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Critical Lens Essay – *The Catcher in the Rye* and *The Crucible*

**DIRECTIONS:** Review the following body paragraph and use as a guide for the rest of your essay. **You are responsible for the full introduction, Body 2 paragraph, and conclusion.**

“…men are at the mercy of events and cannot control them.” – Herodotus

**SAMPLE BODY 1:**

In Salinger’s novel, **Holden finds himself spiraling out of control because of a past that he cannot control or bear to face**. In the story, Holden is a young, cynical teenager struggling to find his place in society. He’s a self-alienated loner who can’t seem to find the good in anything or anyone (*characterization, without using the phrase- “characterizes him as…”*). As a result of his own self-destructive behaviors, he fails out of school and begins his journey towards self-discovery. Holden’s issues, which primarily stem from the death of his younger brother, Allie, continue to plague him and prevent him from moving on emotionally (*this analyzes his* ***internal conflict*)**. Because he cannot face his feelings about Allie, he internalizes them and grows increasingly more bitter and resentful of the world. He feels powerless because he could not save Allie and lives in a frozen state of grief, unable to progress out of his depression (*this further analyzes his* ***internal conflict***). He likens himself to the ducks in Central Park and wonders what they do when it gets cold. However, unlike the ducks, he’s unable to adapt to events in his life. Since he can’t save himself and his own lost innocence, he makes it his goal to become “The Catcher in the Rye,” a **symbol** of his desire to protect all innocence. He cannot seem to control his outside world, so he struggles to control what he can – the innocence of those around him. He **aims** (motivation) to shield the innocent who haven’t crossed over into the “phony” adult world, especially his little sister, Phoebe who he sees as the one he can save. However, Phoebe makes Holden realize that he’s the one that needs saving as **symbolized** by her gesture in which she returns his red hunting hat and puts it on his head. Phoebe makes him face the issues which haunt him, and it is then that Holden starts to sort through his feelings and process his brother’s death in a healthier way. By the end of the novel, Holden is in a “rest home” and seems to be changing his view of the world and seems to have a better handle of the events that he could not control. Once Holden makes peace with those events which are out of his control, he is able to begin moving on.