

Dear rising seventh graders,

This summer you will read *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton, who was only sixteen when she wrote this book based on her experiences observing rival gangs in her native Oklahoma in the 1960s. (I have defined some of the 1960s slang on the second page of this packet.) It is a wonderful story about friendship, family, and the ties that bind us. There is a very famous and enjoyable movie based on this book. You are welcome to watch the movie but please **DO NOT** watch the movie first. Not only would that be academically dishonest, but it could also take away from your enjoyment of the book. **So that it is fresh in your mind, you should read this book close to the end of the summer.**

In addition to *The Outsiders*, you are required to read **two books** from the reading lists “Recommended Books for Grade 7” or “Recommended Books for Grade 8,” both of which can be found at: <http://library.danahall.org/readinglists/summer-reading>. (Anything you purchased from the “extras” table at the Book Fair counts, too.)

As you read *The Outsiders*, have a pen or pencil in hand and take notes to keep track of the novel’s themes and the characters’ development. Underline words or phrases that stand out to you. In particular, **prepare bullet points on each of these four questions** so that you are prepared to engage in discussions and write a graded essay when you return to school. You **do not have to turn in** these notes and they **will not be graded**.

1. What makes Ponyboy unique and how does he change as he matures?

2. What other characters change and how do they change?
3. Who do you think are “the outsiders” in the book? Can someone who looks like he is on the inside actually feel like he is on the outside?
4. What does this book teach us about making choices? Would you have made any similar or different choices to characters in the book?

I look forward to working with you next year!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Robbins

The Outsiders: 60s Slang

- bawl: sob or cry hard
- barrel race: a type of competitive horse racing (the horses hurdle over barrels)
- beer blast: a party with alcohol and underage drinking
- boozed up/ booze: to drink alcohol/ alcohol. In Oklahoma before 1969, the drinking age was 18 years old (not 21 like today).
- broad: a woman (this is an impolite term and implies that the woman is unsophisticated)
- Corvair: a sportscar
- cooler: jail
- cussed: cursed/swearing
- dames: women or girls (a slightly more polite term)
- dig: understand or 'know the score' ("You dig?" means, "Do you get it?")
- doll: someone who is very cute and attractive (male or female)
- drive-in: a movie theater or restaurant where you drive up and watch or eat in your car
- "get sick": throw up or vomit
- Glory!: An exclamation (like, "Wow!" or "Gosh!")
- greaser: a young tough kid or member of a street gang; has long, greased hair and wears leather and denim
- half-crocked: half crazy or half out of your mind (maybe because of alcohol or lack of sleep)
- hood: short for hoodlum; a thug or a criminal
- IQ: a somewhat outdated intelligence test
- jumped: to be attacked (for money or fun)
- Kools: a type of cigarette

- madras: multi-colored striped or plaid fabric; the Socs wear madras jackets and/or pants
- pop: soda
- rat race: a pressured, exhausting routine or way of life
- rumble: an organized fight between two gangs or groups
- saddle bronc: another type of competitive horse racing
- slugged: punched very hard
- soc: A “Social”-- a rich, preppy person from the west side of Tulsa. Enemies of the greasers and are often violent towards the greasers. Name is pronounced “soash” or “soashes”
- tuff: cool way of saying “tough,” meaning that the person is really cool and strong
- a weed: in this case, a tobacco cigarette (the meaning has changed today)
- “you ain’t a woofin’”: a sarcastic comment showing agreement; close to “You’re not kidding!”