

## Judging a Book by Its Cover

**Name:** Madeline Mayer

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Content area(s):**

*ELA:* Viewing, representing, analysis

*Visual Arts:* Understanding, evaluating and making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

**Classroom Time:** 90 minutes or two 45 minute sessions

**Purpose:** Discuss the effect different book covers have on a perspective reader and what book covers can tell us about books.

**Skills Addressed:**

*ELA skills:*

Interpret and evaluate the various ways visual image makers such as illustrators, documentary filmmakers, and political cartoonists represent meanings, evaluate how different media forms influence and inform

*Visual Arts skill:*

Understanding, interpreting, and evaluating art pieces, connecting visual arts with other disciplines

**Supplies:**

Image of a book cover for a book that students have not read; 3-4 different book covers for a book that the class is about to read; chart paper; markers; paper; and pens

**Lesson Process:**

Warm-up – 10 minutes

- A. Display the cover of “Slam!” [Attachment 1] By Walter Dean Myers on the board. (If students have read this, choose a different book cover.)
- B. Give students 2-3 minutes to quietly brainstorm what that book might be about and then have them share their ideas out loud. – *A boy who likes basketball, a boy who becomes a professional basketball player, etc.*
- C. Ask students what kind of book covers make them want to read those books – *Bright colors, kids my age on the cover, animals on the cover, etc.*

Lesson procedure – 75 minutes

- A. Summarize what the book is about for the students - *Sixteen-year-old "Slam" Harris is counting on his noteworthy basketball talents to get him out of the inner city and give him a chance to*

*succeed in life.* (For a detailed summary -

[http://teenfiction.suite101.com/article.cfm/slam\\_by\\_walter\\_dean\\_myers](http://teenfiction.suite101.com/article.cfm/slam_by_walter_dean_myers))

- B. Ask students to share how the book cover and title gave them an impression of what the book was about. – *Ex. The boy on the cover has a basketball in his hand and looks frustrated, etc...*
- C. Ask for students to share other ideas of book covers for that book that might have given the reader a better/ different perception of what the book was about. – *Ex: Boys playing basketball on the street with houses in the background, etc...*
- D. Randomly assign students one of the four different book covers for a book that the class is about to start reading. ( 4 different covers for “The Outsiders” by S.E. Hinton are attached - Attachment 2)
- E. Have students spend 15 minutes writing down everything that they can interpret about the book’s characters, plot, and setting from viewing the book cover.
- F. Have students get into 4 different groups – one group for each book cover and spend 10 minutes comparing everything they came up with and discussing what the book might possibly be about – *A group of kids that live outside, Boys that are never included – they’re always outside*
- G. Distribute a piece of chart paper to each group. (Attachment 3 – Looking Ahead)
- H. Have each group make a list on chart paper of what they think about the book’s plot, setting, characters, tone, and mood (15 minutes)
- I. Each group will come up and present their ideas to the rest of the class (5 minutes for each group)
- J. Students write a reflection on which cover would make them most likely to read the book and why. (15 minutes)

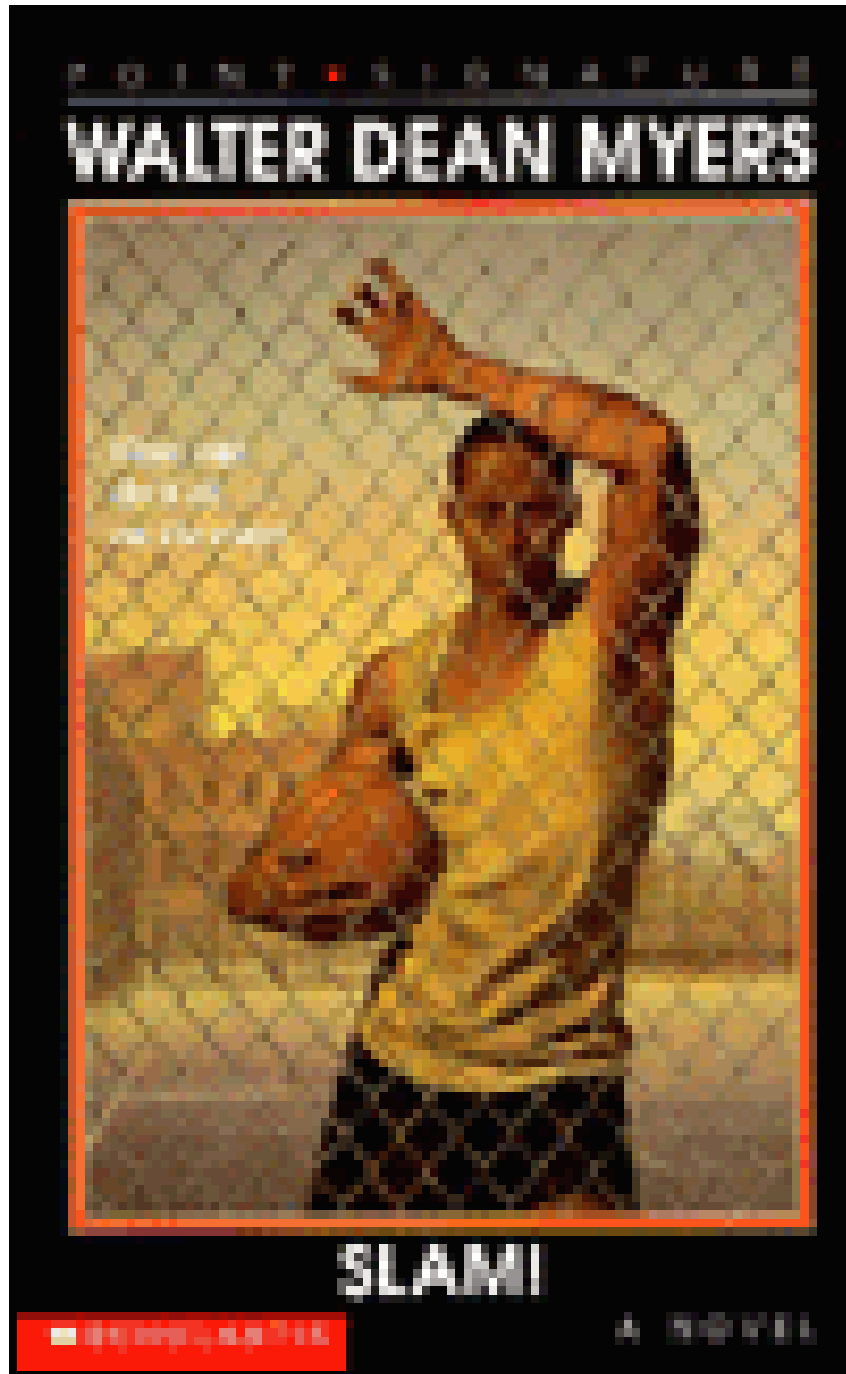
Student assessment or final product to be developed:

Charts created in groups, class participation, teacher observation and final reflection

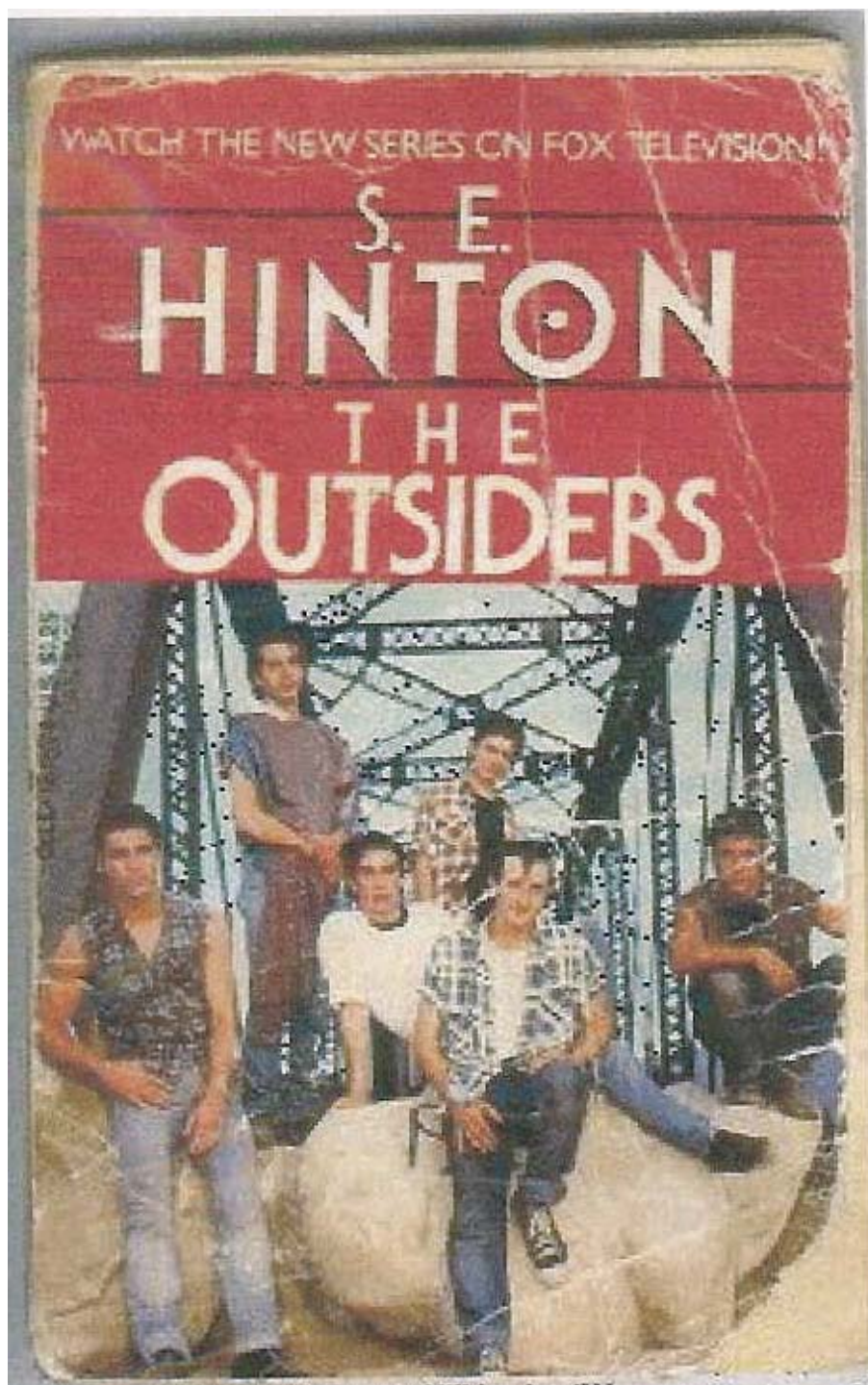
Extension activities

- A. Students write a reflection on how the different covers for 1 book changed what people thought about the book before they read it.
- B. After students have read the book, have them draw their own alternative cover for the book

Attachment 1



Attachment 2





LAUREL-LEAF CONTEMPORARY FICTION

S. E.  
HINTON

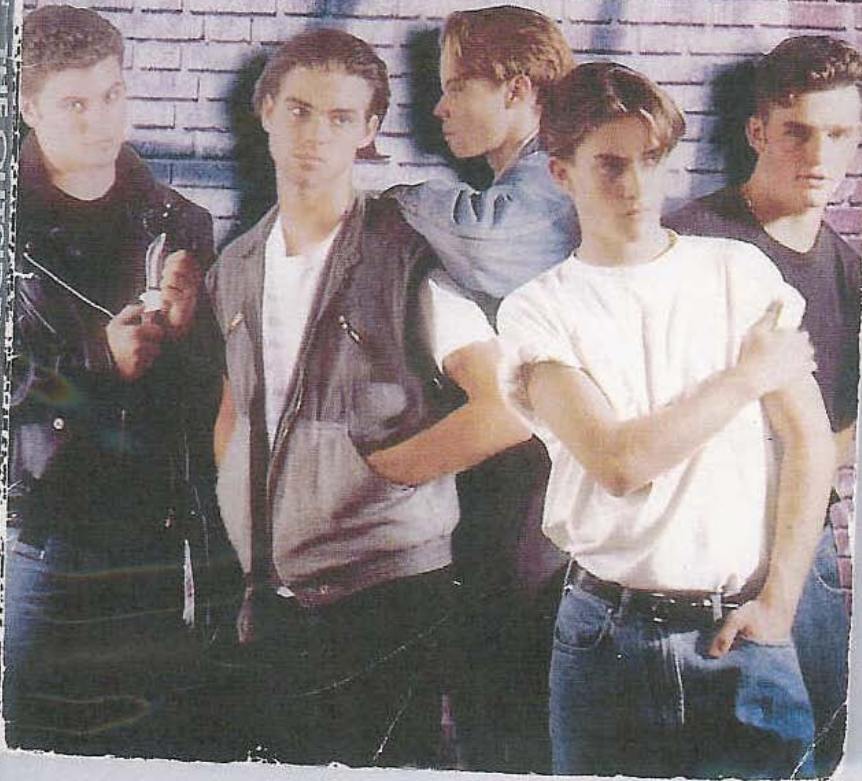
THE  
OUTSIDERS

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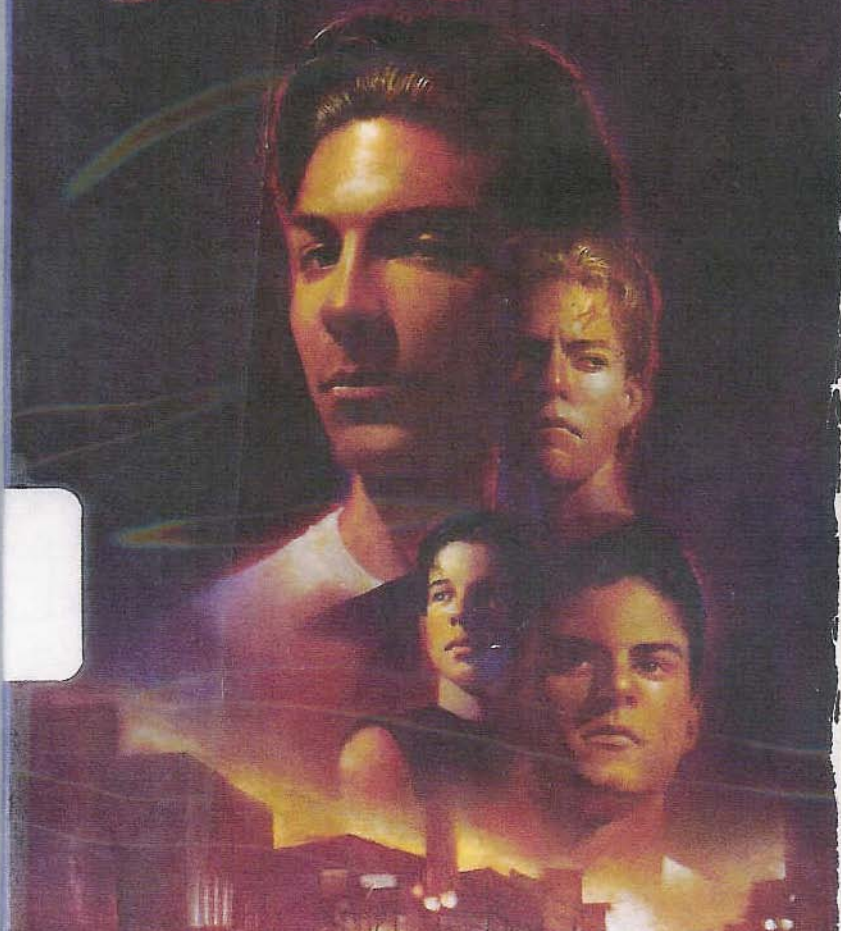
S. E. HINTON

The Outsiders



S. E. HINTON THE OUTSIDERS

# The Outsiders



S. E. HINTON

# Looking Ahead

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

	Plot
	Setting
	Characters
	Tone
	Mood

## National Standards

### ELA

ELA7R1 - The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts.

ELA7RC2 - The student participates in discussions related to curricular learning in all subject areas.

### Art

AR8.2 Students respond to, analyze, and make informed judgments about works in the arts.

## TEKS

### ELA:

7.23 Viewing/representing/analysis. The student analyzes and critiques the significance of visual images, messages, and meanings. The student is expected to: (A) interprets and evaluates the various ways visual image makers such as illustrators, documentary filmmakers, and political cartoonists represent meanings (6-8) (D) evaluate how different media forms influence and inform (6-8).

### Visual Arts:

*Response/evaluation.* The student makes informed judgments about personal artworks and the artworks of others. The student is expected to: (A) analyzes and compares relationships, such as function and meaning, in personal artwork