The Catcher in the Rye Essay Prompt

Choose one of the following prompts:

- Explore Salinger's usage of symbolism through an examination of the red hunting hat, the ducks at Central park, the carousel, or Allie's mitt. Consider how the symbol relates to Holden's identity.

- Examine how Salinger uses Holden's point of view, and the style of stream of consciousness, to make a commentary on the struggle of adolescence and perhaps mental illness. Consider how his mental state may reflect the unease of the time.

- Trace Allie or Phoebe's characterization throughout the novel. Analyze how Salinger uses characters to represent themes of innocence. How do they influence Holden's development?

- Analyze Salinger''s usage of setting through a close reading of Pencey Prep, the Natural History Museum, New York City, (hotel, bars, etc.), the carousel, and Phoebe's school. Explain how Holden's wandering around New York City mirrors his intellectual and emotional journey. Consider how different locations are associated with different stages of Holden's mental state and development.

- Choose your own topic: the characterization of Jane, Mr. Spencer, or Mr. Antolini, the symbol of Holden's hair, religious references, references to the movies, references to war/ manhood, or anything else that interests you. Just get my approval.

Instructions:

Your essay should be 3-6 pages. You need *at least* 5 quotes from the text *The Catcher in the Rye*. You also need 3 quotes from one of the secondary sources/ scholarly articles I provide for you. All quotes should be properly introduced with ties and thoroughly analyzed. You need to convey how Salinger's usage of a particular device contributes to the overall meaning of the text.

In the prewriting process, you will write 5 say mean matter charts for the quotes from the primary text (*The Catcher in the Rye)* and 3 say mean matter charts for the quotes from the secondary source (scholarly article). You will use your charts as a reference to help you organize your points into CEI paragraphs. The secondary source should be used as a supplement to support your claim. Do not forget to interpret these quotes and explain how they support your claim.

- Include a Works Cited Page
- Use the following formula to create your thesis statement :

Salinger uses _____ in order to _____.

Literary device academic verb→ specific comment on theme