**Essay Topics—*The Outsiders***

**Directions:** After reading and annotating your novel, choose one topic to develop into a full essay. Be sure to develop a clear thesis statement with supporting topic sentences that includes related details and textual evidence from the book and/or the related readings.

1. Compare and contrast the characters of Johnny and Dally. What roles does each character play in the novel? What is each character’s role in Ponyboy’s life? Explain in detail and provide textual evidence from the novel to support your ideas.
2. Explain Ponyboy’s ever changing perceptions of the Socs as the novel progresses. How does his opinion of the Socs at the end of the novel differ from his opinion at the beginning? Explain in detail and provide textual evidence from the novel to support your ideas.
3. Explain how “Nothing Gold Can Stay,” the poem by Robert Frost that Ponyboy reads to Johnny at the church is relevant to Ponyboy and Johnny’s personal story. Explain in detail and provide textual evidence from the novel to support your ideas.
4. What draws Cherry to the Greasers? Why is she with Bob? Why does she say she could fall in love with Dally? Explain in detail and provide textual evidence from the novel to support your ideas.
5. Discuss the role of the novel’s physical setting, How does the division between the East Side and the West Side represent the conflict between the two social groups in the novel? Explain in detail and provide textual evidence from the novel to support your ideas.
6. Compare and contrast the Curtis brothers, Darry, Sodapop, and Ponyboy. How does their relationship change over the course of the novel? Explain in detail and provide textual evidence from the novel to support your ideas.
7. Think about the role of physical violence in the novel. Is the violence shocking, predictable, boring, or melodramatic? Explain in detail and provide textual evidence from the novel to support your ideas.