*The Catcher in the Rye* Pre-Reading Notes

~Setting: Pencey Prep/New York 1950s

~Published in 1951 (Post Modernism)

~Historical context: In the 1950s, social pressures to conform were intense. However, teenagers were becoming more rebellious and taking social cues from rock and roll and “beatniks”. *The Catcher in the Rye* reflects this conflict.

Be paying attention to/make note of the following elements of the text:

~ Themes relating to conformity, alienation and loneliness, failure, guilt and innocence, and the quest for identity.

~ Holden as an unreliable narrator.

~Narrative structure: 1st POV, dialect, unreliable, frame story (Holden as narrator past and present), the plot takes place over the course of three days

~Conflict: Holden has conflicts with family, school, and society

~ Symbols and Motifs: red hunting hat, ducks in Central Park, the catcher in the rye, baseball glove, Museum of Natural History, carousel