Chapter 9
Chapter 9-12 Study Guide

1. On the bottom of p.132, when Pony asks what kind of a world it is, what comment is he making about how he judges people?
In this part of the story, Ponyboy is proud to be a greaser. This is the world that he grew up in—the family that he has always had. Although others judged him with his slicked back hair and the way he dressed, Pony was confident in who he was. He knows that appearances can be deceiving and cannot dictate who a person is or who they’ll become.

2. Why do the boys fight? Is Pony different?
Sodapop says that he likes fighting because “[i]t’s action. It’s a contest, Like a drag race or a dance or something” (133). Steve, is more violent in the sense that he likes fighting because he wants to “beat those Soc’ head in” (133) because he enjoys it. The boys explain that Darry likes to fight because he gets to show off his muscles. Ponyboy says that Darry likes to take part in anything related to strength. Ponyboy will fight, but he doesn’t like it.

Darry is hesitant to let Ponyboy fight because he has lost weight and strength since being in Windrixville. He also doesn’t like that Ponyboy will be fighting without Johnny, since they usually protect each other.

3. What is the difference between Tim Sheppard’s gang and Ponyboy’s? Explain how Pony feels this difference give his group the upper hand?
Ponyboy notes that the difference between Tim Sheppard’s gang and their gang was that “they had a leader and were organized; we were just buddies who stuck together – each man was his own leader” (138). Pony thought that this gave their gang the advantage. Tim Sheppard’s gang was also more criminal. They enjoyed being ‘hood’, while Pony and his brothers were more determined to make something of their lives.

4. What do you think Johnny’s last words to Pony mean?
Johnny’s last words to Ponyboy were “Stay gold, Ponyboy. Stay gold” (148). This message refers back to the poem that Johnny and Pony read while they were at the church in Windrixville. Stay gold in this particular instance refers to being true to yourself and attempting to remain innocent an uncorrupted. When Johnny, in his final hour, tells Ponyboy to “Stay Gold” he is telling him to not conform to what society dictates and to stay true to his pure self despite the violent and tumultuous world he lives in.
5. What happened with Dally in the end?
After Dally robbed the gas station and was running from the cops, he raised the gun he had, knowing that the cops would think it was loaded. Since he lost Johnny, the only person he really ever cared about, he had no reason to live. Dally wanted to die.

Chapter 10
6. How does pony's dreaming, or lying to himself, finally work in this chapter?
Ponyboy is walking around not knowing what really truly happened because he is in shock from all the events that happened. Because of this, when he lied to himself, it worked. He wasn’t in his right mind.

7. Why was Johnny’s dying so difficult for Dally to handle?
Dally finally broke because Johnny was the only thing he had ever loved.

8. Who do you think Dally would have wanted to die?
Dally would have wanted himself to die if it could have saved Johnny.

9. How does Pony describe Dally as being a person who made a difference on pg. 154?
Dally had given Pony and Johnny his gun, he had pulled the kids from the burning church, and Dally had risked his life and risked going to jail in order to keep Pony and Johnny safe. He made a difference by caring for his family.

Chapter 11 and 12 Study Guide

Chapter 11
1. Explain why Pony might rather anyone’s hate than their pity (p.162)?
Ponyboy shares that he would rather the socs hate him than pity him. He says he hopes they “weren’t full of that pity-the-victims-of-environment junk that social workers kept handing Curly Shepard” (162) who often was sent off to a reformatory. Ponyboy has seen people pity other greasers before, and he does not want to experience that.

2. What do you think is going on with Ponyboy when he says, “Johnny didn’t have anything to do with Bob’s getting killed.”(p.166)?
He is still trying to convince himself of what he wants to make himself believe.
3. Why does Randy come to visit Pony, beyond the obvious?
Randy explains that he came to see Pony to see how he was feeling, but it seems he is really there because he feels stress about the upcoming trial. Randy, according to Ponyboy, had nothing two worry about since Pony was in a much worse situation.

4. What did Randy discover in his conversation with Pony?
During their discussion Randy learns the Ponyboy’s parents are dead and that there is a possibility the judge could take Ponyboy out of his home.

Chapter 12

1. What circumstances did Ponyboy’s teacher refer to? What circumstances does Ponyboy think his teacher is referring to?
His teacher was referring to everything that had happened—the deaths and the court. Ponyboy thought he was just simply talking about him not doing well because he was goofing off and getting into a lot of trouble.

2. Why doesn’t Ponyboy feel scared when the socs approach him and he threatens them with a broken bottle(p.170-171)? How is this a dramatic change from the Ponyboy we have seen up until this point? Was there anything odd about Pony’s behavior?
In this scene, this shows the changes in the personality of Ponyboy’s character. Until now, he has not been interested in violence or crime. Now, he is not scared because he is bitter and doesn’t feel anything after all the tragic events that happened. Pony told them that they better leave him alone or else. This was odd for Pony because he was never considered “tough” or outspoken. This shows that he had been pushed to his limit.

3. What does Ponyboy end up doing for his English assignment?
In the end, Ponyboy decides to write his composition on his life experiences. The reader learns that the novel is, in fact, Ponyboy’s composition. We know this because the first lines of the composition are identical to the first lines of the novel.

4. Discuss the importance of narrative point of view in The Outsiders.
The narrative point of view used in this novel is first person narration through the character – Ponyboy. While the narration of the novel is important and allows greater insight into the main character, we learn in these chapters how important the narration really is. In the end, the reader learns that this novel’s narration has been a written composition by Ponyboy to his English teacher.