From *The Catcher in the Rye*

**QUOTATION**: “and all that David Copperfield kind of crap” (1)

**A: Literal Level (What’s happening in the story when the quotation takes place):**

On the first page of the novel, Holden is discussing what he is going to share with the reader about his story, and he says that the reader will “probably” want to know all the details about his life—his parents and his “lousy” childhood. The “David Copperfield kind of crap” refers to the Charles Dickens novel called *David Copperfield*, about an orphan who tries to find his way in the world. But Holden only wants to tell the story of how he had a mental breakdown and ended up in a rest home in California.

**B: Analytical Level (Why might the quotation be significant to the story?):**

Maybe the David Copperfield information about Holden—his background and his childhood—is important to the story, and the fact that Holden doesn’t want to share it is letting the reader know not that it *isn’t* important, but that it’s *so* important that even Holden isn’t aware of it—or maybe he’s in fact trying to hide something from the reader. In addition, the reference to *David Copperfield* may be Salinger’s way of announcing Holden as an orphan, alone without his parents, who are still grieving over the death of Allie.

**Sample Body Paragraph (on an imagined essay on Holden’s self-deception, “Holden the Liar”):**

An early example of Holden lying to himself comes on the opening page, when Holden is discussing what he is going to share with the reader about his story. He tells us, “you’ll probably want to know is where I was born and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap” (1), referring to the Charles Dickens novel called *David Copperfield*, about an orphan who tries to find his way in the world. While Holden says only wants to tell the story of how he had a mental breakdown and ended up in a rest home in California, his reference to *David Copperfield* makes a connection to orphanhood and reflects Holden’s feeling of abandonment by his parents, who are still grieving over the death of Allie. Orphanhood will come up again when Holden tells us about Phoebe’s story of Hazle Weatherfield, who’s “supposed to be an orphan” (68), suggesting that Phoebe, too, feels abandoned by their grieving parents. Holden sees *David Copperfield* as a novel that tells the reader too much but in fact by referring to it, Holden is letting us in on a secret of himself that even he is unaware of.
Starter Quotation Cards

QUOTATION:
A: Literal Level:

B: Analytical Level:

QUOTATION:
A: Literal Level:

B: Analytical Level:
QUOTATION:
A: Literal Level:

B: Analytical Level:

QUOTATION:
A: Literal Level:

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QUOTATION:
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QUOTATION:
A: Literal Level:

B: Analytical Level: