

SPITballing  
Spitball= to brainstorm (v)

SPITball Strategies

Use the SPITball Strategies below to develop commentary

- **Stylistic Devices.** You might consider word choice (diction), the use of figurative language, opposites, punctuation, repetition, rhyme, rhythm, etc. *TIP:* discuss the connotation of specific words related to the stylistic device you are writing about.

  - *Example: For chapters 13-15, you might discuss the connotations of the phrase “whory-looking blonds” (80) to show Holden tends to see women as sexual objects.*
  
- **Pattern.** When discussing your quote, point out reoccurring ideas, behaviors, motifs, symbols or themes and compare with other places in the text to show a pattern or a change of pattern. You might look at patterns in a character’s behavior, attitudes, or speech among other things.

  - *Example: For chapters 9 - 11 you might show a pattern of Holden seeking out the company of complete strangers and even people he doesn’t like because he does not wish to be alone. You might discuss how he starts up conversations with complete strangers like Mrs. Morrow on the train, the cab driver, and the nuns in the restaurant and even calls a girl he has never met to ask if she will meet him for drinks as well as a prostitute to avoid being alone.*
  
- **Inference.** What do the character’s words and actions show that the author has not explicitly stated? Consider how your personal experiences help you to understand what isn’t being stated in the text.

  - *Example: For chapter 3, you might provide the quote, “This sentence I’m reading is terrific,” (21) and explain that Holden’s sarcastic tone suggests that he’s annoyed by Ackley, indicating that he’s not a good friend. If you’re really awesome you will discuss the diction (word choice) and how “terrific” tells us Holden really means the opposite, the same way people sometimes say, “Yeah right” when they really mean they don’t believe you. Do you see how inference overlaps with the other kinds of commentary (like in this situation Stylistic Devices)?*
  
- **Tie** to another part of the text. Make connections between one part of the text and another to support what you are saying.

  - *Example: For chapters 5-7 you might connect Holden’s statement that his friends “laughed like hyenas”(37) at the movies with his observation in chapter 3 that Ackley was “cutting his nails”( 24) on Holden’s bedroom floor in order to show that he is still irritated by his friend’s behavior.*