Roles: Within each Expert Team students will select the following roles:

Reader- Responsible for reading all the information in the folder aloud.

Task Master- Make sure that the group completes all of the assigned tasks.

Recorder- Responsible for writing anything that needs to be written down. Example: Notes for a summary.

Collector- Pass out all materials needed to group members. Also, collect all materials at the end of each day and secure it in their folder.

Procedures:

Each Expert Group will utilize all materials in their packets to explore one aspect of life in the 1950's. Each expert group will be told to read through the materials in the folder and come up with a plan to teach the information to their home teams. Each Expert Group will develop a graphic organizer to help explain their aspect to their Home Team.

1. The teacher will randomly arrange the class into groups of four and assign each group a color. Each student will receive a certain color of paper. The color of paper will put them into their Home Teams. Each Home Team will receive a packet of instructions which tells them to create a team name.
2. When in their Home Teams, the students will draw a number from the envelope that correlates to what expert team they will go to.

3. Using the material in the Expert Group Sheets, students will research their aspect of 1950's life and organize the information. They will also create a graphic organizer to teach this freedom to their Home Team.

Check: Random students will be asked to explain what they are doing in their Expert Group and Home Team. The teacher will walk around the groups observing, listening to discussions, and asking questions. If help or clarification is needed, it will be given.

4. Students will return to their Home Team and take turns sharing what they have learned from their Expert Groups.
5. Students will now be able to work together to put the pieces of the 1950's together and complete their plan.
6. Home Teams will present their understanding of life in the 1950's.

Closing: Students will be asked how they are going to use the knowledge they gained from this lesson and apply it to their reading.

Positive Interdependence: Everyone in their Expert Group will have to learn their information, return to their Home Team, and share what they have learned with everyone. Members of the Home Team are dependent on one another to complete their task.

Team Accountability: The Students will complete the Expert Group assignment and also be a part of the Home Team assignment.

Home Team

Names of Home Team Members:

1. Select a nickname from the 1950's for your Home Team's name
2. Each member picks a lottery number from the envelope provided.
The number you draw shows you what Expert Group you will be going to:

#1 Entertainment

#2 Politics

#3 Fashion

#4 Technology

3. When you are told, you will split off with other expert group members. You will be given a packet of readings and information to learn about a specific aspect of 1950's life.
4. Learn your information well! You will be responsible for coming back to your Home Team and teaching to everyone what you have learned.
5. After everyone has come back into their Home Teams and presented, the Home team will prepare a presentation to explain the 1950's to the class.

“I remember...”

Materials:

The Sound and the Fury

Ulysses

Discussion:

Have you ever noticed that one memory leads to another, which leads to another? This is called *memory association* and it is what Holden does throughout most of the novel.

Sometimes two ideas that have nothing to do with each other can be connected. For example, peanuts make me think of my dad; that’s because he always calls me peanut.

What do you think of when I say Birthday?

What about Tree?

Journal/Activity

I will give you a topic and a time limit to write. During that time you will write what memories you associate with that topic.

(Write on the board)

Peanuts make me think of my dad which makes me think of laughing which makes me think of my friends...

Keep going with a pattern like this until I say stop.

(Allow writing for approximately 3 minutes)

Now cut out the “which makes me think of” and just record your thoughts.

(Write on board)

Peanuts my dad laughing friends

You do not have to worry about punctuation.

The topic this time is school

(Allow students to write for approximately 15 minutes)

Explain to the students that they have just done an extremely sophisticated form of writing called *stream of consciousness*—writing whatever comes into your mind lacking any sort of punctuation.

Pass around examples of stream of consciousness writing in books and entertain any questions.

“Just the Way I Liked It”

Discussion:

Holden’s hunting hat means a lot to him. Have you noticed anything about it?

Leading questions Which way does he like it? How does he act when it is to the back?

Journal:

Write all about Holden’s Hat:

Explain how Holden got his hat.

Write about the many different ways he wears it and what each way means

Discuss the color

Discuss what the hat symbolizes

What purpose does the hat serve for Holden?

Include quotes about his hat

“It Just About Killed Me”

Discussion:

J.D. Salinger’s *diction* (word choice) for Holden Caulfield is unique and interesting.

His voice is easily distinguished among literary characters. What do you find interesting/unique/distinguishable about Holden’s style of speech?

Lead Questions What types of words does he use? What is the tone? Is he grammatically correct?

Journal:

In your journals, pretend you are Holden and write a paragraph as he would. Try to really capture Holden’s voice in this assignment.

“Jane’s Kings”

Discussion:

It is apparent that Holden cares very much for Jane. It seems she is the only person he really likes. Why then wouldn't he go see her when she was at his school with Stradlater? Discuss why Holden likes Jane.

Journal:

Holden really likes the fact that Jane “kept all her kings in the back row.” He hates, and even punches, Stradlater because he does not care that Jane did.

In your journal write what you think Jane keeping all her kings in the back row means. Is this a *metaphor* for something? If so what?

“A.K.A”

Discussion:

Throughout the novel, Holden develops aliases and pretends to be other people.

What purpose does this serve? What are some examples of people with aliases?

Journal:

Pick one of Holden's aliases and describe the situation. Who is he talking to? What kind of person does he become? What are some possible reasons he became someone else?

“Would You Like to Use Your Life Line?”

Discussion:

Throughout the novel Holden attempts to call many people for help. Holden wants to call Jane several times, but never does. Why do you think this is so? Who else does Holden attempt to call?

Journal:

Write in your journal who your life line is. Who would you call for help when you needed it the most, and why?

“Suitcases”

Discussion:

In the middle of the novel on page 108, Holden goes into great detail about suitcases. What does he say? Is he speaking *literally* or *figuratively*?

Journal:

The suitcases act as a metaphor, but for what? What is Holden really talking about when he discusses the suitcases?

“The Liars Club”

Discussion:

Do you think Holden is telling the complete truth? Is he making things up and/or leaving things out? Characters like Holden are often referred to as *unreliable narrators*. This means you cannot rely on them to tell the complete truth. They will only tell you what they want you to believe.

Journal:

Record the definition of unreliable narrator in your journal. Include at least one example from the novel where Holden may not be telling the whole truth.

Activity:

The Liars Club game

Ask for 3 good storyteller volunteers. Explain that you are going to assign a story topic such as “my most embarrassing moment.”

The 3 volunteers will go into the hall. They will all tell their embarrassing moment and decide what the best story is.

They will all memorize that same story, adding or subtracting details to make it their own.

They will come in front of the class and one at a time share the story.

It is the audience's job to figure out who is the real owner of the story.

The storytellers get an idea of how hard/easy it is to lie to an audience and what they must do to trick the audience that they "own" the story.

The audience learns how hard/easy it is to be lied to. They also learn that stories change with who tells them and what perspective they are coming from.

“The Museum”

Discussion:

The one place Holden feels comfort and happiness is in the museum. Why does he like it there so much? What specifically does he say about it?

Journal:

Do you have a place that you look back on to feel safe and happy? Describe this place using as much physical and emotional detail as you can.

What is the significance of the museum to Holden? Support your answer with the physical and emotional detail Holden uses.

“Allie”

Discussion:

Although Allie, Holden’s brother, is not actually alive in the novel, he is an important character. Holden even talks to him throughout the novel. This is called an *apostrophe*. Why is he so important to understanding this novel?

Journal:

Describe Allie with as much detail as you can. What effect does Allie’s death have on Holden? Does Holden blame himself for Allie’s death? What do you think about the situation?

“The Patterns of Your Mind”

Discussion:

When Holden is visiting with Carl Luce, he says that his father is a psychoanalyst and can help him to “recognize the patterns of his mind.” What does this mean?

Was Holden asking for Carl Luce’s company because he was lonely, or was there an ulterior motive?

Journal:

Pretend you are a psychoanalyst and Holden has come in for an appointment.

Write down the notes you would take to help Holden “recognize the patterns of his mind.” Be sure to include what you think the patterns of Holden’s mind actually are.

“Allie’s Funeral”

Discussion:

Holden informs readers that he did not attend Allie’s funeral. What was his reason why he did not? What are your thoughts on this?

Journal:

What is the significance of Holden not being at Allie’s funeral? Does it affect him?

Why or why not?

“Mr. Antolini”

Discussion:

The scene where Holden goes to stay with Mr. Antolini is one of great controversy.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about that scene? (Explain that it is speculated that Mr. Antolini could be a homosexual.) What are your thoughts on this?

Journal:

Do you think that Mr. Antolini is a homosexual? Why or why not? Support your answer. Do you think it is important to the story to know if he is or is not? Do you think it should be a controversy?

“I am Holden Caulfield”

Discussion:

The characters in this novel are very distinguishable from one another. They have certain traits that make them who they are, just as we do. What characters in this novel do you like? Why? What characters do you not like? Why?

Journal:

Choose one character, other than Holden, in the novel and describe them with as much detail as you can. Write down your favorite quotes or scenes from them. Also, record your feeling about them.

Activity:

The classroom will become a talk show.

One person will come to the front and embody the character they wrote about.

The rest of the class will ask questions and see if they can figure out who they were trying to be.

It is important to explain that embodying a character does not mean just talking like them, it means becoming them. Answer questions as they would, stand how they do, use their facial and hand expressions etc.

“A Terrible Fall”

Discussion:

Mr. Antolini tells Holden he sees him “riding for some kind of terrible fall.” What literary device is this an example of? (*Foreshadowing*) What other words or wisdom does Mr. Antolini have for Holden?

Journal:

Does Holden understand and take to heart what Mr. Antolini tells him? Why or why not. Should he? Do you always listen to the advice of others? Should you?

“Signs and Symptoms”

Materials:

Signs and Symptoms of depression handout

Discussion:

Holden is dealing with some very serious problems in this novel; one of them being depression. Depression is not simply feeling sad, but what is it? What can it lead to? What effect does it have on a person? What can be done to help?

(Pass out handout)

Journal:

Record some of the signs and symptoms of depression that Holden displays. As the novel progresses, Holden sinks deeper into depression. How can you tell? Record any thoughts or feeling you have about depression.

Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Emotional	Physical	Behavioural	Thoughts/Perceptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sadness • Anxiety • Guilt • Anger • Mood swings • Lack of emotional responsiveness • Helplessness • Hopelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic fatigue, lack of energy • Sleeping too much or too little • Overeating or loss of appetite • Constipation • Weight loss or gain • Irregular menstrual cycle • Loss of sexual desire • Unexplained aches and pains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crying spells • Withdrawal from others • Worrying • Neglect of responsibilities • Loss of interest in personal appearance • Loss of motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent self-criticism • Self-blame • Pessimism • Impaired memory and concentration • Indecisiveness and confusion • Tendency to believe others see you in a negative light • Thoughts of death and suicide

“Disappearing”

Discussion:

Holden states several times throughout the novel that he feels as if he is disappearing. Particularly at the end of the novel he more frequently states he feels this way. What is the significance of this? What could it mean?

Journal:

Have you ever felt like you were disappearing? Develop another *analogy* someone could use to feeling extremely depressed. Record the page numbers and the exact quotes for Holden’s disappearing.

“On the Wall”

Discussion:

When Holden finds the “Fuck You” on the wall, how does it make him feel? What does this show the reader about Holden? What does the “Fuck You” symbolize?

Journal:

How would you feel if you seen that written on the wall of your school, or a place where children were? What *connotation* (feelings) do those words evoke?

“Symbols”

Discussion:

There are many *symbols* throughout this novel. A symbol is something chosen in a novel to represent something else. Name a few symbols in the novel and some possibilities for what they represent.

Journal:

Choose one symbol from the novel The Catcher in the Rye and write a paragraph explaining what it symbolizes.

Activity:

Find a physical representation (an object or something you can bring into class) of your symbol.

The class will try to guess what each person’s symbol is and what it means.

After the guessing, the student will share their paragraph with the class to reveal the answer.

“Carousel”

Discussion:

In one of the most powerful scenes in the novel, Holden takes his sister Phoebe for a ride on the carousel in Central Park. Why is this scene so important? How did it make you feel? Many people believe that Holden makes a breakthrough in this scene. Do you agree? If you do, what kind of a breakthrough does Holden make?

Journal:

Explain what the child reaching for the golden ring on the carousel is a *metaphor* for.

In your opinion, what makes Holden so happy at this point in the novel?

“Don’t Judge a Book by its Cover”

Materials:

Salinger, A Biography by Paul Alexander

The Catcher in the Rye, Franny and Zooey, and Nine Stories with the plain white cover.

Discussion:

As you may have learned in the background information provided, J.D. Salinger was a very private man. He took his personal life, as well as his writing, very seriously.

According to *Salinger, A Biography*, after a certain point, J.D. Salinger would only allow his books to be published with a plain white cover (hold up examples). He did this to make people read the book for what it was, and not for what it looked like.

With society so interested in looks and appeal, this was a very bold move for Salinger. Do you think this was a good idea? What does it say about Salinger as a person? What does it say about his philosophy of writing?

Activity:

You are now being given the chance to design a cover for *The Catcher in the Rye*.

You may use any medium you choose (the computer, markers, paint, crayons, photographs...). Your cover does not have to be a scene from the book. You may

represent this novel in any way you choose. Your finished product will become the cover for your journal.

Journal:

After you have completed your cover, record an explanation of the choices you made to represent the novel.

“Holden Caulfield: A Rock”

Materials:

“The Sound of Silence” and “I am a Rock” lyrics

“Holden Caulfield: A Rock, an Island, or a Misinterpreted Boy” essay

Discussion:

Music often allows people to express their innermost feelings and thoughts. Songs can be very complex, containing *metaphors*, *similes*, and other literary devices.

Music can also help people connect ideas.

Two songs that remind me of Holden Caulfield are “I am a Rock” and “Sound of Silence” by Simon and Garfunkel.

(Pass out lyrics)

I will play the two songs and we will discuss what connections we can find to Holden.

I will then share a paper with you that I have wrote about the lyrics connection to Holden.

Feel free to write anything you find useful in your journals.

Journal:

Find a song that relates to any theme or person in The Catcher in the Rye. Write down or print out a copy of the lyrics.

Write an informal essay comparing the lyrics to your subject.

I am a Rock

A winter's day
In a deep and dark December
I am alone
Gazing from my window
To the streets below
On a freshly fallen silent shroud of snow

I am a rock
I am an island

I've built walls
A fortress deep and mighty
That none may penetrate
I have no need for friendship
Friendship causes pain
It's laughter and it's loving I disdain.

I am a rock
I am an island

Don't talk of love
Well, I've heard the word before
It's sleeping in my memory
I won't disturb the slumber
Of feelings that have died
If I'd never loved,
I never would have cried

I am a rock
I am an island

I have my books
And my poetry to protect me
I am shielded in my armor
Hiding in my room
Safe within my womb
I touch no-one and no-one touches me

I am a rock
I am an island
And the rock feels no pain
And an island never cries

By: Simon and Garfunkel

The Sound of Silence

Hello, darkness, my old friend
I've come to talk with you again
Because a vision softly creeping
Left its seeds while I was sleeping
And the vision
That was planted in my brain
Still remains
Within the sound of silence

In restless dreams I walked alone
Narrow streets of cobblestone
Beneath the halo of a street lamp
I turned my collar to the cold and damp
When my eyes were stabbed
By the flash of a neon light
That split the night
And touched the sound of silence

And in the naked light I saw
Ten thousand people, maybe more
People talking without speaking
People hearing without listening
People writing songs that voices never share...
And no one dare
Disturb the sound of silence.

"Fools," said I, "you do not know
Silence like a cancer grows."
"Hear my words that I might teach you,
Take my arms that I might reach you."
But my words like silent raindrops fell,
And echoed in the wells of silence.

And the people bowed and prayed
To the neon god they made.
And the sign flashed out its warning
In the words that it was forming.
And the signs said: "The words of the prophets
Are written on the subway walls
And tenement halls,
And whisper'd in the sound of silence."

By: Simon and Garfunkel

Holden Caulfield: A Rock, an Island, or a Misinterpreted Boy?

Literature and music are very closely related. It is in songs that listeners hear beautiful and poetic lyrics that relate and apply to their lives and the lives of others. “I am a Rock” is one such song. The lyrics of the song “I am a Rock” by Paul Simon, in various ways apply to the character Holden Caulfield in the novel The Catcher in the Rye.

The lyric, “If I never loved I never would have cried,” applies directly to Holden’s mental breakdown. There are four times that Holden cries within the novel, the first time is with his encounter with Maurice. The confrontation makes him “so damn mad and nervous,” that he breaks down and cries (103). The second time is at the Wicker Bar after Carl Luce leaves and after he calls Sally. These rejections make him “so damn depressed and lonesome,” and that causes him to cry (153). The third time he cries is when he goes home to visit Phoebe. He starts to cry and he claims that he “couldn’t help it” (179). The final time that he cries when Phoebe is on the carousel. This however is different; Holden cries because he feels “so damn happy” (213). Every time that Holden cries represents a different stage of his mental breakdown, starting with his anger and nervousness and ending with his happiness. The connection with the lyric from the song is that Holden “never would have cried” or felt the way he did if he did not feel love. Love for his brother Allie, for his sister Phoebe, and for his own life.

The lyric “Don’t talk of love/I’ve heard the word before/It’s sleeping in my memory,” correlates with Holden’s inability to express himself and his emotions. This is apparent in the fact that he passed all his English classes that had to do with writing or reading; things people can do alone or in their mind. He flunked Oral Expression, where people have to convey and represent their life and feelings out loud

to others. Another way this concept is shown is when Holden is talking to Mr. Antolini and begins to mention all the people that he hates. As he mentions these people, for example Robert Ackley, or Stradlater, he states that he “sort of missed them” (187). The final way Holden shows his incapacity of expressing feelings is the last lines of the novel, “Don’t ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody” (214). Every one of these references shows that Holden fears that if he expresses any one of these thoughts or feelings, it will only bring him pain. Holden makes the conscious effort to bottle up his emotions and that is one of the leading causes of his depression and breakdown.

The lyric “I am shielded in my armour,” relates directly to Holden’s red hunting hat. The way in which Holden wears his hat is directly associated to the way he acts. When he wears his hat with the peak to the front, he is his normal, nervous self, “I pulled the peak of my hunting hat to the front all of a sudden for a change. I was getting sort of nervous all of a sudden. I’m quite a nervous guy” (34). When Holden wear the peak of his hat in the back he becomes outspoken, rebellious, and outgoing. This is the way he prefers to wear it, “I put it on, and turned the old peak around to the back, the way I liked it” (45). The hat does more than deciding Holden’s personality; it also shields him and gives him protection. The hat shields him from events he does not want to endure, “I pulled the old peak of my hunting hat around to the front, then pulled it way down over my eyes. That way I couldn’t see a goddam thing” (21). The hat gives him protection from his life and the circumstances it creates, “My hunting hat really gave me quite a lot of protection” (212-213). The hat directly relates to the lyric because it is Holden’s armour, giving him the strength and refuge that he needs to survive.

The lyric “I have my books and my poetry to protect me,” identifies with Holden’s decoys and possessions. Holden often uses decoys as a way to avoid and protect him. In one situation Holden uses a book as a way not to talk to Ackley, “He kept standing there. What the hellyya reading?” “This sentence I’m reading is terrific” (21). Another example of Holden trying to make excuses is at Mr.

Antolini's house. When Mr. Antolini tries talking to Holden about his problems, Holden suddenly feels sick and tired. "I kept wishing though that he would continue the conversation in the morning, instead of now," "I didn't feel at all like discussing it...I still had this awful headache," these are examples of Holden's tactic to avoid conversation (186-187). Perhaps the most obvious way that Holden connects with this lyric is through the baseball mitt. Allie's baseball mitt with all the poems written on it is Holden's prize possession, "The thing that was very descriptive about it, though, was that he had poems written all over the fingers and the pocket and everywhere" (38). He values this above all else in his life and only shows it to people that he truly care about and feels accepted with, "She(Jane) was the only one outside my family that I ever showed Allie's baseball mitt to with all the poems written on it" (77). The baseball mitt gives Holden protection by giving hope and letting him place his feelings of trust and acceptance in an inanimate object.

The song "I am a Rock," gives insight into the way Holden feels about himself. He views himself as alone and beyond help. He sees himself as a rock with no emotions and an island that cannot be reached by anyone. This song sheds an understanding light on Holden's self-perceptions ad the way the reader interprets his thoughts and behaviors.

Position Paper

Did you know that The Catcher in the Rye is among a list of books banned in libraries and schools across America? Some adults think that the topics, language, and themes in certain pieces of literature are not suitable for children. If you remember before we began this unit, your guardian had to sign a permission slip. This is because there is a lot of controversy concerning the teaching of this novel in schools.

Not allowing someone to read or see something that has been written is called *ensorship*. Some people believe censorship is good because it regulates and sets standards for children's literature. Other people believe censorship is bad because it does not allow children to be exposed to all types of literature. How do you feel about it?

In an essay, address how you feel about the censorship of literature. You may choose to focus directly on The Catcher in the Rye and why it is banned/censored, or you may also discuss and elaborate about censorship in general and how you feel it affects students. Either route you choose, you must include at least one paragraph on censorship and The Catcher in the Rye.

This essay is to be written and included in your journal. It is worth 50 points. 15 points for grammar, spelling, and mechanics, and 35 points for content, thoughts, and ideas.

Please see me with any questions you may have on this assignment or on censorship in general! I am looking forward to reading about your feelings on this very important topic.

Good Luck!

Final Essay

After thoroughly exploring and experiencing The Catcher in the Rye, you are now ready to create a well written and researched composition.

In a well written essay, demonstrate your knowledge and opinion of a topic from the novel The Catcher in the Rye. You **must** use quotes from the novel, as well as literary device(s) to support your thesis.

Possible essay topics:

- Is Holden Caulfield a *static* or *dynamic* character?
- What is the significance of the title/poem The Catcher in the Rye?
- What are the ducks a *metaphor* for?
- What is the significance of the carousel scene at the end of the novel?

If you would like to explore another topic for your essay feel free to do so!

note I must approve all topics

This final essay is worth 200 points

100 points for content and ideas

100 points for grammar, usage, and mechanics

You may submit your rough draft(s) to me for comments and suggestions!

hint Use your journals as a way to reflect on your topic and support your thesis.

Many of the topics and literary devices have been addressed or touched on in your journals!

Good Luck!!!

Extra Credit

The Catcher in the Rye has become a part of pop culture and society. You can find *allusions* to The Catcher in the Rye in many songs, movies, novels, and news stories.

Your job is to locate those *allusions*.

For every *allusion* you find, you get one extra credit point. You can earn a maximum of 3 points with this assignment.

When you locate an allusion, simply **type** up what it is, where you found it, and any thoughts you may have about it. Hand it in and the point is yours! I will return your submissions because they are to be included in your journal.

Good Luck and Happy Hunting :o)

*Tip

This is an open assignment; use all the resources you can think of such as the Internet, the library, or your parents!

Extra Credit

Fan Fiction is when you extend upon or respond to a piece of literature that has already been written. Some examples of *fan fiction* would be adding a chapter to a novel you have read, creating a different ending, or adding a character.

Fan Fiction is leaving your mark upon literature.

For up to 10 extra credit points you may create a piece of fan fiction for The Catcher in the Rye. The points you will receive will depend on the quality and thoroughness of your *fan fiction*. Be Creative!

Have fun and good luck!

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APPENDICES

EXPERT GROUP # 1. ENTERTAINMENT

EXPERT GROUP #2. POLITICS

EXPERT GROUP #3. FASHION

EXPERT GROUP #4. TECHNOLOGY

Expert Group Instruction Sheet

Welcome to your Expert Group!

Each member must choose a role and fulfill the corresponding obligations:

- **Reader:** Responsible for reading all the information in the folder aloud.
- **Task Master:** Make sure that the group completes all of the assigned tasks.
- **Recorder:** Responsible for writing anything that needs to be written down.
- **Collector:** Pass out all materials needed to group members. Also, collect all materials at the end of each day and secure them in their folder.

Research the aspect of the 1950's that you will have to teach to your Home Team. You must create a worksheet to organize your thoughts. Be creative! The worksheet can be anything you want it to be—an outline, a summary, a picture—anything you feel will help you teach your aspect better and allow your Home Team to learn better.

Expert Group # 1: Entertainment

In the fifties if you had a television, you would be the neatest kid on the block. Even though at the beginning they only had a few shows, anything would be fun, in 1956 some scientists did a study on how much kids ages 10-16 watched television. The results showed that a average kid watched six hours of television a day which was equal to how long they went to school everyday. Television was groovy.

One of the popular shows for teenagers was American Bandstand. Dick Clark, the star of the show, got more than fifty thousand fan letters a week. They thought watching this show was more important than doing their homework. Teenagers loved American Bandstand.

Some of the popular television shows are listed below:

<u>Comedy</u>	<u>Drama</u>	<u>Kids</u>
I Love Lucy The Honeymooners The Families of the Fifties	Dragnet The Twilight Zone Superman Private Everywhere	Howdy Doody Time Lassie Walt Disney Mickey Mouse Club

In 1952 movies became more than just movies. In the month of November the first 3-D movie, Bwana Devil, was able to be seen. At first people were amused by this optical illusion, but the fad did not last very long at all.

In 1956 rock and roll became known to parents as bad, unhealthy, basically not right. Boyfriends threatened to break up with their girl if she went to his performances. Girls who went to the performances came home and broke with their guys before they had a chance to do anything. Ed Sullivan, a host of a weekly television show said Elvis's music was unfit for a family audience. Younger people did not agree. They thought the music was new and stylish and a great way to be different.

.Neato Toys

During World War Two toy companies were actually making supplies for the war. So afterwards they had fascinating ideas for new dolls and games. They started to see wonderful new material, like plastic. In 1948, Lionel produced new trains. In 1949, Silly Putty started there were over 30 million Silly Putty eggs sold. In that year Lego was introduced. Matchbox Cars, a favorite to little boys now were invented in 1954. In 1957, Hula Hoops were invented in. They became a fad in 1958, but it was shortly over in 1959 when Barbie took over. Then in 1960 Etch-a-Sketch was put in stores, a favorite of mine. In 1961 Ken was introduced to the world, Barbie had fallen in love! Slip'n Slide was also introduced. There were some pretty neat toys introduced in the fifties.

Teen Idols

The teens of the fifties had many role models. Some of them were known as "hip", "groovy", or "cool". Some of the teen idols were Frankie Avalon, Bobby Darin, Fabian, Ricky Nelson, Paul Anka, and Bobby Rydell. Below are some of their famous sayings.

- Frankie Avalon - If a miss wants to be kissed instead of cuddled, And to this you are in doubt as what to say, When a girl changes from bobby socks to stockings, Then she is old enough to give her heart away.
- Bobby Darin - There was lollipop with-a Peggy Sue, Good Golly, Miss Molly was-a even there, too! A-well-a Splish Splash, I forgot to about the bath I went and put my dancin' shoes on, yay...
- Fabian - Turn me loose, Turn me lose, I say. Gonna rock and roll As long as the band's gonna play
- Bobby Rydell - Forget him, If he doesn't love you. Forget him, If he doesn't care...
- Ricky Nelson - Some people call me a teenage idol, Some people say they envy me. I guess they got no way of knowing how lonesome I can be.
- Paul Anka - And they call it Puppy Love just because we're seventeen. Tell them all, oh, please tell them it isn't fair to take away my only dream.

Expert Group # 2: Politics

The Cold War and the Korean War

The Cold War was the name of a military conflict with no actual warring. Beginning after World War II, it was a time of diplomatic struggles and mutual suspicion between the United States and a group of nations led by the Soviet Union. The United States, being a democracy, was at odds with the communist ideals of China and the Soviet Union. The fear of Communism was very powerful in the United States. In Congress there was a series of highly publicized inquiries into pro-Communist activity. The best-known investigator was Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, who was known for his strong stance on anticommunism. McCarthy first attracted attention in February 1950, with the charge that the Department of State had been infiltrated by Communists. Although his accusation was never substantiated, during the next several years he repeatedly accused various high-ranking officials of "subversive" activities. Many movie actors and actresses were also thought to be communists at that time.

A by-product of the Cold War was the Korean War. When Communist North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950, President Truman sent the American military into action. The Korean War ended three bloody years later in a truce that left the border between North and south Korea intact, the infamous 38th parallel. The U.S. suffered 157,530 casualties and South Korea sustained over 1.3 million casualties. Estimated Communist casualties were 2 million.

Civil Rights

In the 1800's there was slavery. We passed a law that said you could not do such a thing, but even after that the blacks were not treated fairly. There were schools in the fifties that did not allow blacks. The schools for the whites were nice and clean. The schools for the blacks had very little supplies and were dirty. In the south states, they spent, on a average, ten times more money on white schools then they did on black schools. In 1954 this changed; those schools that had segregated children had to bring them together. Just because they were in school together didn't mean everything was fair. When I was researching on this project I found a picture of a black girl and white girl looking at each other. This made me very sad. I felt just terrible.

Expert Group # 3: Fashion

When the 40's ended and the 50's, began few people realized the world was entering a prosperous time in history. As the 1950's continued, the average American lifestyle improved steadily. Money was now available for consumer goods and fashionable clothes at all price levels. After years of rations on almost everything, Americans were in the mood for lavish designs. People from this decade sometimes view the 50's as a decade of "drab conformity". Men's formal and informal wear was very plain and basic, nothing too exciting. However, women's wear, especially evening wear, was the crowning jewel of designer's creations. Women of the 1950's dreamt of glamour and elegance. Women's evening wear had everything to do with the glamour and extravagance, while casual and day wear clearly defined elegance and simplicity.

In the 50's, women looked "subdued" by day and the "blossomed" at night. Women's clothing was full-skirted evening gowns made of chiffon, stiff satin, and taffeta with whalebone corsets sown into the dress to give women an ultra-feminine "hour glass" figure. In the late 50's, the corsets, however, were cast off for a more comfortable feel and a more natural look. In the 50's, the feminine figure was emphasized by clinched, belted waists. The shirtwaist dress was an essential part of any women's wardrobe. This dress was made to look neat all day and designed in small scale or solid patterns. The accented waist was very important in the 50's. For the career woman, there was the ever popular and smart looking suit. The skirt length sometimes changed daily and the changes were posted daily in the newspaper. They ranged from mod-calf to just above the ankles. Worn with narrow heeled pumps and a waist-length jacket, the outfit was complete. Busy days and entertaining nights were the basic cycle of the 50's for some.

For teens in the 50's, there were many stereotypes with the different styles. For the female "preps," there were cashmere sweaters and the poodle skirt. For the "jocks", there was the 1950's gym wear. For the "greasers," there was the rolled-up t-shirt in either black or white, then the black leather jacket with the collar turned up to be "hip." Finally, the girls who were dating the greasers would wear pedal pushers, probably in gold and a scarf. There were many role models and influences in the 50's: Marilyn Monroe, James Dean with his rebel look, Elvis Presley and Elizabeth Taylor. They will represent the 50's and its style forever.

Expert Group # 4: Technology

There were some new technologies in the fifties. Television was just one of them. In 1950 Paper Mate made its first leak free ball point pen. The first copy machine was made 1950 also. The Chevrolet Corvette becomes the first car to have a all-fiberglass body in 1953. In 1954 Bell Telephone labs produce solar battery. In 1954 you could get a yard of contact paper for only 59 cents. Polypropylene was invented in 1954. In 1955 Jonas Salk invented a polio vaccine which was given to more than seven million American students. In 1956 a solar powered wrist watch was invented.

A surprise came in 1957; a 184 pound satellite was launched by the Russians. They named it Sputnik 1. The space race begins 4 months later the United States launched a smaller satellite. In 1958 the first plastic Coke bottle appeared.

TIMELINE: 1950s

Technical Communication	Year	Science/Technology
Engineers and technicians do most of the technical writing.	1950	The United States begins a foreign aid project, the Point Four Program, designed to bring technological skills to developing nations.
Ads for technical writers appear in the "Help Wanted"	1951	John Mauchley and J. Presper Eckert build UNIVAC 1, the first computer to be commercially available and the first to store data on magnetic tape. First useful electric power is produced at the national reactor testing station at Arco, Idaho.
Joseph D. Chapline documents the UNIVAC computer, using examples to document its functions.	1952	UNIVAC 1 correctly predicts the outcome of the U. S. presidential election – a landslide victory for Eisenhower – but no one believes it.
Two of the Society of Technical Communication's three parent organizations were founded: the Association of Technical Writers and Editors (TWE) and the Society of Technical Writers (STW). In April, a group of about 40 technical writers gather at the "Workshop on the Production and Use of Technical Reports," and debate the need for a national professional association dedicated to technical documentation. This led to the November meeting of 40 technical writers and editors who formed the Association of Technical Writers and Editors (TWE). On October 7, 50 technical writers and editors meet to form the Society of Technical Writers (STW). Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute announces a Master of Science degree in Technical Communication, the first of its kind, and also hold its first Technical Writers Institute for professionals.	1953	In Philadelphia, John Gibbon, M. D. performs the first successful open-heart surgery at Jefferson Medical College, using the heart-lung machine that he invented. Francis Crick and James Watson present their double-helix model of the DNA molecule. IBM releases its first mainframe computer, the Model 701. The first phototypesetters, invented in France, go into use in the U. S. Norbert Weiner defines "Cybernetics" as "the study of the control and communication in the animal and the machine."

Expert Group #4: Technology (cont'd)

<p>In Pasadena, California, Charles Van Hagan and Ted Tyler found the Technical Publishing Society (TPS), the third organization that eventually merged to become STC.</p>	<p>1954</p>	<p>Dr. Jonas Salk develops a polio vaccine and begins a program of mass vaccination of children.</p> <p>In an area of California that will become known as “Silicon Valley,” Texas Instruments creates a new generation of transistors using silicon in place of germanium.</p> <p>TV Dinners are introduced in the U. S.</p>
<p>Technical communication professionals and technical communication educators begin a “dialogue” to make courses more relevant to “real-world” requirements of the profession, including both the visual and verbal aspects of communication.</p>	<p>1955</p>	<p>The Velcro fastener is patented.</p>
<p>The Council of Biology Editors holds its first annual meeting.</p>	<p>1956</p>	<p>John Backus and a team at IBM invent FORTRAN, the first computer programming language.</p> <p>John McCarthy develops Lisp, a list-processing computer language often used in artificial intelligence.</p> <p>Burroughs demonstrates the first desk-sized computer, the E-101, intended for use by engineers and scientists, not businesses.</p>
<p>The Society of Technical Writers (STW) and the Association of Technical Writers (TWE) join forces to become the Society of Technical Writers and Editors (STWE). The new society publishes a journal called <i>STWE Review</i>.</p> <p>The Technical Publication Society (TPS) holds the first national competition for technical publications and technical art. The winning entries are displayed at the TPS’s fifth annual conference.</p>	<p>1957</p>	<p>In October, the Soviet Union launches the world’s first artificial satellite, Sputnik I. A month later, Sputnik 2 carries a dog, Laika, into space, with instruments to monitor her body’s reactions to space flight.</p>
<p>STWE develops a set of canons for ethical conduct.</p> <p>The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) establishes the journal <i>Transactions on Engineering Writing and Speech</i>, later call the <i>IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication</i>.</p> <p>B. F. Weil, editor, publishes the first book devoted to technical editing.</p>	<p>1958</p>	<p>In the United States, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is formally inaugurated.</p>
<p>The Internal Revenue Service rules that STC is a nonprofit, Federal tax-exempt business league as defined by IRS regulation 501 (c)(6).</p>	<p>1959</p>	<p>Grace Murray Hopper and her team invent the Common Business Oriented Language (COBOL) computer language, designed to be more English-like and human-readable than previous computer languages.</p> <p>Strunk and White publish the first edition of <i>The Element of Style</i>.</p>
