

This lesson is a great way to review the text of The Outsiders as well as have the students think critically about the information and determine what information in the text is important. These are skills that are necessary for the NYS ELA and reading in general (in all subject areas). It should be completed following the chapter six.

Students are put into four groups as follows:

1. Legal team for the prosecution (2 lawyers and a few other students who will be assistants)
2. Legal team for the defense (2 lawyers and a few other students who will be assistants)
3. Cast of characters:
 - a. Johnny
 - b. Ponyboy
 - c. Cherry Valence
 - d. Marcia
 - e. Randy
4. Jury

Each group will have specific responsibilities to prepare for the “trial” of Ponyboy and Johnny.

Obviously, the legal teams are to put together evidence for their “clients”. They should go back in the text and find information that will be important in the “trial”. They will also need to write questions for the witnesses they plan to call. Each witness they call should be asked at least three questions regarding Bob’s death and the other occurrences that evening. Finally, they should write an “opening statement” in which they state and defend their position. This combines a few higher order thinking skills. First, they must defend their position about the case (this is done through the opening statement). Next, they must examine the evidence and create questions (analysis and synthesis).

The cast of characters will review the text so that when they are questioned they will be able to provide true and accurate answers. You can provide them with comprehension questions as a guide if you wish.

The jury will also need to review the information from the text. They should also be provided with information about what it means to be a part of a jury. They will be asked to take notes during the mock trial and make a decision at the end based upon which team of their classmates provided the best case for their clients. This is a very high level thinking activity. It is an evaluation activity in which they are being asked to make a judgment. The students on the jury should be able to explain why and how they came to their decision.

The following outline should be given to the legal teams in order to assist them in writing opening statements:

- a) Theme/theory of the case
- b) Character sketch of the major people in the case
- c) Identity of the major witnesses
- d) Description of what the witnesses will testify
- e) Important legal elements
- f) Conclusion requesting a certain verdict

The students should be given one 90 minute block to prepare and one 90 minute block to perform the trial