

# The Outsiders

Written by S.E. Hinton

**Speak**

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Penguin  
Random House  
PENGUIN YOUNG READERS

## OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Tracking characters' actions and motives throughout a novel allows students to gain a deeper understanding of the connection between characterization and theme. Students will use chapter one of *The Outsiders* to establish their initial thoughts on the characters and determine which archetype S.E. Hinton is portraying through their characteristics.

## LEARNING TARGETS

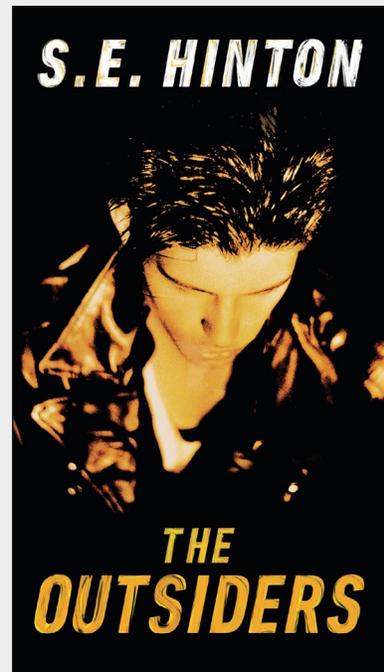
1. Students will be able to identify character traits revealed in chapter one of *The Outsiders*.
2. Based on the character evidence, students will be able to categorize each character as one of the traditional archetypes.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
- Character Analysis Chart (Based on "12 Character Archetypes Every Writer Should Already Know")
- "12 Character Archetypes Every Writer Should Already Know": [tinyurl.com/2ds73yd3](http://tinyurl.com/2ds73yd3)

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## SUMMARY

Ponyboy can count on his brothers and on his friends, but not on much else—besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up “greasers” like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect—until the night someone takes things too far.

## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

- Step 1:** Read chapter one of *The Outsiders* aloud.
- Step 2:** Introduce students to “12 Character Archetypes Every Writer Should Already Know.”
- Step 3:** Review each of the archetypes described.
- Step 4:** Review the Character Theme Connection chart.
- Step 5:** Review the Ponyboy example.
- Step 6:** Have students work with a partner to collect evidence for Darry and determine an archetype.
- Step 7:** Discuss student evidence and archetype.
- Step 8:** Continue with the next examples.

### Character Analysis Chart

An archetype is a character who is revealed as having universally recognizable traits. The most common character archetypes are warrior, child, orphan, creator, caregiver, mentor, joker/trickster, magician, rebel, lover, and seductress. Using the characters identified in chapter one of *The Outsiders*, identify the traits revealed and determine which archetype you believe is being represented.

Character	Evidence of Traits Revealed	Archetype
Ponyboy	<p>“They had me down in a second. They had my arms and legs pinned down and one of them was sitting on my chest with his knees on my elbows, and if you don’t think that hurts, you’re crazy.” p 5</p> <p>“I looked away hurriedly, because, if you want to know the truth, I was starting to bawl.” P 8</p> <p>“I was coming home from the movies. I didn’t think...” p 13</p> <p>“One time in biology I had to dissect a worm, and the razor wouldn’t cut, so I used my switchblade. The minute I flicked it out – I forgot what I was doing or I would never have done it...” p 15</p>	Ponyboy represents the child archetype. He is portrayed as being naive by not thinking to get a ride to the movies and physically powerless against the attack from the Socs.
Darry		
Sodapop		
Steve Randle		
Two-Bit Mathews		
Dallas Winston - Dally		