



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2010 Volume II: The Art of Reading People: Character, Expression, Interpretation

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## **Better Read Than Viewed? Contrasting the Novel and Film**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 10.02.12

by Mary Lou L. Narowski

Using the Paideia educational philosophy as the overall process, this unit seeks to address the question, "Which has more merit, the novel or its film version?" Drawing upon the novel *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton and the film of the same name directed by Francis Ford Coppola, my students will observe character, write a film script scene, and compose a comparative essay as a way of answering this essential question. Exploring the Konstantin Stanislavski's Method Acting concept, my students will first critically observe three people in their lives, studying their appearances, behaviors, moods, and attitudes. They will apply this understanding to character as they read the novel. Using a series of graphic organizers, students will map different aspects of character, readying them for the viewing the film. From there, groups of students will choose a scene from the novel and write a filmscript of that scene using skills they acquired while reading *Monster*. Next they will actually watch the movie recording identical information to be used in their comparative essay. Finally they will discuss the components of a comparative essay, and using all the information they gather throughout the process, write an essay deciding which has more merit, the novel or the film.

(Recommended for English Language Arts, grades 7-9)

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