**Strengths**
- Body ¶ #2 does a nice job of presenting textual evidence that shows Jane’s innocence and Holden’s worry that it will be lost; however, it doesn’t do enough to show why she’s not in the novel.
- Organization; clean prose—solid overall.

**Suggestions**
- Body ¶ #1 needs more quotations to show hope. And then, for the quotation that you have, which shows security, more analysis/explanation is needed before the paragraph ends.
- Body #2—according to the intro—should have been about responsibility. Why isn’t it?
- Remember that each point should be working to answer the question, “Why does Jane not appear as a character in the novel?”
- Short conclusion doesn’t finish the essay with enthusiasm.

This is an ambitious piece of writing with good organization and solid and overall clean prose. Body paragraph #2 is your strongest, in which you make the case with good evidence of Jane’s innocence—but a weakness overall is that the thesis of explaining why Salinger keeps her out of the novel is still left unaddressed. Still, the essay shows good knowledge of the text and the writing process. AR

**B-**

The Symbol of Jane

There is always that special person that inspires you to get through life. Sometimes that person is someone that you have never even met, and sometimes not meeting that person saves you from disappointment. In *The Catcher In the Rye*, by J.D. Salinger, Jane is a character in the novel that is mentioned multiple times by Holden, but is never actually introduced to the readers. In emphasizing the significance of Jane Gallager’s innocence throughout the novel, J.D. Salinger suggests that she is more important to Holden as an idea than as an actual friend. Holden is not mentally stable, and Jane is a symbol of hope, responsibility, and stability for him. However, he is not mentally able to meet with Jane because if Jane disappoints him, Holden would not be able to handle it.
Salinger starts by showing that Jane is a symbol of Holden’s hope. The way that Holden thinks and talks about Jane suggests that Jane makes him really happy and that she gives him hope and reason to not kill himself. He remembers moments with Jane that make her special and make their relationship worthwhile. Jane is the only person that Holden actually has an emotional connection with. Having this happiness gives Holden a reason to continue to live, and gives him hope that he will have happiness like he has had in the past. Holden talks about getting together with Jane, but provides excuses to avoid seeing her. His expectations that Jane will make him happy are so high that it is better for him not to meet her, because she might disappoint him. He does not want to discover that she is different from the way that he remembers her. While Holden is in the lobby of the hotel sitting on a very comfy chair thinking about his memories with Jane he says, “She was terrific to hold hands with … Jane was different … You never even worried, with Jane, whether your hand was sweaty or not. All you knew was you were happy. You really were” (79). Jane made Holden feel safe and secure which made him confident in himself and hopeful in his life. If Holden met with Jane, this confidence might be lost, and with that, his hope.

Jane’s innocence is very important to him. He thinks of Jane as an innocent girl he knew a few years earlier, and he is scared of what she may have turned into. One thing that he might have qualms about is the fact that Jane is now going out with people like Stradlater, who Holden thinks does not treat girls respectfully. Holden shows that he wants to protect Jane and therefore he does not want her to go out with Stradlater. Holden might think that Jane is not grown up enough to be ready for a date with a guy like Stradlater, who is a “sexy bastard” (34), and is not suitable for the girl that Holden thinks
Jane is. After Stradlater says that he is going on a date with Jane, Holden says, “I kept thinking about Jane, and about Stradlater having a date with her and all. It made me so nervous I nearly went crazy. I already told you what a sexy bastard Stradlater was” (34). After Holden asks Stradlater where they are going on the date he responds, “’I don’t know. New York, if we have time. She only signed out for nine-thirty, for Chrissake.’ I didn’t like the way he said it” (34). Jane signing out until 9:30 shows us and Holden the innocent side of her that does not want to stay out late with an older guy. He is annoyed that Stradlater does not realize her innocence. Holden is frustrated that Stradlater does not understand how Jane was a few years ago. His description of Jane’s childhood with her stepfather shows Jane’s innocence and how she is not ready for the “sexy stuff,” which is what Stradlater likes. Holden only knows Jane as the person she was a few years ago and he does not understand that Stradlater knows Jane differently. Holden says, “’She had a lousy childhood. I’m not kidding.’ That didn’t interest Stradlater, though. Only very sexy stuff interested him” (32). Holden is thinking about when Jane was younger, and how her stepfather did not treat her and her family well. Holden is horrified by what Jane grew up with, because her innocence was probably lost because of her stepfather. Holden describes an experience with Jane’s stepfather, “And run around the goddam house, naked. With Jane around, and all” (32). Holden cannot accept her loss of innocence, and is and was scared for Jane to see and experience the kinds of things that her stepfather did. He believes that Stradlater may also have bad intentions, which is also the reason why he does not want Stradlater going out with her. The way Holden talks about Jane’s experiences with her stepfather makes him seem very worried for Jane’s innocence on the date with Stradlater.
Jane is also a symbol of responsibility for Holden, and feels that they have a special connection. Holden remembers a moment, “One time, in this movie, Jane did something that just about knocked me out...most girls if you see them putting their hand on the back of somebody’s neck, they’re around twenty-five or thirty and usually they’re doing it to their husband or their little kid” (79-80). Holden sees his relationship with Jane as unusual, and he sees their relationship as close but innocent. He sees Jane as mature in their relationship and is comparing himself to Jane’s husband or child. Jane putting her hand on Holden’s back shows how she supports him, because she is being mature with him. Now that Holden has grown up, he thinks that he has to protect and support Jane just like she did for him.

Holden wants to have stability, and Jane represents that for him. Before Holden goes into the museum he suddenly is not in the mood to go in anymore, after going all the way there and looking forward to it. Similarly, Holden is looking forward to talking to Jane and always wants to talk to her, but always decides not to in the end, because he is not in the mood and he doesn’t feel like it anymore. Holden says, “When I got to the museum, all of a sudden I wouldn’t have gone inside for a million bucks” (122). When describing the museum, Holden notices that everything stays the same and this is a comparison to Jane, because just like the museum, Holden does not want Jane to change so he does not introduce her to the reader and he does not call and meet up with her so that his idea and memory of the innocent Jane that he knew can stay the same. Holden says, “The best thing, though, in that museum was that everything always stayed right where it was. Nobody’d move” (121). Holden also describes how things in the museum are much better if they just stay the same. He says, “Certain things they should stay the
way they are. You ought to stick them in one of those big glass cases and just leave them alone (122). This relates to the idea that Jane’s image in Holden’s head should be put away and kept safe so that their innocence can be safe as well.

Jane’s symbolism of hope, responsibility, and stability helps Holden be more mentally stable and get through his life more easily. Although he does not meet with her, his thoughts about her provides him with support that he needs in order to function better in his life. If he ever met Jane, his image of her might change which could affect his life tremendously.