

TOPIC: USA in the 1950s

Texts:

1. "The Catcher in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger, 1958
2. "Pleasantville" by Gary Ross, 1998
3. "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson, 1949
4. USA IN THE 1950s – website.docx
5. "Guilty by suspicion" by Irwin Winkler, 1991

Most important themes / aspects:

- The youth culture of the 1950s
- The Communist threat
- A great economic growth after the war.

Important (historical) events:

- Korea war
- The beginning of the Civil Rights Movement
- Television
- Suburbs

Text 1: 'The Catcher in the Rye'

Short summary:

The story sets sometime around the 1950's. It's about a 17-year old boy, Holden Caulfield, who struggles with his life. When the story begins, Holden attends Pencey Prep School, but not soon after he decides to drop out of Pencey, and go to New York. The reader follows Holden strolling around New York City a couple of days, visiting friends, family and other places. He's extremely judgemental of everyone and everything. The story ends with Holden taking her little sister to the Zoo, after telling her that he has decided to leave home for good. Holden tells the whole story, while he's undergoing treatment in a mental hospital.

Themes:

The adolescence
Alienation

Analysis and interpretation:

Text 2:

Short summary:

Two 1990's siblings - a boy and a girl - find themselves in a 1950's sitcom called Pleasantville where their influence starts to change that complacent world. The boy is very introverted and a great fan of the TV-show and knows all about it, while the girl is more shallow and outgoing.

Themes:

Enlightenment

Analysis and interpretation:

Text 3: 'The Lottery'

Short summary:

The villagers of a small town gathers in the square.

Themes:

- The dangers of following traditions which has no logical reason.
- Family
- Ritual

Symbols:

- The black box
- The Lottery

Important characters:

- Tessie Hutchinson
- Old man Warner
- Mr. Summers

Analysis and interpretation:

Text 4:

Short summary: The film is about a movie director called David Merrill. Throughout

the movie David becomes more and more pressured to snitch on his friends, that he went to a communist meeting with several years back.

Themes:

Country or friends

Principles

Analysis and interpretation: