



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

THE OUTSIDERS

BY S . E . H I N T O N



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Edited by Stephanie Polukis

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 1

Characterization

Objective: Recognizing how character traits are revealed

Activity

The characters are introduced in this chapter; it is important to know who they are so you can distinguish among them. The narrator tells the reader their ages, appearances, backgrounds, personalities, and things that are important to them in life.

1. Use the following charts to list information about each character. Each group should complete all seven charts.
2. After completing all seven charts:
 - You will either choose a character or be assigned one to report on. Use the chart to write an introduction for one person that could be used as a biographical entry in a book of fictional characters.
 - Each group will then introduce its character to the class. After the introduction, the class should discuss the information presented. Was it complete and accurate? Did it agree with the other groups' perceptions? Do other groups have any information to add, etc

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 2 – 3**Characterization**

Objective: Weighing the truth and/or significance of a character's assertions

Activity

As the story progresses, Ponyboy, as narrator, makes several comments about what things mean; he interprets and explains events. Some of his explanations reflect his view of the world and of life. The comments of some of the other characters also express their views of life.

1. First, select one of the statements from the following list and think about its meaning.
 - What ideas come to your mind when you read the statement?
 - What view of life is being expressed?
 - Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
2. Next, using the three questions above as a guide, write notes on your reaction to the statement.
3. Each person or pair should give a three-minute speech on the statement.
4. After each speech, students can discuss their reactions to the statement.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 3

Plot

Objective: Understanding how character conflict advances plot

Activity

In Chapter 3, the conflicts are intensified. First, Ponyboy realizes that Cherry's boyfriend, Bob, is probably the boy in the Mustang who beat up Johnny. Now, Bob and his friend have found their girlfriends walking with greasers. Ponyboy expresses his feelings about Darry to the others. Finally, when Ponyboy gets home late, he and Darry get in a fight, and Ponyboy runs away. Although Ponyboy decides to return home, the chapter ends with his comment, "Things gotta get better, I figured. They couldn't get worse. I was wrong."

In your group, select a topic from the following list. Before writing your group monologue, discuss the topic. What would the person say? Why would he or she say this? Refer to and include what the person says in the text about this topic. Explain the reasons you think, from reading between the lines, that the person feels or believes what he or she does.

Each group should present its monologue to the class. After each monologue, students can discuss the points presented.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 4 – 5**Figurative Language**

Objective: Understanding how figurative language creates meaning.

Activity

Ponyboy often uses figurative language to make a point. For instance, in this chapter when the five Socs are coming at Ponyboy and Johnny, Ponyboy uses a simile and describes Johnny as “white as a ghost and his eyes were wild-looking, like the eyes of an animal in a trap.”

The literary term he uses is called a simile. The **topic** is Johnny’s fear and powerlessness. The phrase “like the eyes of an animal in a trap” puts a picture in the reader’s mind of a frightened, trapped animal. The phrase is used as a **vehicle** to help the reader understand what Johnny is experiencing. As readers see the similarities between Johnny and a fearful, powerless animal, they have an idea of Johnny’s feelings.

In small groups or pairs, discuss the figurative language listed. Complete the following chart to help understand the ideas suggested by the figurative language. The first one is done for you as an example.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 6**Theme**

Objectives: Understanding thematic ideas
Relating literature to life

Activity

When Dally comes to visit Ponyboy and Johnny, Johnny wants to know if his parents have asked about him. Ponyboy realizes that even though Johnny has the gang and he (Pony) has his brothers and the gang, nobody can take the place of parents.

Write a five-minute speech to the PTA on the topic of Parents from a Child's Perspective. Your opinion on the topic is the most important aspect of the talk, so be sure to emphasize what that opinion is. Use details from *The Outsiders* to support your point.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 7

Inference and Character Motivation

Objectives: Interpreting the thoughts and language of a character
Inferring meaning in a literary text

Activity

In Chapter 7, several statements are made, but are left unexplained. Therefore, it is up to the reader to read between the lines and understand the meaning behind the statements. For instance, when the doctor tells the Curtis boys that Johnny might not live, and that he would be crippled if he does, Ponyboy says that Soda “looked like I felt when I had seen that black-haired Soc lying doubled up and still in the moonlight.” The reader understands what Ponyboy and Soda are experiencing as they try to absorb the possible loss of their close friend.

In small groups, use one of the statements from the following group and list as much information as you can that is related to the statement. Use the information in your list to write a paragraph that explains the meaning of the statement. Use quotations in your paragraph to aid in your understanding. Each group should read its paragraph to the class and use this for further discussion of the statement.

Example:

Statement: “Even if Johnny did live he’d be crippled and never play football or help us out in a rumble again. He’d have to stay in that house he hated, where he wasn’t wanted, and things could never be like they used to be.”

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 10 – 12**Theme II**

Objective: Understanding the book and characters through different perspectives.

Activity

In your group, write out potential short responses to each of the following situations:

1. A thank-you note written to Johnny by the parents of one of the children he saved.
2. Randy's statement about his friend Bob and association with Johnny and Ponyboy.
3. A criminal profile written by a detective after he or she realizes that Dally the thief is also Dally the hero.
4. A eulogy or poem for Johnny. A eulogy is a speech that expresses sorrow over the death of another person. It makes remarks on the good done by that person while alive.
5. A eulogy or poem for Dally.
6. A eulogy for Bob.
7. A written report for the courts about Ponyboy and his brothers, written by the doctor who cared for Ponyboy.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 10 – 12**Plot and Characterization**

Objectives: Understanding plot structure, conflict, and conclusion.
Interpreting the thoughts of a character.

Activity

Each group should complete both Conflict pages.

In Chapter 12, Ponyboy comes to conclusions about both his conflicts. First, after another argument with Darry, he has an even deeper understanding of his brothers and their relationships. Second, after reading Johnny's letter to him, he puts his concerns about being a hood in perspective.

Complete the questions that follow to show how Ponyboy comes to his conclusions about the two issues he has been struggling with. At the bottom, write your opinion of the conclusion of the novel.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 12

Inference

Objective: Inferring details based on general information provided.

Activity:

In Chapter 12, Ponyboy summarizes what happened in the hearing by supplying the main points. Dramatize in detail a skit of what you think happened.

Assign roles for the following eleven characters:

- Ponyboy
- Darry
- Soda
- Randy and his two parents
- Cherry and her two parents
- the guys that jump Ponyboy and Johnny
- the doctor
- the judge

Take volunteers or draw names to assign a cast; another group will write the script. The first will then practice the skit for presentation.