

8th Grade

There are **two** required reading books during the summer. All incoming 8th grade students (current and new) must read:

A paragraph is composed of 6-8 sentences

Incoming 8th

- **The Outsiders by S. E. Hinton - Assignment (See Below)**
- **The 5 People You Meet In Heaven by Mitch Albom - Test (Upon Return to School)**

As you read *The Outsiders*, you are to keep a journal of responses to the questions/tasks below. You will need to:

- Keep your journal in a composition notebook
- Label each entry with the journal number and date
- Entries should be in complete sentences and in paragraph form
- Each paragraph should be at least 6-8 sentences
- Spelling and Punctuation count
- Be creative!**

Journal Entry #1: Outside Identity! (*Response should be two paragraphs*)

Theme: Identity – Individuality vs. The Group

Writing Prompt: Write about your personal identity and your group of friend's identity? What is your personal identity? What is your group of friend's identity? What does identity mean?

Journal Entry #2: The impression of the 1960s (*Response should be two paragraphs*)

Theme: Setting and Issues of the 1960s

Writing Prompt: After reading the first chapter of *The Outsiders*, what is your impression of the setting, including time period and place? Discuss the ideas and perceptions of setting? How does it relate to 2014? Are the years similar or different? What are 2 differences between the 1960s and 2014?

Journal Entry #3: To be or not to be? (*Response should be **one** paragraph for **part two***)

Theme: Characterization

(Part 1) (List the characters name and answer for each character)

Describe the characters: Ponyboy, Soda, Darry, Steve, Two-Bit, Johnny, and Cherry. Be sure to include:

- Characters name
- Physical characteristics
- Personality traits
- Relationship to other characters
- Any other relevant information

(Part 2)

Are any of the characters similar to you? If so, who? How?

Journal Entry #4: Who Am I? (*Response should be **two** paragraphs*)

Theme: Self-identity

Writing Prompt: Who are you? What makes you unique? What factors influence who you are? (family, friends) Why?

Write about a particular event that has impacted your life and has that has shaped who you are. Include a photo, drawing, or object that represents this event and explain why you chose the item.

Journal Entry #5: Clash of the Cliques (*Response should be **two** paragraphs*)

Theme: Greasers vs. Socs

Writing Prompt: Describe Ponyboy's neighborhood, The East, what is it like? What is the West like? What are the differences between the East and West? What are the Similarities? What is the difference between a Greaser and a Soc?

Journal Entry # 6: Staying Gold!

Theme: Innocence vs. Experience

Writing Prompt: Why do you think Johnny killed Bob?

- Do you think you would have reacted differently?
 - What could have been some alternatives?
 - If you were Ponyboy and Johnny, whom would you turn to for help? Why do you think they went to Dally?
 - Why do you think Ponyboy and Johnny's situation prompted Ponyboy's recitation of "Nothing Gold Can Stay?"
 - Who is innocent? Who has experience? (all characters) Is Dally innocent or experienced? What about the rest of the Greasers?
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Journal Entry # 7: **This is who I am.** (Response should be *one* paragraph)

Theme: Biography

Writing Prompt: Finish the following statements:

The best thing about me is ..., and the worst thing about me is ...? Explain why you chose those best things and worst things? How does your identity relate to Ponyboy's?

Journal #8: After reading Chapters 7-8, answer each question in complete sentences (must explain):

1. What condition were Dally and Johnny in?
 2. Why did Darry never lock the front door to the house and what does this say about the Greasers?
 3. How are Ponyboy, Johnny and Dally portrayed in the newspaper article?
 4. Why did everyone go silent when Pony asked Soda if he would take Sandy to the party?
 5. What was Bob's real problem, according to Randy?
 6. Why doesn't Johnny want to see his mother?
 7. What was it about Darry that made him different from the rest of the gang?
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Journal #9: After reading Chapters 9-10, answer each question in complete sentences (must explain):

1. What were the reasons that the various boys gave for fighting?

2. Why did Dally take Ponyboy to see Johnny after the rumble?
 3. What are the two things Greasers have to be proud of?
 4. Why does Ponyboy feel he and his gang don't belong with Tim Sheperd's gang and the Brumley boys?
 5. Who joins the rumble at the last minute?
 6. How does the fight end?
 7. What did Johnny mean when he told Ponyboy to "stay gold"?
 8. Do you think the rumble was worth the trouble?
 9. Why is Dally so upset about Johnny's death?
 10. What did Johnny leave for Ponyboy?
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Journal Entry #10: Take My Advice! (*Response should be **two** paragraphs*)

Theme: Crisis and Help

Writing Prompt: Why does Dally handle the situation the way he does? How do Ponyboy and the other Greasers deal with similar pressures? How do you handle a crisis? Where could Dally gone for help?

Journal Entry #11: Evaluate the Novel (*Response should be **one** paragraph*)

What is your definition of an "outsider"? Why do you believe S.E. Hinton chose this title for the book? Who are the "outsiders" in the book? It may seem like an obvious question, but it can have a complicated answer.