

**Note:** the 'Advice' section that accompanies the following question will **not** be present on the exam paper!

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**J.D. Salinger: *The Catcher in the Rye***

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**Look carefully at the following extract. It is taken from chapter 16 of the novel.**

'The best thing, though, in that museum was that everything always stayed right where it was. Nobody'd move. You could go there a hundred thousand times, and that Eskimo would still be just finished catching those two fish, the birds would still be on their way south, the deers would still be drinking out of that water hole, with their pretty antlers and their pretty, skinny legs, and that squaw with the naked bosom would still be weaving that same blanket. Nobody'd be different. The only thing that would be different would be *you*. Not that you'd be so much older or anything. It wouldn't be that, exactly. You'd just be different, that's all. You'd have an overcoat on this time. Or the kid that was your partner in line the last time had got scarlet fever and you'd have a new partner. Or you'd have a substitute taking the class, instead of Miss Aigletinger. Or you'd heard your mother and father having a terrific fight in the bathroom. Or you'd just passed by one of those puddles in the street with gasoline rainbows in them. I mean you'd be *different* in some way – I can't explain what I mean. And even if I could, I'm not sure I'd feel like it.'

**Write about:**

- **how the writer presents The Museum of Natural History in this extract.**
  - **the significance of this extract to the novel as a whole.** (27 marks)
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Advice:

In order to answer the above question, you need to think carefully about:

- **The narrative and language used by the author.** For example, how would you describe the tone of this extract? How does Salinger use details to build up a picture of the Museum? Why does Salinger start four sentences in a row with 'or'?
- **The effect on the reader.** For example, do we understand what Holden means? Why do you think he feels he can't explain?
- **The way in which characters, themes and ideas are revealed.** For example, what does the museum represent? What changes? How does Holden feel about these changes?

You should ...

- write about 'the writer' / 'Salinger' / 'the author' and the techniques he uses.
- write about the 'reader' and how they might feel and react to the text.
- use short quotations to support your ideas.
- write about the language, voice, narrative.
- use interesting adjectives to describe the effects of the text or any interesting phrases.
- write about the themes, symbols, characters, setting or ideas that are presented to the reader.

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**Look carefully at the following extract. It is taken from chapter 24 of the novel.**

‘Mr Antolini didn’t say anything for a while. He got up and got another hunk of ice and put it in his drink, then he sat down again. You could tell he was thinking. I kept wishing, though, that he’d continue the conversation in the morning, instead of now, but he was hot. People are mostly hot to have a discussion when you’re not.

‘All right. Listen to me a minute now... I may not word this as memorably as I’d like to, but I’ll write you a letter about it in a day or two. Then you can get it all straight. But listen now, anyway.’ He started concentrating again. Then he said, ‘This fall I think you’re riding for – it’s a special kind of fall, a horrible kind. The man falling isn’t permitted to feel or hear himself hit bottom. He just keeps falling and falling. The whole arrangement’s designed for men who, at some point in their lives, were looking for something their own environment couldn’t supply them with. Or they thought their own environment couldn’t supply them with. So they gave up looking. They gave it up before they ever really got started. You follow me?’

**How does Salinger use this episode to provide the reader with an insight into the character of Holden? You should go on to discuss the significance of this extract to the novel as a whole.**

*(27 marks)*

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Advice:

You should consider:

- **The narrative and language used by the author.** For example, how would you describe the tone of this extract? How does the language used by Holden and that used by Mr Antolini differ? What is the effect of this?
- **The effect on the reader.** For example, do we understand what Mr Antolini means? Does Holden respond in the way we would expect?
- **The way in which characters, themes and ideas are revealed.** For example, what does Mr Antolini suggest is happening to Holden? To what extent do you think he is right? How does Holden react to this situation? How do you (as a reader) feel about Holden’s reaction?

You should ...

- write about ‘the writer’ / ‘Salinger’ / ‘the author’ and the techniques he uses
- write about the ‘reader’ and how they might feel and react to the text
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**Look carefully at the following extract. It is taken from Chapter 14 of the novel.**

‘But I’m crazy. I swear to God I am. About halfway to the bathroom, I sort of started pretending I had a bullet in my guts. Old Maurice had plugged me. Now I was on the way to the bathroom to get a good shot of bourbon or something to steady my nerves and help me *really* go into action. I pictured myself coming out of the goddam bathroom, dressed and all, with my automatic in my pocket, and staggering around a little bit. Then I’d walk downstairs, instead of using the elevator. I’d hold onto the banister and all, with this blood trickling out of the side of my mouth a little at a time. What I’d do, I’d walk down a few floors – holding onto my guts, blood leaking all over the place – and then I’d ring the elevator bell. As soon as old Maurice opened the doors, he’d see me with the automatic in my hand and he’d start screaming at me, in this very high-pitched, yellow-belly voice, to leave him alone. But I’d plug him anyway. Six shots right through his fat hairy belly. Then I’d throw my automatic down the elevator shaft – after I’d wiped off all the finger prints and all. Then I’d crawl back to my room and call up Jane and have her come over and bandage up my guts. I pictured her holding a cigarette for me to smoke while I was bleeding and all.

The goddam movies. They can ruin you. I’m not kidding.’

**How does Salinger present Holden in this extract? How does the reader react to Holden’s fantasy? You should go on to discuss the significance of this extract to the novel as a whole.**

(27 marks)

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Advice:

You should think carefully about:

- **The narrative and language used by the author.** For example, how would you describe the tone of this extract? Describe the language used by Holden. What effect does the language have? Explain how Holden creates a fantasy image of himself.
- **The effect on the reader.** For example, how does the reader react to Holden in this extract? What do you think about the fantasy world that he is creating?
- **The way in which characters, themes and ideas are revealed.** For example, how does this relate to Holden’s view of the movies? These fantasies occur with regularity throughout the novel - what effect do they have? What do they suggest about Holden’s state of mind?

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Look carefully at the following extract. It is taken from Chapter 5 of the novel.

'My brother Allie had this left-handed fielder's mitt. He was left-handed. The thing that was descriptive about it, though, was that he had poems written all over the fingers and the pocket and everywhere. In green ink. He wrote them on it so that he'd have something to read when he was in the field and nobody was up at bat. He's dead now. He got leukaemia and died when we were up in Maine, on July 18, 1946. You'd have liked him. He was two years younger than I was, but about fifty times as intelligent ... But it wasn't just that he was the most intelligent member in the family. He was also the nicest, in lots of ways. He never got mad at anybody. People with red hair are supposed to get mad very easily, but Allie never did, and he had very red hair... God he was a nice kid, though. He used to laugh so hard at something he thought of at the dinner table that he just about fell off his chair. I was only thirteen, and they were going to have me psychoanalyzed and all, because I broke all the windows in the garage. I don't blame them. I really don't. I slept in the garage the night he died, and I broke all the goddam windows with my fist, just for the hell of it... It was a very stupid thing to do, I'll admit, but I hardly didn't even know I was doing it, and you didn't know Allie.'

**How does Salinger present Holden in this passage? You should go on to discuss the significance of this extract to the novel as a whole.**

(27 marks)

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Advice:

You should think carefully about:

- **The narrative and language used by the author.** For example, how would you describe the tone of this extract? How does Salinger use detail to create a picture of Allie? How does the language used here differ to that used in other parts of the novel?
- **The effect on the reader.** For example, how does the reader react to Holden in this extract? Does this extract shed any light on Holden's behaviour?
- **The way in which characters, themes and ideas are revealed.** For example, What other characters in the novel allow us to see this side of Holden? How does his initial reaction to Allie's death resemble his behaviour throughout the novel?

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