

Catch-your Playlist

TIME

This lesson is to be implemented in one 50-minute period on Thursday, February 17, 2011.

SETTING

11th grade English classroom with 25 students

THEORY INTO PRACTICE BACKGROUND

1. I am constantly searching for opportunities to integrate students' out-of-school experiences, interests and activities into classroom content. In their book *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*, Banks & Banks stresses the importance of content integration. This dimension of multicultural education deals with "the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups" (20). Although this primarily talks about culture integration, I think the point is that students should be able to relate to the content in a personal way. Music is a significant part of many adolescents' experience and often makes deep connections with them in ways that other literary texts fail to do. By allowing students to listen to music and use it analyze Holden's character, I can capture and sustain students' interests. Further, the homework assignment allows students to bring in songs from their own culture, which asks students to delve into multiple dimensions of their identity.
2. Prior to this lesson, students will have read up to chapter 22 in the novel. They will have participated in the Silent Conversation activity, through which they got a chance to think and respond to engaging questions that require them to think critically, offer interpretations and make personal connections. This activity should have adequately prepared them for their third reading quiz, which covered Ch. 13-20. Please refer to the Silent Conversation lesson plan for a more specific overview of background content information.
3. First, the "What's in Holden's iPod?" worksheet is designed to help students think critically about Holden's character / identity and make connections to a few songs that have been inspired by the artist's reading of *The Catcher in the Rye*. The fact that this information has been confirmed either through published interviews or album liner notes is meaningful in that students are not forced to make connections to something that they may not even know relates to the novel. In doing this activity, they will be encouraged to think from Holden's perspective and gain a better understanding and personal connection to him.

Moreover, the “If I Were A Song” homework assignment is intended to help students meet the second objective, which is to think about how they identify themselves vs. how others identify them. One of the essential questions for this thematic unit is: “Is how we identify with ourselves more important than how others identify us?” Using the first activity as a way to think about music as a viable way to capture one’s identity, students will be encouraged to come up with two songs that represent how they identify with themselves, and another that captures how they think others identify them. Their ability to detect this difference is one way for them to begin discovering how their perception of self.

4. This lesson focuses on helping students understand Holden’s character on a personal level. By listening to the songs that have been inspired by the artist’s reading and understanding of Holden, students are being asked to view the world through a character’s lens, as well. The more important objective for this lesson is accomplished through their homework assignment, where they will have to come up with songs that they identify with. This is intended to help students in their search for self—more specifically, in articulating how they identify themselves.

OBJECTIVES

After this class, students will be able to (1) understand songs and its lyrics from the perspective of Holden, and in doing so, gain a better understanding of his identity; (2) think about how they identify themselves vs. how others identify them; (3) use and understand and use music as a viable way to capture or describe their identity.

MATERIALS

- *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger
- 5 working laptops with wireless connection
- “What’s in Holden’s iPod?” Packet (Worksheet #1)
- “What’s in Holden’s iPod?” Rubric (Worksheet #2)
- “If I Were A Song...” Worksheet (Worksheet #3)
- A transparency copy of the lyrics to “If 6 Was 9” by Jimi Hendrix (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSDIfbsr92g>) (Worksheet #4)

PREPARATION

- Pre-assign 5 groups of 5 students for the group activity.
- Have the song “If 6 Was 9” by Jimi Hendrix ready to play.
- Check out laptops cart (at least 5 laptops)

PROCEDURE

Before class

- Stand by the door and distribute “What’s in Holden’s iPod?” packet.

Introduction of Lesson: 12 min.

- *3 min* When students settle in, introduce the activity as outlined in the worksheet. Explain that they will listen to 5 songs that have been inspired by the artist’s reading of *The Catcher in the Rye*. This has been confirmed either through the artist’s album liner notes or published interviews that attributed the artist’s inspiration to the novel. In groups, they are to use one laptop to go through each of the songs, listen and read to the lyrics, and think about how this relates to *The Catcher in the Rye*. More specifically, why would this song be something that Holden might have on his ipod? What are some lines that Holden can really relate to?
- *5 min* Model this activity with the song “If 6 Was 9” by Jimi Hendrix. Play the song and put the lyrics up on the transparency. As students listen to the song, have them independently write down, on a sheet of paper, why this is something that is representative of *Catcher* and Holden. Encourage them to look for specific lines that call attention to the novel, as well as implicit/underlying connections that can be made.
- *4 min* Discuss students’ responses. Anticipate students to talk about Holden’s jaded outlook on life and his individualistic, “I do what I want” attitude. Ask them to point to certain lines that really connect to the novel.
- *1 min* Break students off into their predetermined groups and have one member of each group grab a laptop from the cart. Assign each group to start with a different song, so that as a class they will have gone through all five songs. Each group should aim to listen to *at least* 3 songs before regrouping as a whole class. Answer any questions they may have about the activity.

Lesson Instruction: 33 min.

- *20 min* Circulate around the room during group work. Ensure that students are on task and using the laptops to listen to songs on Youtube, only. Encourage students to think about whether the lyrics represent Holden’s attitude and outlook on life, precisely capture his emotions at a specific point in the novel, or exemplify his lifestyle, relationships, etc., in any way. Encourage them to think beyond surface-level and make connections that may not be so obvious.
- *13 min* Regroup as a class for a discussion. Starting with the first song, one representative from each group will share with the class. A different member of the group should present for each song. After students have shared their findings, ask the following discussion questions: Do you see any re-occurring / prominent themes or issues within the songs? Do these things accurately capture Holden’s life? In what ways is this *not* an accurate representation of Holden and his life? Can you think of other songs that Holden might listen to? What are some benefits of using music as a way to describe

yourself? If you had a song that captured your identity, what would be its major themes and/or issues?

Closure/Wrap-Up: 5 min.

- *3 min* Wrap up the activity by introducing their homework for the following day. Pass out “If I Were A Song...” worksheet (Worksheet #3) and read the directions aloud. Students are to go home and think of one song that they think captures their identity, and one song that represents how others may view them as a person. If possible, they should email the titles and the artists to me before class, so I can plan accordingly. They are to bring a copy of the lyrics and write a 1 page rationale describing their choice of songs.
- *2 min* Ask students to return the laptops to the cart and bring the desks back in its original formation. Collect their packets. Dismiss students.

DISCUSSION IDEAS

- Why might Holden listen to these songs?
- What are some lines that Holden can really relate to?
- Do you see any re-occurring / prominent themes or issues within the songs?
- Do these things accurately capture Holden’s life?
- In what ways are these songs *not* an accurate representation of Holden’s identity?
- Can you think of other songs that Holden might listen to?
- What are some benefits of using music as a way to describe yourself? What are some downsides?
- If you had a song that captured your identity, what would be its major themes and/or issues?

BILINGUAL/ESL AND ENGLISHES ACCOMMODATIONS

Spanish

- The ELL whose L1 is Spanish will be accommodated in these following ways:
 - ✓ Spanish-English and English-Spanish dictionaries will be provided in the classroom as his L1 resource. He may refer to these whenever necessary—especially as he listens to the songs and read through the lyrics.
 - ✓ This student will be assigned in groups with classmates who are helpful and willing to assist his understanding.
 - ✓ This student will have the option of choosing a song in his native language for the “If I Were A Song...” homework.
 - ✓ He will receive translated copies of all of the lyrics for “What’s in Holden’s iPod?” activity.
 - Jimi Hendrix’s lyrics in Spanish here, and translations for other lyrics can be found on lyricsfreak.com:

http://www.lyricsfreak.com/j/jimi+hendrix/spa:if+6+was+9_20071549.html

- ✓ His rationale will be assessed with a different rubric to accommodate his developing grammar/mechanics.
- ✓ He and I will discuss the possibility of extending his deadline for the rationale; if necessary, his rationale will be due on Monday.
- ✓ I will circulate around the room during group work to assist this ELL student to see if he might need extra assistance.

African American English

- Students who speak African American English will be accommodated in these following ways:
 - ✓ Students will be free to participate in discussion in whichever dialect that is comfortable for them.
 - ✓ Students will not be required to write in Standard English for the “What’s in Holden’s iPod?” activity, since this will be assessed more for content and completion. Also, they will not be required to use SWE for the “If I Were A Song...” rationale, since this assignment asks students to make personal connections to song lyrics and talk about their identities. They should be free to write in whichever dialect that represents their true selves.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ACCOMMODATIONS

“*Asperger’s disorder* is characterized by severe, sustained, and often lifelong impairments in social interactions and the development of restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, and activities” (Rosenberg et al 263).

- The student with Asperger’s disorder will be accommodated in these following ways:
 - ✓ Student will be provided with an agenda of the day’s lesson, which outlines the instructional activities, so that they know what to anticipate when they come to class.
 - ✓ Student will receive all of the discussion questions in advance so they can prepare in what the class will discuss for this particular lesson.
 - ✓ Student will be given enough time to prepare when changing routine in class.
 - ✓ When giving instructions and/or leading discussions, I will use language that is direct and literal, avoiding unnecessary idioms and irony, which may cause confusion.
 - ✓ This student will be assigned with classmates who are friendly, helpful, and can serve as good role models for social behavior.

ASSESSMENT

- Students will be formally assessed on their thoughtful completion and meaningful connection between the song and *Catcher in the Rye* using a rubric (Worksheet #2).

- Students will also be informally assessed on their contribution during group work and their participation in class discussions.

EXTENSION IDEAS

- A modified version of this activity would ask students to think of a song that they believe represents Holden in the novel and share it with the class.
- If time permits, students can watch the music video of the songs and discuss the words *and* images of the song in relation to the novel.

SOURCE OF ACTIVITY

I would like to thank the contributors of English Companion Ning for suggesting the idea of using music to better understand character in relation to the novel. I would also like to extend my gratitude to LitTunes' database for providing me with a great list of songs to pair with my novel.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

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ILLINOIS STATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOALS

- **Goal 1: Apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.**

- **1.B.5a** Relate reading to prior knowledge and experience and make connections to related information.

- ✓ This goal is accomplished as students read the song lyrics inspired by *The Catcher in the Rye*. Students are to treat the lyrics as text and use their prior knowledge about the novel and the way it captures Holden's character—his lifestyle, relationships, emotions, and overall identity. Their prior understanding of Holden and the novel will help them make connections to the re-occurring themes and issues that appear in the lyrics.

- **Goal 3: Read and interpret a variety of literary works.**

- **2.B.5a** Analyze and express an interpretation of a literary work

- ✓ This goal will be accomplished as students reflect on their reading and interpretation of *The Catcher in the Rye* (Ch. 1-21). During "What's in Holden's iPod?" activity, students will have to refer to their analysis and interpretation of the novel and express them within the group in order to make connections to the song lyrics.

- **Goal 4: Speak effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience.**

- **4.B.4b** Use group discussion skills to assume leadership and participant roles within an assigned project or to reach a group goal.

- ✓ Students will get an opportunity to fulfill this goal as they work in groups of 5 to listen to songs and analyze the lyrics. They will have to discuss and collaboratively make connections to Holden. By assuming leadership and participant roles, students will work together to listen to at least 3 songs before regrouping as a class.

“What’s in Holden’s iPod?”

Worksheet #1

When J.D. Salinger first created Holden Caulfield in the 1950’s, there was no such thing as mp3 players or iPods. Instead, they had to carry around pocket radios and Walkmans the size of our novel. But let’s just say, for the sake of this class, that Holden had the luxury of having a 4th generation iPod Touch—what kind of music do you think he would listen to?

The following is a list of songs that were inspired by the artist’s reading of *The Catcher in the Rye*. This was “confirmed either through album liner notes or published interviews that specifically mention the artist’s source of inspiration” (corndancer.com).

- 1) “If 6 Was 9” by Jimi Hendrix
- 2) “World On Fire” by Sarah McLachlan
- 3) “Speedway” by Counting Crows
- 4) “Paint it Black” by Rolling Stones
- 5) “Youth of the Nation” by P.O.D.

In your pre-assigned groups of 5, you are to listen to these songs. Pay close attention to the rhythm, melody, and especially the lyrics. How does the song—especially the lyrics—capture Holden as a person? In other words, how do the lyrics represent Holden’s attitude and outlook on life, capture his emotions at a specific point in the novel, or exemplify his lifestyle, relationships, and etc.? Or, do you even think it does capture Holden’s character?

In the spaces available next to each song, write down how you feel these songs connect to Holden. Feel free to highlight *certain lines* of the song that really represent Holden, or those that do not describe him at all. Listen to these songs from the perspective of Holden!

“WORLD ON FIRE” BY SARAH MCLACHLAN

Hearts are worn in these dark ages
You're not alone in this story's pages
Night has fallen amongst the living and the dying
And I try to hold it in, yeah I try to hold it in

[Chorus]

The world's on fire and
It's more than I can handle
I'll tap into the water
(I try to pull my ship)
I try to bring more
More than I can handle
(Bring it to the table)
Bring what I am able

I watch the heavens and I find a calling
Something I can do to change this moment
Stay close to me while the sky is falling
Don't wanna be left alone, don't wanna be alone

[Chorus]

Hearts break, hearts mend
Love still hurts
Visions clash, planes crash
Still there's talk of
Saving souls, still the cold
Is closing in on us

We part the veil on our killer sun
Stray from the straight line on this short run
The more we take, the less we become
A fortune of one that means less for some

[Chorus X]

“SPEEDWAY” BY COUNTING CROWS

I get so nervous, I'm shaking
It's so I got no pride at all
It gets so bad but I just keep coming back for more
Guess I just get off on that stuff

I'm thinkin' 'bout taking some time
Thinkin' about leavin soon

I got some things I can't tell anyone
I got some things I just can't say
There the kinda things that no one knows about
Just need somebody to talk to me

I'm thinkin' about leaving tomorrow
Thinkin' about being on my own
I think I've been wasting my time
Thinkin' about getting out
Thinkin' about getting out

In all this time, the bottom line
You don't know how much I feel
You say you see but I don't agree
Don't know, don't know how I feel

Just trying to get myself some gravity
Your just trying to get me to stay
Sometimes I sit here looking down upon Los Angeles
Sometimes I'm floating away

Thinkin' about breaking myself
Thinkin' about getting back home
Think I've been waiting way to long
Thinkin' 'bout getting out
Thinkin 'bout getting out
Thinkin 'bout getting out

“PAINT IT BLACK” BY ROLLING STONES

Paint It, Black

I see a red door and I want it painted black
No colors anymore I want them to turn black
I see the girls walk by dressed in their summer clothes
I have to turn my head until my darkness goes

I see a line of cars and they're all painted black
With flowers and my love both never to come back
I see people turn their heads and quickly look away
Like a new born baby it just happens every day

I look inside myself and see my heart is black
I see my red door and must have it painted black
Maybe then I'll fade away and not have to face the facts
It's not easy facin' up when your whole world is black

No more will my green sea go turn a deeper blue
I could not foresee this thing happening to you

If I look hard enough into the settin' sun
My love will laugh with me before the mornin' comes

I see a red door and I want it painted black
No colors anymore I want them to turn black
I see the girls go by dressed in their summer clothes
I have to turn my head until my darkness goes

Hmm, hmm, hmm...

I wanna see it tainted, tainted black
Black as night, black as coal
I wanna see the sun blotted out from the sky
I wanna see it tainted, tainted, tainted, tainted black
Yeah!

Hmm, hmm, hmm...

“YOUTH OF THE NATION” BY P.O.D.

Last day of the rest of my life I wish I would have known cause i'd have kissed my
momma goobye. I didn't tell her that I loved her or how much cared or thank my
pops for all the talks and all the wisdom he shared. Unaware I just did what I
always do. Everyday the same routine before I skate off to school but who knew
that this day wasnt like the rest, instead of takin the test I took two to the chest.
Call me blind but I didn't see it comin and everybody was runnin but I couldn't
hear nothin, except gun blast, it happened so fast I didn't really know this kid
though I sat by him in class. Maybe this kid was reachin out for love or maybe
for a moment he forgot who he was or maybe this kid just wanted to be hugged,
whatever it was I know its because

CHORUS

We are We are the youth of the nation (repeat)x4

Little Suzy she was only twelve she was given the world with every chance to
excel

Hang with the boys and hear the stories they tell she might act kinda proud
but no respect for herself

She finds love in all the wrong places the same situations but different faces.
Changed up her pace since her daddy left her too bad he never told her she
deserved much better.

Johnny boy always played the fool, he broke all the rules so you would think he
was cool.

He was never really one of the guys no matter how hard he tried, with the
thought of suicide

It's kinda hard when you ain't got no friends, he put his life to an end they
might remember him then.

You cross a line and there is no turnin back he told the world how he felt with
the sound of a gat.

CHORUS x4

Whos to blame for the life that tragedies claim no matter what you say it won't
take away the pain, that I feel inside I'm tired of all the lies don't nobody know
why it's the blind leadin the blind.

Guess that's the way that the story goes, will it ever make sense somebody's
gotta know, there's gotta be more to life than this, there's got to be more to everything
I thought exists

“What’s in Holden’s iPod?” Rubric

Worksheet #2

	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Content	Shows evidence of meaningful connection between songs and Holden’s identity.	Shows careless or inaccurate connections between songs and Holden’s identity.
Completion	Worksheet is completed and turned in on time	Worksheet is incomplete or not turned in on time

If I Were A Song...

Worksheet #3

Now that you've gotten a chance to listen to songs that have been inspired by *The Catcher in the Rye*, I would like for you to **think of a song that you think captures yourself**. Have you ever listened to a song that made you think, "Wow, this describes me so perfectly!" Approach this as creatively as you'd like; you can choose a song because you can identify with the person in the song, the emotions that the song evoke, your current perception of self, your overall goals in life, your morals, beliefs, etc. Then, I would like you to **choose a song that captures how you think others identify you**. In other words, how do you think others view you? If your friends or family chose a song that they thought described you, what would it be? Is there a difference between the way you identify yourself and how others identify you? For some, these two songs may be the same—for others, it may be different. **PLEASE ensure that your song is school appropriate! Your song may be in a different language—as long as you understand the lyrics and ideally can provide translations!**

After you've chosen these two songs, write a **minimum** of 1-page rationale that explains your decision. Why did you choose the songs you did? Which parts of the song captures your identity (or your identity as others perceive it to be)? **If you only chose one song, clearly indicate *why* in your rationale.** Remember to bring a copy of the lyrics to your song(s).

For this assignment, you may bring your iPods to class if both of your songs are stored in them. ☺

This assignment is worth 15 points and is due TOMORROW: Friday, Feb. 18, 2010.

Checklist:

- ✓ Choose two songs (if only one applies to you, that's fine—be sure to explain why in your rationale)
- ✓ A 1-page minimum rationale explaining your song choice
- ✓ Print and bring lyrics to song(s)
- ✓ Bring iPod & ear phones

“If 6 Was 9” by Jimi Hendrix
Worksheet #4

(Yeah)

(Sing a song, brother)

If the sun refused to shine,

I don't mind, I don't mind.

(Yeah)

If the mountains fell in the sea,

Let it be, it ain't me.

Got my own world to live through

And I ain't gonna copy you.

Now, if 6 turned up to be 9,

I don't mind, I don't mind.

If all the hippies cut off their hair,

I don't care, I don't care.

Did, 'cos I got my own world to live through

And I ain't gonna copy you.

White-collar conservatives flashing down the street

Pointing their plastic finger at me.

They're hoping soon my kind will drop and die,

But I'm gonna wave my freak flag high . . . HIGH!

Hah, hah

Falling mountains just don't fall on me

Point on mister Buisnessman,

You can't dress like me.

Nobody know what I'm talking about

I've got my own life to live

I'm the one that's gonna have to die

When it's time for me to die

So let me live my life the way I want to.

Yeah . . .

Sing on brother,

Play on brother . . .