

LESSON PLAN

Playlist for Holden: Character Analysis With Music and Lyrics



Grades 7 - 12
Lesson Plan Type Minilesson
Estimated Time Two 45-minute sessions
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INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will

- Analyze a fictional character (through dialogue, plot, conflict, and resolution)
- Evaluate lyrics and music of popular songs for appropriate thematic connections with the character
- Apply evidence from the text to support their selections

SESSION 1

1. Ask students to think about each statement on the board and to decide which they feel is the more accurate assessment of Holden Caulfield (see Preparation, Step 5). Have them write a short list of reasons for their choice.
2. Under their list of reasons for choosing Statement 1 or Statement 2, ask students to compile a list of two or three scenes from the book that support their choice, making note of the page number for each scene.
3. After students have worked individually to write rationales and identify scenes from the book (with their corresponding page numbers), ask them to announce their perspective (siding with either Statement 1 or Statement 2) and form a group with two to three other students (four students maximum per group) who share the same view.
4. Have each group select a group leader and then have students share their rationales with their group. The group leader compiles the lists of reasons and scenes into a single list, ferreting out weak choices and adding any new ones suggested during the discussion.
5. When all groups are ready, each group's list is presented to the class by the group leader. Encourage students

to comment upon the relative merits of the evidence provided.

Note: This is a good introduction to the project, as it allows students a chance to develop individual opinions of Holden, as well as to think of the moments within the novel that may have shaped those opinions. Once students have discussed their thoughts about Holden in their groups and you are comfortable with their understanding of the character, move on to the larger project.

6. Have students move back to their original seats. Distribute the [Playlist for Holden Assignment](#) handout and go over the instructions.
7. Discuss the handout step by step to clarify expectations.
8. Have students begin brainstorming for songs they may wish to use; ask students to write down lists of songs and some possible related scenes.

SESSION 2

Note: Session 2 may follow directly after Session 1.

1. Have students return to their groups from Session 1. Students will work together to create the rationale, the letter, and the playlist, with one student acting as the leader for each assignment. The group leader begins by describing the overall process and explaining possible difficulties or differences of opinion within the group. The group leader then compiles a playlist agreed upon by group members and ensures that the correlations for each song are well-substantiated through textual evidence.
2. A second member of the group leads the letter writing, and a third member of the group crafts the rationale. (The fourth member of the group, if there is one, helps with the rationale or the letter.)
3. When all groups have finished their playlists, rationales, and letters, have each group present their work to the rest of the class. The student in charge of the rationale presents Holden's playlist, along with evidence from the book for each song selected. The student in charge of writing the letter reads it to class.
4. After each presentation, invite students from other groups to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of songs on the playlist, citing compatible or contrary evidence from the book. Also invite students to comment upon the suitability of the letter to Holden.

EXTENSIONS

Students who are more visual may prefer to tell Holden's story in graphic novel format. See [Holden Caulfield—The Graphic Novel](#) handout for a description of this project. [Assessment for Holden Caulfield—The Graphic Novel](#) can be used to evaluate this project.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT/REFLECTIONS

Use the rubrics [Assessment for Playlist for Holden: The Songs](#) and [Assessment for Playlist for Holden: The Letter](#) to evaluate the projects. You can either evaluate the projects as a whole, with each member of the group receiving the same grade, or, if you prefer, assign individual grades based upon the primary responsibilities of each student during the project.

