

## Welcome to 8th Grade Language Arts!

We are looking forward to meeting you in September. In preparation for our first classes together, we would like you to read a wonderful book: ***The Outsiders*, by S. E. Hinton.**

*Fun fact:* S. E. Hinton wrote this novel when she was just 16. Yes, she's female - but her publisher thought that readers might take her more seriously if her identity were obscured, especially since this is a story about boys. Good call? Who knows...but this book has sold more than 14 million copies since, and continues to be a favorite among middle school students everywhere.

Please take this assignment seriously, as we will base many lessons on it. Feel free to listen to a recorded version and follow along in the text, if that works best for you.

Complete the assignment ON A GOOGLE DOC (that you will ultimately transfer to a Google Classroom assignment). Remember to re-read your work, checking for accuracy in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar usage (they matter).

\*Also,, you are encouraged to read one (or more) additional books for pleasure. Provide your teacher with the title and author of the book(s) you chose. No assignment required.

## “Reporter’s Notes”

**Background:** During the first or second week of the 2019-20 school year, you will write an insightful newspaper or magazine article about S. E. Hinton’s novel, *The Outsiders*. To prepare for that event, you will:

1. Read the novel through TWO perspectives: i) as a student; ii) as a journalist
2. Record 15-20 of the best “reporter’s notes” you can muster

\*You will have access to these Summer Reading notes during the in-class writing of your article. Therefore, try to think like a reporter as you gather and record your notes -- be strategic and thorough.

**Guidelines:** We, the 8th-grade Language Arts teachers of UMS, are giving you *up to* FOUR categories to use for your note-taking.

- **(S) Setting**
  - This category allows you to study elements of setting. Setting = time + place.
  - You can take basic “time and place” notes, or you can dig deeper into any of these [four dimensions of setting](#).
  
- **(M/W) Mirrors & Windows**
  - This category allows you to reflect on the novel in a more personal way.
    - “Mirrors” = moments when you see yourself reflected in the novel
    - “Windows” = moments when you see into lives unlike your own
  
- **(CS) Character Study**
  - This category allows you to collect and piece together interesting information about any character of choice, in order to understand him or her on a deeper level.  
(Keep in mind, characters other than Ponyboy have a dramatic impact and adjust their opinions and personalities over the course of the novel)
  
- **(C) Conflicts**
  - This category allows you to track and investigate [conflict](#) (and the ways characters respond).

**RULES:**

1. Using the chart below, record a total of 15-20 notes. These should be the best notes you can muster.
  - a. Minimum of 1 note per chapter; Maximum of 2 notes per chapter.
2. You don’t need to use every category. In fact, you may use only one category if you prefer.
3. Professionalism matters. Eighth-grade standards emphasize accurate spelling, capitalization, punctuation and grammar usage.

**Reminder:** You will have access to these notes during the in-class writing of your newspaper or magazine article; therefore, you’ll want to take notes that are likely to be useful during that class.

#	Category	Detail/Scene/page	Significance (or potential significance)
Ex	CS	After venturing off alone to the theater, Ponyboy is surrounded by the Socs and is attacked. “...the Socs jumped up and left me lying there, gasping. I lay there and wonder what in the world	Conflict clearly drives this story and the physical violence between the two groups is evident from the opening chapter. Ponyboy openly admits to being fearful for his life, and we get a sense of

		was happening -- people were jumping over me and running by me... Then [Darry] had me under the armpits and was hauling me to my feet” (6).	how closely he relies on his group for support through these hardships.
Ex	M	“Nothing is real with us. You know, sometimes I’ll catch myself talking to a girl-friend, and realize I don’t mean half of what I’m saying” - Cherry (38).	This quote is acting as a mirror for me, because I often feel like I am saying or doing things with my friends that I don’t mean. Either in person, over text, or on social media, I may say things to fit in or sound cool, which may be why the Socs say things they don’t mean.
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