

Name _____



Facing Adulthood

Holden Caulfield didn't want to grow up. To him, adulthood was full of phoniness—people pretending to be someone they weren't, chasing money, and forgetting what really mattered. He wanted to stay young forever, where people were still honest and life wasn't complicated.

At the beginning of his journey, Holden saw adulthood as something to avoid. He believed that most adults were fake

and selfish. When he got kicked out of yet another school, he didn't want to face his parents or his responsibilities. Instead, he ran away to New York City, hoping to escape his problems. But everywhere he went, he saw reminders of the adult world—people obsessed with success, people lying to each other, and people acting like something they weren't.

Holden's attitude toward growing up became more complicated as he spent time with his little sister, Phoebe. She was one of the few people he truly loved. She was still young, innocent, and honest—everything Holden wanted to protect. That's why he dreamed of being "the catcher in the rye." He imagined himself standing at the edge of a big field, catching children before they fell off a cliff. To him, this cliff symbolized growing up and losing innocence. He wanted to save children from becoming adults, from entering a world he didn't trust.

But over time, Holden started to realize something: growing up wasn't something he could stop. Even Phoebe would grow up one day. He couldn't freeze time, no matter how much he wanted to. At the end of the novel, he watches Phoebe ride a carousel, laughing and happy. In that moment, Holden feels something new—acceptance. Maybe growing up wasn't all bad. Maybe it was possible to grow up without becoming a phony.

Holden's journey shows the struggle of facing adulthood. He resists it, fears it, and even tries to run from it. But by the end, he begins to understand that growing up is a part of life. He doesn't have all the answers yet, but he realizes that he can't avoid the future forever.