



A Reader's Companion to J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*

Peter G. Beidler

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Peter G. Beidler's Reader's Companion is an indispensable guide for teachers, students, and general readers who want fully to appreciate Salinger's perennial bestseller. Now nearly six decades old, *The Catcher in the Rye* contains references to people, places, books, movies, and historical events that will puzzle many twenty-first-century readers. Beidler's guide provides some 250 explanations to help readers make sense of the culture through which Holden Caulfield stumbles as he comes of age. It provides a map showing the various stops in Holden's Manhattan odyssey. Of particular interest to readers whose native language is not English is the glossary of more than a hundred terms, phrases, and slang expressions. In his introductory essay, "Catching The Catcher in the Rye," Beidler discusses such topics as the three-day time line for the novel, the way the novel grew out of two earlier-published short stories, the extent to which the novel is autobiographical, what Holden looks like, and the reasons for the enduring appeal of the novel. The many photographs in the Reader's Companion give fascinating glimpses into the world that Holden has made famous. Beidler also provides discussion of some of the issues that have engaged scholars down through the years: the meaning of Holden's red hunting hat, whether Holden writes his novel in an insane asylum, Mr. Antolini's troubling actions, and Holden's close relationship with his sister and his two brothers. Readers of *A Reader's Companion to J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye* will wonder how they managed without it before.

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Dwight Richardson:

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