Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton

Final Research Paper Assignment

For this research paper, you are called to choose any theme present in S.E. Hinton’s *The Outsiders* and explore it in the form of a carefully-planned, well-researched paper. A good paper will contain a strong thesis statement, relevant examples from the text, and outside research that supports any claims that you may make.

For example, if you choose the theme of loyalty in the novel, you will need to discuss the ways in which the characters’ loyalty or disloyalty shapes the course of the story. There are a number of ways that you could do this! Most importantly, you need to have a tight grasp on the novel’s characters, plot, setting, etc. Using this information, you could research “gang loyalty” in the 1950’s to provide a historical context for your paper or research Tulsa, Oklahoman to see if there is any information about gang rivalries that may have been playing out during that time period. You could then point out specific examples from the text that perpetuate this theme and use your historical research to further strengthen your thesis.

The goals of this assignment are to help you:

* become more knowledgeable about finding and using **varied research sources**
* further develop your **critical thinking skills** and **back up your points with evidence**
* become more adept at **synthesizing information** and **developing informed views**
* discipline yourself to **follow a scholarly research format** to **document in-text sources** and a **reference page (bibliography)**
* compose a **well organized, clear, concise**, **research paper** to expand your knowledge on a subject in your major

The Basics

**Length**: 5-7 pages. Any papers handed in that do not fall within these parameters will lose points.

**Documentation:** This research paper should follow the **MLA Style format**. Use your MLA handout as well as online resources such as the Purdue Online Writing Lab (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>) to make sure that the MLA criteria is being met throughout the assignment. Follow Purdue’s MLA Style Guide for documenting the sources in your text and on your Works Cited Page.

**Sources**: For this assignment you will need *at least* 7sources. You will be required to do some of your research at a "real," not virtual, library. Much scholarly work and other valuable information still resides only in hard copy. Relying only on the Internet will give you a false impression of what is out there. If you are unsure about a particular source, we can discuss it! If you are having trouble finding sources, talk to a teacher! We would be more than happy to help.

**Margins**: 1 inch (top, bottom, left, right)

**Font**: 12 point, Times New Roman (No exceptions!)

**Pagination:** Put page numbers in the top right hand corner of each page. The page number should be formatted with your first name in front of the page number (Smith 1, Smith 2, Smith 3, etc.)

Your paper should contain these parts:

**Introduction:** Your introductory material should set up your topic for your audience. Briefly summarize your findings on the subject - If the sources disagree about the value of or perspective on the subject, point out the areas of disagreement. Your introduction should not meander around the point of your paper. It may be more than one paragraph in length, but at some point, very early in the paper you then need to start the substance of the paper. Your thesis should come at the end of your introductory material. State your thesis in the form of a sentence or two. **It should** **not be in the form of a question.** Your thesis should be a brief statement, in your own words, that points out the major issues about your theme that you discovered in your research. If you can't articulate in a sentence or two what your main point is then you probably don't have a good idea of what you will be writing about.

**Body of Paper:** The body of your paper should provide supporting evidence to support your thesis, in a logical, fully developed manner. For each new topic which supports your overall thesis, provide a topic sentence or two which is, in effect, the thesis for that sub-topic. You need to provide transition sentences to move your reader from one paragraph to the next.

A writer of a research paper should synthesize the information gained from sources and weave them into a well ordered paper, using the sources as evidence to support key points. A paper which is just a string of quotes shows that the author made no attempt to come to grips with the subject and is relying on the sources to speak for her or him.

**Conclusion:** Your conclusion should make some "wrap up" statements about what you learned about your chosen topic and the possible impact of your findings on people and perhaps society in general. Also, address any issues that may still not be resolved for you. Don't be reluctant to address any issues that aren't easily resolved or have negative or ambiguous outcomes. We are not necessarily looking for a neatly wrapped up conclusion with no loose ends. I am looking for a conscientious, thoughtful look at some topic in your field, sharing of the major significance of this issue, and any unanswered questions, if any, you are still dealing with.

One last piece of advice: Don’t worry!

Consult your teachers when needed throughout the process –

We are happy to help!