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Individual Learning Packet

Teaching Unit

The Outsiders

by S.E. Hinton

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The Outsiders

Terms and Definitions

Inference - the act of drawing a conclusion that is not actually stated. For example, in *The Pigman* from the fact that John and Lorraine are writing a memorial epic about the incident with the Pigman, we may infer that the Pigman is now dead and the incident is important to them.

Stereotype - the act of putting people into groups based on race, religion, nationality, physical appearance, social class, or some other easily identifiable characteristic. Example: In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Magua and Uncas have become the stereotypical ideals of evil and good Indians.

Foreshadowing - the use of hints or clues in a story to suggest what action is to come. Foreshadowing is frequently used to create interest and build suspense.

Flashback - a scene that interrupts the ongoing action in a story to show an event that happened earlier.

Metaphor - a comparison of two things that are basically dissimilar but are brought together in order to create a sharp image. Example: The moon, a haunting lantern, shone through the clouds.

Allusion - a reference to a person, place, poem, book, or movie outside of the story that the author expects the reader will recognize.

Symbol - an object, person, or place that has a meaning in itself and that also stands for something larger than itself, usually an idea or concept; some concrete thing which represents an abstraction. Example: The sea could be symbolic for “the unknown;” since the sea is something which is physical and can be seen by the reader, but has elements which can not be understood, it can be used *symbolically* to stand for the abstraction of “mystery,” “obscurity,” or “the unknown.”

Narrator - the one who tells the story. If the narrator is a character in the book, the term is first-person narration. (Example: *Moby Dick* is narrated by Ishmael, a crew member). If the narrator is not a character, the term is third-person narration. (Example: *Sense and Sensibility*).

Note: All page references come from the Puffin Books edition of *The Outsiders*, copyright 1967

The Outsiders

Objectives for the Student

By the end of this novel, the student will be able to

1. write an essay which explains and supports the following statement: *The Outsiders*, by S. E. Hinton, is a good example of the Coming-of-Age theme.
2. identify and discuss the following themes in this novel and cite comments and incidents in the novel for support:
 - A. People need to relate closely to other people; otherwise, they become hard and dried-up inside.
 - B. When parental love and approval are not present, the approval of friends and gang members can be a substitute, but never a completely satisfactory substitute.
 - C. Peer pressure for conformity can weaken an individual's sensitivity and sense of individuality. (This applies to the Socs more than the greasers.)
 - D. Judging people by their appearances is foolish and makes people seem like stereotypes, rather than individuals.
 - E. Human worth can not be measured by cars, clothes, or social class standing. Every person is unique; that is, all people share a common humanity, but each one has qualities that set him or her apart.
 - F. Violence does not solve problems and differences. In fact, it may only lead to more violence.
 - G. In life as we grow older, we should try to hang on to our innocence and to our sense of wonder and freshness, rather than letting ourselves become bored with life.
 - H. In life, it is important to feel things, but not feel them too violently.

3. define the following terms and give examples from the novel to support the definitions:
 - A. Stereotype
 - B. Foreshadowing
 - C. Metaphor
 - D. Allusion
 - E. Flashback
 - F. Narrator
4. write a one-half page character description of the following:
Ponyboy
Sodapop
Darryl
Dallas
Cherry
Johnny
5. draw inferences about plot and characters from comments that only suggest, rather than state what they mean.
6. list the major incidents in this plot and identify those incidents that are
 - A. exposition
 - B. rising action
 - C. climax
 - D. falling action
 - E. resolution
7. comment on how the title fits the book, including the fact that "Outsiders" is plural.

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QUESTIONS FOR ESSAY AND DISCUSSION

1. Here are some ideas presented in the novel that the author appears to believe are true. Which of these, from your experience, do you believe to be true?
 - A. When parental love and approval is absent, the approval of friends may be a substitute, but never a wholly satisfactory substitute.
 - B. People who do not love and relate to other people dry up inside and become bitter and mean.
 - C. Peer pressure from your group can force you to be someone you do not want to be.
 - D. Many people do make judgments about people based on stereotypes that exist in their minds.
 - E. Every human being is unique but also a part of humanity; therefore, every human being should be respected and given consideration.
 - F. Violence does not solve problems and may only lead to making problems worse.
 - G. People, as they grow older, may lose their sense of wonder and become bored and emotionless people if they are not careful.
 - H. While it is important to feel things, we must restrain ourselves so that we do not feel them too violently.
2. Explain why this novel is a good example of the Coming-of-Age theme. Support your answer by referring to comments and incidents from the novel.
3. Define the following terms and give examples from the novel:
 - A. Flashback
 - B. Metaphor
 - C. Allusion
 - D. Symbol
 - E. Narrator
4. Write a short essay in which you explain how foreshadowing is used in this novel to build interest and suspense.
5. Explain how in this novel both the Socs and the greasers are guilty of stereotyping.
6. Be prepared to write a one-half page description of each of the major characters in the novel.
7. List the major incidents in the plot of this novel and identify those incidents that are part of the *Exposition*, those that constitute *Rising Action*, that incident that is the *Climax*, those that are part of the *Falling Action*, and that one which is the *Resolution*.

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TEST

I. Multiple Choice

1. When Ponyboy says that all Socs wear Madras shirts, drive Mustangs, and have more money than they need, it is an example of
 - A. allusion.
 - B. stereotyping.
 - C. inference.
 - D. metaphor.
 - E. foreshadowing.
2. A flashback scene occurs in this novel when
 - A. Ponyboy imagines how life on a farm would be.
 - B. Johnny is in the hospital thinking about his father.
 - C. Ponyboy relates to Cherry how Johnny was beaten.
 - D. Darryl remembers his big football game.
 - E. Dallas tells the story about how he was knifed in prison.
3. This story is narrated by
 - A. Ponyboy.
 - B. Johnny.
 - C. the first-person narrator.
 - D. the all-knowing narrator.
 - E. Both A and C
4. An example of an allusion in this story is when
 - A. one of the characters call the Socs “chicken.”
 - B. Ponyboy and Johnny talk about *Gone With the Wind*.
 - C. there is the fire in the church.
 - D. Dallas gets shot.
 - E. Both C and D.
5. Although it is not stated in exact words, we infer that Sodapop’s girl friend
 - A. is still in love with him.
 - B. is in love with Dallas.
 - C. had been made pregnant by someone other than Sodapop.
 - D. is sick of the violence and killing.
 - E. is going to return and marry Sodapop.

6. An example of a metaphor is
- A. his eyes were blue, blazing ice.
 - B. he was smart and you had to respect him.
 - C. Dallas has sharp animal teeth and the ears of a lynx.
 - D. Both A and C.
 - E. A, B, and C.
7. Which incident *does not* occur in this story?
- A. Dallas beats up Johnny.
 - B. Johnny stabs a Soc.
 - C. Ponyboy says that he stabbed the Soc.
 - D. Ponyboy picks up a broken bottle to drive off some Socs.
 - E. Darryl gets involved in the gang fight.
8. Ponyboy and Cherry get along well together because
- A. Ponyboy is in love with Cherry.
 - B. they are both bright, sensitive people.
 - C. Cherry is in love with Soda.
 - D. Cherry reminds Ponyboy of his mother.
 - E. they are both in the same classes at school.
9. In this story “watching the sun set” is a symbol used to represent
- A. approaching old age.
 - B. the end of a day.
 - C. the end of a period or phase in your life.
 - D. an interest in and sensitivity to beauty and nature.
 - E. Both B and C
10. Randy proves to Ponyboy that
- A. Socs are just people like himself.
 - B. life is worth living.
 - C. Johnny is the one who killed Bob.
 - D. loyalty does not exist among the Socs.
 - E. Cherry is a two-timer.

Characterization:

Matching - Identify the character described. Use each one only once.

- | | | |
|---------|---|--------------------|
| ___ 11. | He is the greaser who had the most hate in him. | A. Johnny |
| ___ 12. | He is the Soc who was killed. | B. Steve Randall |
| ___ 13. | He is the one who always had an opinion to throw in. | C. Bob |
| ___ 14. | He is a greaser who could have been a Soc if he wished to. | D. Darryl |
| ___ 15. | His parents give him beatings, never any love or approval . | E. Two-Bit Mathews |
| | | F. Dallas |

III. Vocabulary

16. To avoid or escape
- A. premonition
 - B. elude
 - C. rueful
 - D. contract
 - E. implore
17. To beg or request
- A. implore
 - B. indignant
 - C. gallant
 - D. bolt
 - E. contract
18. brave
- A. elude
 - B. bolt
 - C. indignant
 - D. ruefully
 - E. gallant

19. anger aroused by something unjust

- A. bolt
- B. agony
- C. stupor
- D. indignant
- E. dumbfounded

20. act or process of muscles tensing

- A. liable
- B. dumbfounded
- C. contracted
- D. implore
- E. stupor

IV. Essays (Answer any two)

1. On the left side of a paper, briefly list the major incidents in this plot and to the right, identify the following: those incidents that make up the exposition; those that make up the rising action; that incident which is the climax; those incidents that comprise the falling action; and that incident which is the resolution.
2. In an essay, state why this novel is a good example of the Coming-of-Age theme and support your statement by referring to incidents and comments in the novel.
3. In an essay, compare and contrast the Socs and greasers and explain how both are guilty of stereotyping.
4. In a paragraph, explain how foreshadowing is used in this novel to build interest and suspense.
5. Explain who the outsiders in the book really are, in a two or three paragraph essay.

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Answer Key

1.	B	6.	D	11.	F	16.	B
2.	C	7.	A	12.	C	17.	A
3.	E	8.	B	13.	E	18.	E
4.	B	9.	D	14.	D	19.	D
5.	C	10.	A	15.	A	20.	C

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STUDY GUIDE

Teacher's Copy

Chapter One

1. Who is the narrator in this story? Describe him.

Ponyboy is the narrator. He is fourteen, a greaser, and the youngest of three boys whose mother and father are dead.

2. Who are the Socs? Who are the greasers?

Socs are kids from middle-class families; they would be called preppies today. Greasers are kids from working-class families. The second group is thought of as hoods by the first.

3. Identify the following characters: Darryl, Sodapop, Steve Randall, Dallas Winston, and Johnny.

Darryl — Ponyboy's oldest brother (20). He works hard to support Ponyboy and Soda; Ponyboy thinks Darryl is hard on him.

Sodapop — Ponyboy's older brother (16). He is very close to Ponyboy and lets Ponyboy tag along when he and Steve go anywhere.

Steve Randall — Soda's best friend (17). He is an auto mechanic and does not like Ponyboy tagging along.

Dallas Winston — He is the toughest of the gang and the one most often in trouble with the law.

Johnny — Youngest of the gang and especially shy since the time a gang of Socs beat him up badly.

4. How did Two-Bit Mathews get his name? What type of stealing is his specialty?

He is always offering his opinion on any subject. He is a shoplifter.

5. Soda tells Ponyboy that Darryl keeps after him because the older boy loves his younger brother. Why does Ponyboy think that Soda is wrong?

Ponyboy believes that Darryl does not love anyone except, possibly, Soda.

6. Ponyboy tells us that Darryl grew up too fast and that Sodapop has never grown up at all. He concludes: "I don't know which way's the best. I'll find out one of these days." (Pg. 2) From this, what would you suppose this novel is going to be about?

The book will probably deal with Pony coming of age, growing up, and understanding life.

7. What is Ponyboy's guess (Pg. 11) as to why Dallas is bitter about life?

The Socs have all the advantages, and nothing can change that.

Chapter Two

1. Why does Ponyboy get a sinking feeling and is embarrassed when he sees Dallas sit down behind the two Soc girls?

He knows that Dallas is going to "talk dirty" and give them a hard time. In addition, Pony is younger and "half-scared of all nice girls..." (Pg. 22)

2. In addition to being older and tougher, in what other ways is Dallas different from Johnny and Ponyboy?

He is meaner, cruder, and much more bitter. Although they would not like the term, Ponyboy and Johnny are more sensitive and understanding. They are nice people; Dallas is not.

3. Why does Dallas not hit, or at least say something smart, to Johnny when Johnny tells Dallas to leave the girls alone?

Dallas is aware that Johnny idolizes him and Dallas could easily get him (Johnny) to back down, but chooses not to. Johnny is "the gang's pet," and this is the first time Johnny ever talked back to anyone. Apparently Dallas wants to keep Johnny's good opinion and just walks away. (Pg. 25)

4. What is Ponyboy proud of and what is he ashamed of regarding Soda?

He is proud of Soda's movie-star good looks, but he is shamed that he is a drop-out.

5. In the flashback pages (31-34) how far in the past did the incident occur, and about what incidents do we learn the details?

It happened four months ago when Johnny was beaten badly by the Socs. He received a scar that would last a lifetime and had been threatened. Pony says, "I didn't think he'd ever get over it." Now he carries a switchblade.

6. What does Cherry tell Ponyboy about the Socs that he has a hard time believing?

Socs have major problems, too.

7. What does Cherry's comment to Ponyboy about trouble suggest or foreshadow?

She has some sort of a problem of which we will learn more later.

8. Earlier, Cherry showed herself to be a sensitive person when she finishes Marcia's statement by saying both boys look sixteen. What is it Marcia is going to say, and why does Cherry stop her?

Marcia is going to say that they both look fourteen, but Cherry realizes that this would be a sensitive point for Johnny.

9. The last line in Chapter Two refers to what? What is foreshadowed by this line?

The opposing gang also has troubles. We are going to learn something about these troubles as the novel unfolds. Since Pony knows better now, he will reveal it to the reader later.

Chapter Three

1. What do Cherry and Ponyboy say is the real difference between the Socs and greasers?

Not money, but their set of values set the gang apart. The Socs are too sophisticated ever to show emotion, but the greasers feel negative emotions too strongly and react violently.

2. What is it in Ponyboy that Cherry likes?

He is a sensitive, bright boy to whom she has an easy time talking.

3. What could Cherry possibly find interesting about Dallas?

In addition to a physical attractiveness, she is probably attracted by his violent, negative nature. She seems to appreciate the emotional energy he gives off.

4. Why does Ponyboy lash out at Johnny?

He feels angry at having made himself look stupid, so he attacks Johnny because the boy is a convenient target.

5. Sum up in one sentence what Ponyboy says “ain’t fair”?

In life some people are born with wealthy, loving parents (as he envisions the Socs) while others, like himself and his friends, are born into poor families, who have to fight alcoholism and scrape to get by.

6. The blue Mustang is bound to show up again. Why?

One of the boys in the front seat is apparently the one who beat up Johnny. These guys are some of the real villains in the story. They drink and love to fight.

7. On page 46, why does Ponyboy say, “Two-Bit was smart. He knew the score”?

On reflection, he realizes that a Soc like Marcia will never actually go out on a date with a greaser.

8. Ponyboy has a hard time adjusting to life’s injustices. How does he see the others deal with the inequalities of life?

*Two-Bit: His attitude is to take them or leave them.
Sodapop: He says to ignore them and love life anyway.
Dallas: He hardens himself against them.*

9. What does the country represent for Ponyboy?

It is a place of quiet and peace where there is no fighting between Socs and greasers.

10. Why does Darryl slap Ponyboy?

He has been up worrying about him; now Ponyboy starts talking back to him when he finally gets in.

11. What is foreshadowed by the last paragraph in this chapter?

Despite what has already happened, more and worse trouble is on the way.

Chapter Four

Vocabulary

contemptuously - scornfully

rueful - full of sorrow, shame

premonition - a feeling that something is going to happen

1. Why does Johnny take the action he does?

The marauding Socs are drowning Ponyboy; they have a knife and may kill Pony and beat him again as they did once before.

2. What does Ponyboy conclude Cherry must have seen in Dallas?

Although he is not handsome there is “character, pride, and a savage defiance of the world” in his face. (Pg. 59)

3. What is it that Ponyboy now thinks is worse than being a greaser?

Being a murder suspect on the run would be worse, and is.

4. Ponyboy says that the Church gave him a “creepy feeling”—a premonition. What kind of a premonition might he get in Church?

If it is a “creepy feeling” associated with a church, it could be associated with funerals or with people looking at them with disapproval.

5. Throughout this story, loyalty among the greasers is brought up quite often. Why do they place such a high value on loyalty?

Because all of them have so little, sticking together makes them feel close, like a family.

6. Was it a smart thing for Ponyboy to leave with Johnny?

He has not committed any crime, but given his feelings about loyalty, he probably never even thinks of not going.

7. Was it smart of Johnny to run away?

It sounds as if he would have been able to have a case for self-defense, but apparently this is not something that either of the two boys think of at the time.

Chapter Five

Vocabulary

implore	- to beg, to request
gallant	- brave, bold
elude	- to avoid, to escape
indignant	- anger aroused by something unjust
wistfully	- sadly, full of yearning

1. Why does Ponyboy feel bad about cutting his hair?

His hair identifies him as a greaser and he belongs to something because of it. He also feels that hair is one of the few things the greasers can actually “have” as their own.

2. According to Ponyboy, why do the courts cut people’s hair?

It is the only thing the adolescents have that the courts can take away.

3. Why does Johnny not like to think about the stabbing?

The thought of having taken someone else’s life is horrible to him. He must live with the knowledge that he killed a young boy

4. Having cried themselves out, what mood are Ponyboy and Johnny in now?

He and Johnny are relaxed and feel they can take whatever happens later.

5. What can you infer from the crying incident?

It would be easy to characterize the two as hoods without feelings. The fact that they regret the death of an enemy and cry about their situation, however, shows them to be not much more than frightened teenagers.

6. The Frost poem that Ponyboy remembers on page 69 concludes, “Nothing gold can stay.” What is that poem saying about nature? About youth?

In nature, everything in spring is gold and blossoms, but the gold and blossoms give way to green leaves as spring passes into summer. Youth fades quickly and turns to death.

7. How could the line, “Nothing gold can stay” apply to life?

Everything in life changes; nothing stays the same. Even the best of times passes on, just as the worst do.

8. When Johnny says, "I guess we're different" (Pg. 70), Ponyboy responds, "Maybe they are." What is Pony implying?

Maybe the two of them are not strange because they are sensitive. The people who are not sensitive to nature (most of the other greasers) are the strange ones.

9. What is the situation in town? Who is the spy the greasers have?

The Socs and greasers are at war, and Cherry is a spy for the greasers.

Chapter Six

1. What seems to give Johnny the most pain in his life?

His parents do not seem to care for him, and this thought hurts him greatly.

2. On page 90, what side of Dallas does Ponyboy see that he never saw before?

Dallas talks about how being in jail made him tough and insensitive and how he does not want the same thing to happen to Johnny.

3. Why do the boys feel responsible for the fire?

They suspect that somehow they must have left a lighted cigarette or something in the church.

4. At the end of this chapter what is it that Ponyboy comes to understand?

Darryl really does love him like a brother and was afraid of something happening to Pony.

5. What unusual sound do they hear?

Pony hears gunshots from the gun they left in the church.

6. What is the irony of the boy's actions at the fire?

They are perceived of as hoodlums, and they feel and act as if that were true. During the fire, however, they, all three, act like heroes "sent straight from heaven." (Pg. 95)

7. Explain Ponyboy's feelings about why Darry cries.

Pony feels Darry crying for his parents as well as the fear that "I thought we'd lost you..." Pony now feels that he is "finally home. To stay." (Pgs. 98-99)

Chapter Seven

1. After reading the morning paper what is Ponyboy's biggest fear?

He is worried that the authorities might put Soda and him in a home.

2. What does the narrator mean when he says, "Serious reality has a hard time coming through to Soda, but when it does, it hits him hard"? (Pg. 103)

Soda is happy by nature and takes most things lightly, but when tragedy gets to him, it really hurts.

3. What does Ponyboy's nightmare seem to foreshadow?

Some more personal and serious trouble is on the way.

4. What is the implication that is made about Soda's girl friend Sandy?

She is probably pregnant.

5. What is odd that Ponyboy says about Randy?

Ponyboy describes Randy as being seventeen years old but "he was already old." (Pg. 115) This description obviously means that Randy has felt the pain and emptiness in his life.

6. Randy says that Bob always wanted his parents to say "No" to him. He says, "That's what we all want, really." (Pg. 116) Do you think this statement is accurate?

Answers will vary.

7. What is Randy's dilemma?

He is not interested in fighting any more because it seems pointless to him; if he does not participate in the upcoming rumble, though, his friends will think he is chicken.

8. How has Ponyboy's view of the Socs changed?

He now sees them as human beings with problems just like his own friends and their problems.

Chapter Eight

1. What do you suppose Dallas wants with Two-Bit's knife?

He might be planning on sneaking out of the hospital to be at the fight.

2. In what way could Darry be a Soc?

He is bright and articulate with, apparently, many friends who are Socs. So if he chose to, he could hang around with Socs; but that would look as if he were turning his back on his brothers and friends.

3. Again, Ponyboy talks about his feeling that something bad is going to happen that night. What do you guess might happen?

Possibly one of the main characters could be seriously hurt or killed.

4. Why does Ponyboy turn and ask Cherry, "Can you see the sunset real good from the West Side?" (Pg. 129)

He feels bad about what he had said to her, and it is his way of saying that they are both good people. Pony also wonders about life apart from the life he knows personally

Chapter Nine

Vocabulary

contracted	- the act of muscles tensing
agony	- great pain
bolted	- run off

1. Sometimes Ponyboy seems ashamed to be a greaser; sometimes he seems proud to be one. How is he feeling about this on page 132?

He has mixed feelings. He is proud to be part of this group, but he realizes that there is something stupid about being proud of simply a haircut and a bad reputation.

2. Why is Darryl, who is older, brighter and more clean cut than most of the others, getting in this fight?

Fighting is a physical challenge that he likes, just like he enjoys any physical effort.

3. Why does Ponyboy think that he, Darryl, and the others do not really belong with the Brumley boys and Tim Shepard's gang?

Those other guys are real hoods, future convicts, and he, his brothers, and their friends are not.

4. Why does Pony say the Socs get away with a lot while the greasers get blamed for everything?

People judge by looks; the Socs look clean-cut, and the greasers look like hoodlums. There is no real difference between their attitudes, though.

5. Do you find Ponyboy's observation in question four to be accurate?

Answers will vary.

6. Ponyboy says that Darryl looked jealous and ashamed. Why would he be having those feelings at this time?

He might be jealous of the advantages that someone like his old teammate Paul had, and he is ashamed to be on the same side as hoods like Tim Shepard and the Brumley boys.

7. What does Johnny mean when he tells Ponyboy, "Stay gold, Ponyboy. Stay gold"? (Pg. 148)

Johnny is apparently saying that Ponyboy should hold on to his sense of wonder and his sensitive nature, not grow older, harder and more bitter like Dallas.

Chapter Ten

Vocabulary

stupor - a daze
dumbfounded - speechless; disbelieving

1. Why does Ponyboy conclude that he is able to take Johnny's death, but that Dallas cannot?

He says, "Johnny was the only thing Dally loved." (Pg. 152) On the other hand, Ponyboy still has his two brothers.

2. Why does Dallas pull out the gun knowing it has no bullets?

Ponyboy believes that Dallas wants to die.

3. What technique does Ponyboy use for dealing with the deaths of his friends?

He tells himself not to think about or remember the deaths.

4. What is Ponyboy's greatest fear when he is unconscious? Why?

Pony fears that he might have asked for Sodapop, but not for Darryl. Now that he realizes that Darryl loves him, he does not want to hurt his feelings, but Ponyboy is confused.

Chapter Eleven

Vocabulary

liable - likely; legally responsible

1. What comes to Ponyboy's mind when he sees Bob's picture in the yearbook?

He sees him as a human being with parents who love him and brothers, perhaps. He says, "A reckless, hot-tempered boy, cocky and scared stiff at the same time." (Pg. 162) This is a description that Ponyboy could apply to himself and his friends just as well.

2. Why is being able to feel "lousy" because he disappointed his father a break-through for Randy?

He is so cool that he has not felt anything for a long time, so actually having an honest emotion is a sign of growth.

3. What does Darryl call him that makes Ponyboy feel good?

He calls him "little buddy," a term he had previously used only for Soda.

Chapter Twelve

1. When he returns to school, Ponyboy has a difficult time concentrating. Why?

He is still suffering the effects of the sudden death of his two friends and the continuing difficulties from his concussion..

2. What does Two-Bit mean when he tells Ponyboy "you're not like the rest of us"? (Pg. 171)

Pony is not hard and tough, and he should not become that way.

3. Why does Two-Bit grin when Ponyboy is picking up the glass?

He is relieved to see that Ponyboy cares about the glass in the street and the potential it has for harm. It shows that he has not become a hard criminal-type person.

4. What does Darryl tell Ponyboy about the deaths of Dallas and Johnny?

Everyone misses them, but people have to go on living their lives. Ponyboy is going to have to do that also.

5. Sandy has returned Soda's letter unopened, and he is upset about that. Why, though, does he run out of the house?

When Darryl and Ponyboy fight, Soda feels as if he is pulled between the two of them. The argument is probably the last thing he wanted to have happen directly after receiving the letter, and he becomes emotional and leaves.

6. What does Soda mean when he says, "If you don't have anything, you end up like Dallas...and I don't mean dead either. I mean like he was before. And that's worse than dead"? (Pg. 176)

He means that Dallas had become hard and tough on the outside, but he had no feeling within except hatred and bitterness. Dallas wanted the police to shoot him, and Soda knows that wanting to die is worse than death.

7. What does Ponyboy finally understand about Darryl?

At twenty Darryl could still feel scared and uncertain. He realizes that he has to understand Darryl sometimes and not always expect Darryl to understand him. He also realizes that Darryl has sacrificed a lot for him.

8. In his letter to Ponyboy, Johnny explains what he meant when he said “stay gold.” (Pg. 178) Put his explanation into your own words.

Answers will vary. Example: When you are a kid, everything is new and fresh to you and life is full of promise and beauty. You have to try to hold on to that feeling, or you will lose it.

9. When he sits down to write his English theme, how is Ponyboy different from the way he is at the opening of this chapter?

He has accepted the death of the three boys now, and while he will always miss his friends, he now can go on with his own life and become any kind of person he chooses.

10. How has he changed since the beginning of the novel?

The action of the plot seems to span several months. In that time, Ponyboy has seen three people die; he has suffered the loss and is able, finally, to reconcile their deaths. As a result, he develops a personal philosophy of life and a better love and understanding of others. In short, he matures; it is for this reason that this novel is a good example of the Coming-of-Age theme.

The Outsiders

STUDY GUIDE

Student Copy

Chapter One

1. Who is the narrator in this story? Describe him.
2. Who are the Socs? Who are the greasers?
3. Identify the following characters: Darryl, Sodapop, Steve Randall, Dallas Winston, and Johnny.
4. How did Two-Bit Mathews get his name? What type of stealing is his specialty?
5. Soda tells Ponyboy that Darryl keeps after him because the older boy loves his younger brother. Why does Ponyboy think that Soda is wrong?
6. Ponyboy tells us that Darryl grew up too fast and that Sodapop has never grown up at all. He concludes: "I don't know which way's the best. I'll find out one of these days." (Pg. 2) From this, what would you suppose this novel is going to be about?
7. What is Ponyboy's guess (Pg. 11) as to why Dallas is bitter about life?

Chapter Two

1. Why does Ponyboy get a sinking feeling and is embarrassed when he sees Dallas sit down behind the two Soc girls?
2. In addition to being older and tougher, in what other ways is Dallas different from Johnny and Ponyboy?
3. Why does Dallas not hit, or at least say something smart, to Johnny when Johnny tells Dallas to leave the girls alone?
4. What is Ponyboy proud of and what is he ashamed of regarding Soda?
5. In the flashback pages (31-34) how far in the past did the incident occur, and about what incidents do we learn the details?
6. What does Cherry tell Ponyboy about the Socs that he has a hard time believing?
7. What does Cherry's comment to Ponyboy about trouble suggest or foreshadow?
8. Earlier, Cherry showed herself to be a sensitive person when she finishes Marcia's statement by saying both boys look sixteen. What is it Marcia is going to say, and why does Cherry stop her?
9. The last line in Chapter Two refers to what? What is foreshadowed by this line?

Chapter Three

1. What do Cherry and Ponyboy say is the real difference between the Socs and greasers?
2. What is it in Ponyboy that Cherry likes?
3. What could Cherry possibly find interesting about Dallas?
4. Why does Ponyboy lash out at Johnny?
5. Sum up in one sentence what Ponyboy says “ain’t fair”?
6. The blue Mustang is bound to show up again. Why?
7. On page 46, why does Ponyboy say, “Two-Bit was smart. He knew the score”?
8. Ponyboy has a hard time adjusting to life’s injustices. How does he see the others deal with the inequalities of life?
9. What does the country represent for Ponyboy?
10. Why does Darryl slap Ponyboy?
11. What is foreshadowed by the last paragraph in this chapter?

Chapter Four

Vocabulary

contemptuously - scornfully

rueful - full of sorrow, shame

premonition - a feeling that something is going to happen

1. Why does Johnny take the action he does?
2. What does Ponyboy conclude Cherry must have seen in Dallas?
3. What is it that Ponyboy now thinks is worse than being a greaser?
4. Ponyboy says that the Church gave him a “creepy feeling”—a premonition. What kind of a premonition might he get in Church?
5. Throughout this story, loyalty among the greasers is brought up quite often. Why do they place such a high value on loyalty?
6. Was it a smart thing for Ponyboy to leave with Johnny?
7. Was it smart of Johnny to run away?

Chapter Five

Vocabulary

implore	- to beg, to request
gallant	- brave, bold
elude	- to avoid, to escape
indignant	- anger aroused by something unjust
wistfully	- sadly, full of yearning

1. Why does Ponyboy feel bad about cutting his hair?
2. According to Ponyboy, why do the courts cut people's hair?
3. Why does Johnny not like to think about the stabbing?
4. Having cried themselves out, what mood are Ponyboy and Johnny in now?
5. What can you infer from the crying incident?
6. The Frost poem that Ponyboy remembers on page 69 concludes, "Nothing gold can stay." What is that poem saying about nature? About youth?
7. How could the line, "Nothing gold can stay" apply to life?
8. When Johnny says, "I guess we're different" (Pg. 70), Ponyboy responds, "Maybe *they* are." What is Pony implying?
9. What is the situation in town? Who is the spy the greasers have?

Chapter Six

1. What seems to give Johnny the most pain in his life?
2. On page 90, what side of Dallas does Ponyboy see that he never saw before?
3. Why do the boys feel responsible for the fire?
4. At the end of this chapter what is it that Ponyboy comes to understand?
5. What unusual sound do they hear?
6. What is the irony of the boy's actions at the fire?
7. Explain Ponyboy's feelings about why Darry cries.

Chapter Seven

1. After reading the morning paper what is Ponyboy's biggest fear?
2. What does the narrator mean when he says, "Serious reality has a hard time coming through to Soda, but when it does, it hits him hard"? (Pg. 103)
3. What does Ponyboy's nightmare seem to foreshadow?
4. What is the implication that is made about Soda's girl friend Sandy?
5. What is odd that Ponyboy says about Randy?
6. Randy says that Bob always wanted his parents to say "No" to him. He says, "That's what we all want, really." (Pg. 116) Do you think this statement is accurate?
7. What is Randy's dilemma?
8. How has Ponyboy's view of the Socs changed?

Chapter Eight

1. What do you suppose Dallas wants with Two-Bit's knife?
2. In what way could Darry be a Soc?
3. Again, Ponyboy talks about his feeling that something bad is going to happen that night. What do you guess might happen?
4. Why does Ponyboy turn and ask Cherry, "Can you see the sunset real good from the West Side?" (Pg. 129)

Chapter Nine

Vocabulary

contracted - the act of muscles tensing

agony - great pain

bolted - run off

1. Sometimes Ponyboy seems ashamed to be a greaser; sometimes he seems proud to be one. How is he feeling about this on page 132?
2. Why is Darryl, who is older, brighter and more clean cut than most of the others, getting in this fight?
3. Why does Ponyboy think that he, Darryl, and the others do not really belong with the Brumley boys and Tim Shepard's gang?

4. Why does Pony say the Socs get away with a lot while the greasers get blamed for everything?
5. Do you find Ponyboy's observation in question four to be accurate?
6. Ponyboy says that Darryl looked jealous and ashamed. Why would he be having those feelings at this time?
7. What does Johnny mean when he tells Ponyboy, "Stay gold, Ponyboy. Stay gold"? (Pg. 148)

Chapter Ten

Vocabulary

stupor - a daze
dumbfounded - speechless; disbelieving

1. Why does Ponyboy conclude that he is able to take Johnny's death, but that Dallas cannot?
2. Why does Dallas pull out the gun knowing it has no bullets?
3. What technique does Ponyboy use for dealing with the deaths of his friends?
4. What is Ponyboy's greatest fear when he is unconscious? Why?

Chapter Eleven

Vocabulary

liable - likely; legally responsible

1. What comes to Ponyboy's mind when he sees Bob's picture in the yearbook?
2. Why is being able to feel "lousy" because he disappointed his father a break-through for Randy?
3. What does Darryl call him that makes Ponyboy feel good?

Chapter Twelve

1. When he returns to school, Ponyboy has a difficult time concentrating. Why?
2. What does Two-Bit mean when he tells Ponyboy "you're not like the rest of us"? (Pg. 171)
3. Why does Two-Bit grin when Ponyboy is picking up the glass?
4. What does Darryl tell Ponyboy about the deaths of Dallas and Johnny?
5. Sandy has returned Soda's letter unopened, and he is upset about that. Why, though, does he run out of the house?

6. What does Soda mean when he says, “If you don’t have anything, you end up like Dallas...and I don’t mean dead either. I mean like he was before. And that’s worse than dead”? (Pg. 176)
7. What does Ponyboy finally understand about Darryl?
8. In his letter to Ponyboy, Johnny explains what he meant when he said “stay gold.” (Pg. 178) Put his explanation into your own words.
9. When he sits down to write his English theme, how is Ponyboy different from the way he is at the opening of this chapter?
10. How has he changed since the beginning of the novel?

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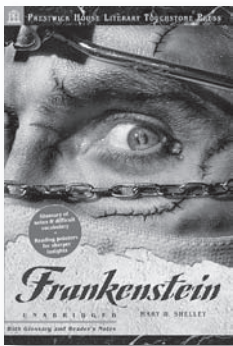
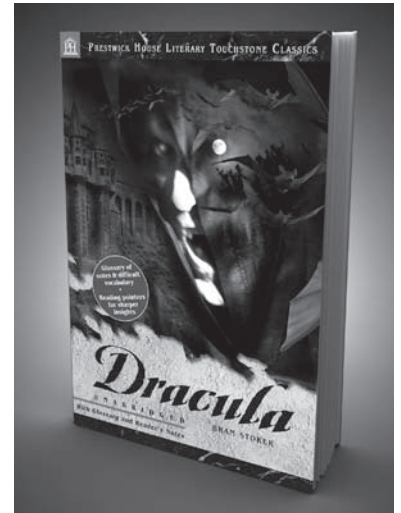
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