Chapter 1:

1. Why doesn’t Ponyboy steal like some of the other Greasers?

Ponyboy doesn't steal because he has a different attitude and mindset compared to some of the other Greasers. Ponyboy is more concerned with reading books and daydreaming, whereas some of the other Greasers are more interested in causing trouble and getting into fights.

Even though Ponyboy is part of the Greaser gang, he doesn't see himself as a troublemaker like the others. He has a strong sense of right and wrong, and he doesn't want to do anything that would hurt others or break the law. This is why he doesn't participate in activities like stealing, which he sees as wrong.

Chapter 2:

1. Describe Cherry Valance’s personality. What makes her different from many of the other characters in this novel?

Cherry Valance is described as a friendly and understanding character. She is a Soc girl, which is the term used in the novel for the rich kids in town. Despite her background, Cherry is very different from many of the other Socs in the novel.

Cherry is kind and empathetic, and she doesn't look down on the Greasers like many of the other Socs do. She treats everyone with respect, regardless of their social status or background. This makes her stand out from the other characters in the novel, who are often very judgmental and quick to start fights.

Another thing that sets Cherry apart from the other characters is her willingness to reach out and connect with people from different backgrounds. She is open-minded and willing to see things from different perspectives, which is something that many of the other characters in the novel lack

Chapter 3:

1. What is something this chapter reveals about one of the characters other than Ponyboy and Cherry?

It reveals more about the character of Darry, showing that he is a strong, responsible, and loving older brother who is doing his best to take care of his family.

Darry is a tough and no-nonsense character who is always pushing Ponyboy to do his best and stay out of trouble. At the same time, however, it's clear that he loves his brothers and is doing his best to take care of them in the absence of their parents.

This chapter also reveals that Darry is under a lot of stress and pressure. He is working long hours to support his family and he feels like he has to be the responsible one all the time. Despite this, he still makes time to talk to Ponyboy and try to understand what's going on in his life.

Chapter 4:

1. Why do the boys go to see Dally (Dallas)?

Because they are looking for someone to help them after they've run away from home. They know that Dally is a tough and streetwise character who has connections with the criminal underworld, and they hope that he can help them find a place to hide and keep them safe.

Chapter 5:

1. What important realization do Ponyboy and Johnny make in this chapter? What about their circumstances do you think led them to realize that?

The important realization that Ponyboy and Johnny make in this chapter is that the violence and gang warfare that they are caught up in is senseless and pointless. They realize that the fighting between the Greasers and the Socs is based on misunderstandings and prejudice, and that it is only making things worse for everyone involved.

Their circumstances of hiding out in the church, and the fact that they are forced to rely on each other for survival, help to bring this realization to their minds. They have a chance to step back from the violence and see things from a different perspective, and they realize that they don't want to be part of the cycle of violence and hate any longer.

Chapter 6:

1. In this chapter, we see Dally and Darry’s attitudes towards Ponyboy and Johnny, and we also see Ponyboy and Johnny’s actions at the church. What do these two things have in common?

The two things have a common theme of protection and concern for the well-being of others.

Dally and Darry both show that they care about Ponyboy and Johnny by trying to protect them from harm and help them out of their difficult situation. Dally helps the boys hide out from the police and gives them money and suggestions to keep them safe. On the other hand, Darry is worried about Ponyboy and Johnny's safety and wants them to come home so he can take care of them.

Ponyboy and Johnny's actions at the church also reflect their concern for the well-being of others. They help to save some children from a burning building, risking their own safety in the process. This shows that they are capable of compassion and selflessness, even in the time when they suffer their own struggles.

Chapter 7:

1. Why does Randy want to talk to Ponyboy? What’s significant about what he reveals?

To apologize for the way he and his friends have treated him and the other Greasers. Randy is starting to realize that the violence and prejudice between the Greasers and the Socs is senseless and that they have more in common than they previously thought. He wants to reach out to Ponyboy and start a conversation to try and bridge the gap between their two groups. Randy is starting to see that they are more alike than they are different and wants to work towards a better understanding and a peaceful solution to their differences.

It shows that change and understanding are possible, even between rival gangs. By reaching out to Ponyboy and trying to have a conversation, Randy is breaking down the walls of hatred and mistrust that have existed between the Greasers and the Socs. His apology and willingness to talk to Ponyboy shows that he is open to the idea of changing his views and making peace with the Greasers.

Chapter 8:

1. Why does Ponyboy mention sunsets in his conversation with Cherry?

To symbolize the idea of beauty in an otherwise harsh and violent world. He uses the image of the sunset to contrast the tough lives of the greasers and the Socs, suggesting that even in the midst of their struggles, there are still moments of peace and beauty to be found.

Chapter 9:

1. What distinction does Ponyboy make between his gang and the other Greaser gangs at the rumble?

Ponyboy distinguishes his gang from the other Greaser gangs at the rumble by describing them as being "greasers" rather than just another gang. Ponyboy realizes that his gang and the other Greasers are more alike than different and that they all share a common struggle against the wealthy and privileged Socs. He recognizes that the violence and aggression at the rumble are not unique to his gang, but rather a result of the social and economic forces that drive the conflict between the Greasers and the Socs. Through this realization, Ponyboy comes to understand that the divisions between the Greaser gangs are not as important as their shared experiences and struggles.

Chapter 10:

1. What drives Dally to commit a crime in this chapter?

Dally's desperation and frustration drive him to commit a crime. After learning about Johnny's death and the destruction of the church, Dally is overcome with grief and anger. He feels a sense of hopelessness and helplessness in the face of the systemic oppression and violence that he and the other Greasers face. This leads him to lash out and rob a grocery store, as a way to assert his power and control over his life in a world where he feels he has nothing to be in control.

Chapter 11:

1. Why does Ponyboy resent Randy in this chapter?

Because of his privileged upbringing and his lack of understanding about the lives of the Greasers. Despite his initial attempts to reach out to Ponyboy and offer condolences for Johnny's death, Ponyboy feels that Randy is unable to truly understand or empathize with his situation. He sees Randy as representing the larger societal forces that have oppressed and marginalized the Greasers, and he resents Randy's privileged position and the ignorance and arrogance that comes with it.

Chapter 12:

1. What is Ponyboy’s “theme” for English class about?

Ponyboy's "theme" for English class is about the struggle of the Greasers and their fight for identity and recognition. In the essay, Ponyboy reflects on his experiences and the struggles of his gang, and he argues that despite their rough exterior, the Greasers are not just a bunch of hoodlums, but rather a group of people fighting to be recognized and valued. He argues that the violence and poverty that they face are not a result of personal failings, but rather a result of larger societal forces beyond their control. Through his essay, Ponyboy shows his growing understanding and awareness of the complexities of his world, and his desire to be seen and understood beyond the stereotypes and prejudices that surround him.

Comprehensive reflection questions:

1. Choose one or two lines from this novel that stick out in your mind. Write about what they mean, and why you think they stand out to you.

One line that stands out is: "Stay gold, Ponyboy. Stay gold." This line is spoken by Johnny to Ponyboy just before he dies. "Stay gold" is a reference to a line in a Robert Frost poem that Johnny quotes earlier in the book. The line means to maintain innocence and purity in the face of a harsh and often cruel world. This line is significant because it represents Johnny's final message to Ponyboy, and it encapsulates the theme of the novel, which is the struggle to maintain one's individuality and humanity in the face of adversity.

In my own life, my teacher also said similar words to me to make me stay innocent and naïve, away from the intricacies of people's relationships and people who agree overtly, but oppose in secret.

1. List two or three things you think could be symbolic in this novel, and what they might mean.

In the novel, the sunset is often used as a symbol of hope and beauty in an otherwise harsh and violent world. The image of the sunset represents moments of peace and tranquility amidst the chaos and aggression of the greaser-Soc conflict.

1. Choose one character from the novel whom you think you’re most like. (Note: You don’t have to have a ton in common externally, e.g. age or appearance. Some kind of internal similarity is what’s important.) Choose another character whom you wish you could be more like, or who has at least some characteristics you really admire. Explain why, for both characters. (4 sentences minimum.)

I think that Ponyboy is very similar to me. Because Ponyboy is a young and idealistic character who is searching for his place in the world and so do I. He struggles to understand the complexities of class and social identity while I remained to stay “naive”. This trait of being introspective and searching for one's place in the world is also what I do. I am controlled by my family (?) and hardly have decisions by myself, which makes me think that I do not have a place in the world.

1. Choose one of the characters from the novel who reminds you of someone else you’ve known. Describe the character, explain who the person they remind you of is, and explain the parallel. (Note: It’s ok if you’re not sure why the character reminds you of that person. Meaningful but unclear connections are more interesting than clear but superficial connections.) (4 sentences minimum.)

I think that Darry is very similar to one of my friends in middle school. He is not so mature when he is with us but very careful about his little sister. Darry is Ponyboy's oldest brother and serves as a surrogate father figure to both Ponyboy and Sodapop. He is tough and determined, the same as my classmate, but he also has a softer side and is fiercely protective of his brothers while my classmate treats his sister with lots of love, buying all kinds of toys for her. This combination of strength and vulnerability is a trait that suits him.

1. The central character group in the novel (The titular Outsiders, the Greasers) are defined and united by many social relationships, including family, friendship, class, town, age, gender, style, taste, and subculture. Which do you think is more important for a teenager: social relationships, or self-reliance? (3 sentences minimum.)

Self-reliance is a critical aspect of personal growth and development, especially for teenagers as they navigate the challenges of adolescence and begin to form their own identity. While social relationships can provide support and a sense of belonging, self-reliance is what ultimately enables individuals to take control of their own lives, make decisions for themselves, and grow as individuals.

In The Outsiders, Ponyboy learns the importance of self-reliance through his experiences and relationships with others. He comes to understand that relying solely on others can be limiting, and that he must rely on his own strengths and abilities in order to succeed and find his place in the world. Through his journey, Ponyboy demonstrates that self-reliance is an essential aspect of personal growth and maturity.

1. The characters in the novel are involved in violence, which has some tragic results. Why do you think teenagers, and teenage males in particular, sometimes get involved in violence? Playing devil’s advocate, can you think of any possible justification or benefits of things like petty crime, group rivalries, and fights like the kind portrayed in the novel? (3 sentences minimum.)

Teenagers, and particularly teenage males, may become involved in violence for a variety of reasons, including peer pressure, a desire to establish or defend a sense of identity or status, and a need to cope with feelings of frustration, anger, or insecurity. In some cases, violence may be seen as a means of resolving conflicts or protecting oneself or others. Also, teens at an early age can avoid their responsibilities. Instead, it often leads to further conflict, injury, and even death. Engaging in violence does not address the underlying issues or provide a lasting solution and can have long-term negative effects on both the individuals involved and their communities.