**[Will Smith’s Monologue in Six Degrees Of Separation](http://myspace.ca/movies/movie-talk/will-smith-awesome-monologue-in-six-degrees-of-separation.html" \o "Permanent Link to Will Smith Awesome Monologue in Six Degrees Of Separation)**

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A substitue teacher out on Long Island was dropped from his job for fighting with a student. A few weeks later, he returned to the classroom, shot the student, unsuccessfully held the class hostage, and then shot himself… Successfully. This fact caught my eye; last sentence, *Times*: ‘A neighbor described the teacher as a nice boy; always reading *Catcher in the Rye*. This nitwit Chapman, who shot John Lennon, said he did it because he wanted to draw the attention of the world to *Catcher in the Rye; and the reading of this book would be his defense. Young Hinckley the ‘wiz-kid’ who shot Reagan and his press secretary and said: ‘If you want my defense, all you have to do is read … Catcher in the Rye.’*

*I borrowed a copy [of the book] from a young friend of mine, because I wanted to see what she had underlined; and I read this book to find out why this touching, beautiful, sensitive story published in July 1951 had turned into this manifesto of hate. I started reading; it’s exactly as I’d remembered; everybody’s a phony. Page 2: ‘My brother’s in Hollywood being a prostitute.’ Page 3: ‘What a phony slob his father was.’ Page 9: ‘People never notice anything.’ Then, on page 22, my hair stood up; remember HOlden Caulfiend, the definitive, sensitive youth wearing his red hunter’s cap?: ‘A deer hunter’s cap? Like hell it is. I sort of closed one eye, like I was taking aim at it. This is a people-shooting hat. I shoot people in this hat.’ This book is preparing people for bigger moments in their lives than I had ever dreamed of. Then, on page 89: ‘I’d rather push a guy out the window or chop his head off with an ax, than sock him in the jaw. I hate fist fights. What scares me most is the other man’s face.’*

*“I finished the book, it’s a touching story; comic because the boy wants to do so much and can’t do anything; hates all phoniness and only lies to others; wants everyone to like him, but is only hateful and is completely self-involved. In other words: A pretty accurate picture of a male adolescent.*

*And what alarms me about the book, well not the book so much as the aura about it is this: The book is primarily about paralysis, the boy can’t function; and at the end before he can run away and start a new life, it starts to rain and he folds. Now, there’s nothing wrong in writing about emotional and intellectual paralysis. It may, indeed, thanks to Checov and Samuel Beckett, be the great modern theme. The extraordinary last lines of Waiting for Godot: ‘Let’s go.’ ‘Yes, let’s go.’ Stage directions: ‘They do not move.’ But the aura around this book of Salinger’s; which perhaps should be read by everyone but young men is this: It mirrors like a Fun-House mirror and amplifies like a distorted speaker one of the great tragedies of our times: The death of the imagination. Because what else is paralysis?*

*The imagination has been so debased that imagination… Being imaginative, rather than being the linchpin of our existence now stands as a synonym for something outside ourselves. LIke science fiction or some new use for tangerine slices on raw pork chops. ‘What an imaginative summer recipe.’ And Star Wars, ‘so imaginative.’ And Star Trek, ‘so imaginative.’ And Lord of the Rings, ‘all those dwarves; so imaginative.’*

*The imagination has moved out of the realm of being our link; our most personal link with our inner lives and the world outside that world is this world we share. What is schizophrenia but a horrifying state where what’s in here [our minds] doesn’t match up with what’s out there? Why has imagination become a synonym for style? I believe the imagination is the passport that we create to help take us into the real world. I believe the imagination is merely a phrase for what is most uniquely us.*

*Jung says the greatest sin is to be unconscious. Our boy Holden says: ‘What scares me most is the other guy’s face. It wouldn’t be so bad if you could both be blindfolded.’ Most of the time the faces that we face are not the other guys’, but our own faces. And it is the worst kind of yellowness: to be so scared of yourself that you put blindfolds on rather than deal with yourself.*

*To face ourselves, that’s the hard thing. ”The imagination: That’s God’s gift to make the act of self-examination bearable.”*

As you can see, The Catcher in the Rye has been used here as a springboard to a much larger philosophical discussion. You are to write a similar “manifesto” as well in which you develop a philosophical argument by tracing threads of the book. Notice his “thread” at the beginning of this:

*I started reading; it’s exactly as I’d remembered; everybody’s a phony. Page 2: ‘My brother’s in Hollywood being a prostitute.’ Page 3: ‘What a phony slob his father was.’ Page 9: ‘People never notice anything.’*

Obviously, this is hard work. You need to make many logical threads of the novel and then tie them together.

Three threads would work well. Mirror what you see above, but make this uniquely yours.