

**Grade 8 English**  
**The Outsiders**  
**Chapters 1-3 Answer Key**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer each of the following in your notebook. Remember to use complete sentences and quotations or page references whenever possible.

**Chapter One:**

1. Who are the characters introduced in Chapter 1?

The characters introduced in chapter 1 are: Ponyboy Curtis, Sodapop Curtis, Darrel (Darry) Curtis, Steve Randle, Two-Bit (Keith) Matthews, Dally (Dallas) Winston, Johnny Cade. Ponyboy is the youngest of the gang, Sodapop and Darry are his older brothers. Steve is Soda's best friend. Two-Bit is the joker of the gang. Dally is the wildest of the bunch and Johnny is the weakest and most timid.

2. Explain the difference between "socs" and "greasers".

Socs are the rich kids while greasers are generally poor. Greasers are wilder than the socs. While greasers live a life of petty crime and run-ins with the law, socs are generally "nice" kids who display occasional outbursts of rowdy, disruptive and sometimes illegal behaviour. Greasers keep their hair long, they wear blue jeans, t-shirts and leather jackets and tennis shoes or boots. Socs wear madras shirts and drive expensive muscle cars.

3. How is Ponyboy's relationship with Darry different from his relationship with Sodapop?

Darry is Ponyboy's oldest brother and since their parents were killed in a car accident, he is the one responsible for keeping the boys together. Darry expects a lot from Ponyboy, and is very stern and strict with him. Ponyboy feels that Darry just doesn't understand him. Sodapop is more understanding and friendlier toward his little brother. He often invites Ponyboy along when he's going out and he'll pick up for Ponyboy when he feels Darry is being too hard on him. Ponyboy feels closer to Soda than to Darry.

4. Why is the 'gang' important to Johnny?

The gang is important to Johnny because without them he would never know what love and affection are. Johnny's parents are abusive and when he needs to get away from them, he knows he can turn to the gang for support.

5. How does Ponyboy react to what Sodapop tells him about Darry?

When Sodapop tells Ponyboy that Darry truly does love him and care about him, Ponyboy refuses to believe it. He thinks that Soda is wrong. Ponyboy believes that Darry doesn't really care about him and he tries to convince himself that he doesn't care about Darry either.

6. Do you think Darry loves Ponyboy? Why does he treat Ponyboy the way he does?

Yes/No. Darry treats Ponyboy the way he does because he wants what is best for him. He knows that Ponyboy has the potential to go far in life and he doesn't want him to mess up.

7. What does Ponyboy mean when he says, "I lie to myself all the time"? Why would somebody ever lie to themselves?

When Ponyboy says "I lie to myself all the time," he means that he is trying to convince himself of things he knows are not true (like saying he doesn't care about Darry when deep down he knows he really does care). People lie to themselves for the same reason. That is, to convince themselves of things they know deep down are untrue.

## Chapter Two:

1. Vocabulary - in your own words, explain what each of the following words mean:

**Incredulous:** unwilling or unable to believe something.

**Vaguely:** in a way that is uncertain, indefinite, or unclear; roughly.

**Nonchalantly:** appearing casually calm and relaxed; not displaying anxiety, interest, or enthusiasm.

2. Who are "the fuzz"? The fuzz are the police.

3. Are the names Ponyboy and Sodapop nicknames? Explain.

No, the names Ponyboy and Sodapop are the characters' actual names, given to them by their parents. The names are unusual and original because, in the words of Ponyboy, his dad "was an original person."

4. Who are Cherry and Marcia?

Cherry and Marcia are the Socs that Ponyboy, Johnny and Dally met at the movies.

5. Why doesn't Ponyboy like referring to Sodapop as a dropout?

Ponyboy doesn't like referring to Sodapop as a "dropout" because he thinks the name doesn't suit his brother, who is up-beat and happy-go-lucky. According to Ponyboy, dropouts are hoodlums wandering the streets at night breaking out street lights.

6. What is "a weed" slang for in 1967? A "weed" is slang for a cigarette.

7. Why does Dally look sick now?

Dally has a sick expression on his face because he is reacting to what happened to Johnny. Despite the fact that Dally had seen much violence in the past he was deeply affected by seeing such a close friend beaten nearly to death. Johnny was the gang's pet and Dally probably felt that he and the other guys had a responsibility to protect him. Seeing him badly injured was hard to take.

8. What literary device does the author use to describe Johnny's mugging?

The author uses flashback to describe Johnny's mugging. Ponyboy was talking to Cherry at the concession stand when he became engrossed in the story about Johnny getting beaten up by the Socs.

### Chapter Three:

1. Vocabulary - In your own words, explain what each of the following words mean:

**Aloof:** not friendly; cool and distant.

**Impersonally:** not influenced by, showing, or involving personal feelings.

**Ornery:** bad-tempered and combative; stubborn

**Resignedly:** Submissively.

2. What does Cherry explain as the difference between the socs and the greasers?

Cherry explains that the main difference between greaser and socs is not money but emotion. She says that the greasers are more emotional, whereas the socs are cool, collected, aloof and unfeeling.

3. What does Ponyboy mean when he says "Johnny and I understood each other without saying anything"?

When Ponyboy says he and Johnny "understood each other without saying anything," he meant that they were such close friends that each knew what the other was thinking. They knew each other so well, and thought in such similar ways that they didn't need to talk to know what was on the other's mind.

4. When and how did Pony's parents die?

Pony's parents were killed in an auto wreck eight months before the events in the story take place.

5. What happens when Pony comes home after his curfew?

When Ponyboy comes home after his curfew Darry becomes angry with him and begins shouting at him. Soda also gets involved in the argument. Darry loses his temper and strikes Ponyboy in the face. Angry and confused, Pony dashes out the door in search of his friend Johnny.

6. Why does Johnny like it better when his father is hitting him?

Johnny likes it better when his father is hitting him because this is the only time his dad pays attention to him. Johnny's parents simply don't care about him and hardly ever notice him. He says that the only time his dad even knows him is when they are fighting.

7. At the end of the chapter, how does the author foreshadow that bad things are to come?

The author foreshadows that bad things are to come by having Ponyboy say "Things gotta get better, I figured. They couldn't get worse. I was wrong." These words let the reader know that while Ponyboy and Johnny already have their share of troubles, worse things are on the way.