

Approved for use in 7th grade

Summary of the Work:

The Outsiders is about two gangs, the "Greasers" (from the wrong side of town) and the "Socs" (from the wealthier part of town). They exhibit gang mentality, which ends in violence, but there are stronger themes of friendship and avoiding judging others that run throughout the book.

Rationale:

For those Junior high school students who aren't "natural" readers or who don't like "made-up" stories, *The Outsiders* is an ideal book. Its exciting narrative and simple language quickly capture a reader's attention, but its mature reflection on serious issues ensures that the student will also have a significant reading experience. For many of those readers it is their first positive reading experience. To many it even changes their perceptions about themselves as non-readers.*

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

- Amazon.com: According to Ponyboy, there are two kinds of people in the world: greasers and socs. A soc (short for "social") has money, can get away with just about anything, and has an attitude longer than a limousine. A greaser, on the other hand, always lives on the outside and needs to watch his back. Ponyboy is a greaser, and he's always been proud of it, even willing to rumble against a gang of socs for the sake of his fellow greasers--until one terrible night when his friend Johnny kills a soc. The murder gets under Ponyboy's skin, causing his bifurcated world to crumble and teaching him that pain feels the same whether a soc or a greaser. This classic, written by S. E. Hinton when she was 16 years old, is as profound today as it was when it was first published in 1967.

* Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.

* Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Noted Distinction:

- Bilby (Books I Love Best Yearly) Award (WON AWARD) 1991

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 750L
- Readability Level:

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: [\(link\)](#)

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

This text discusses the life of gangs and, therefore, includes mild violence and expletives associated with their activities. Teenagers know that the world is often harsh, cruel, and violent. They realize that they must learn acceptable roles vital for survival. Teen-agers of today respond positively to this novel's directness and honesty.

Connection to the Curriculum:

Hinton's characters in *The Outsiders* represent different backgrounds, cultures, and adolescent personalities. The reader can see how gangs and violence affect so many lives. Through the characters and plot, the reader is encouraged to examine positive resolutions to his/her own conflicts in everyday life. Students can examine not only the elements of a novel but also timely topics.

Additional Connections:

There is a video that parallels the book fairly closely, which is helpful for students to watch after reading the novel.

* Rationale by Barbara Leigh Laurain