



Mob Mentality and The Outsiders

Integrating Fiction and Nonfiction



Keristy Nieto, Susan McHale

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Grade Level	7th – 8th Grade	Time Frame	1-2 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	Duration	75 minutes
Course	American Literature		

Essential Question

Why do people follow the crowd in certain situations? How does reality influence fiction?

Summary

This lesson focuses on the theme of mob mentality. Students will look for connections between informational text and a piece of fiction from the book "The Outsiders." Students will analyze the actions of a character from "The Outsiders" and determine whether the character acted independently or as part of a mob mentality. Students will make connections to their own lives as middle school students and explore how mob mentality, herd mentality, or "going along with the crowd," might affect their daily decision-making. This lesson includes optional modifications for distance learning and Google Classroom resources. While this lesson is currently aligned only to 8th grade standards, it would be appropriate to teach in grades 7 through 8, adjusting standards as needed.

Snapshot

Engage

Students participate in a Magnetic Statements activity by choosing to align themselves with pictures and statements that are "trends." They choose a trend that attracts them, then one that repels them. Students then create a definition of the word "trend."

Explore

Students use the CUS and Discuss annotation strategy as they read about mob mentality.

Explain

Based on the facts from the informational text, students complete a graphic organizer citing examples of when characters in "The Outsiders" demonstrate mob mentality or when they demonstrate independent thinking.

Extend

Students watch a video with a real-world example of mob mentality and discuss times they have seen or felt mob mentality in real life.

Evaluate

Students reflect on and write about examples of mob mentality in "The Outsiders" or in their own lives.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 8)

8.2.R.1: Students will summarize and paraphrase ideas, while maintaining meaning and a logical sequence of events, within and between texts.

8.3.R.7: Students will make connections (e.g., thematic links, literary analysis) between and across multiple texts and provide textual evidence to support their inferences.

8.8.R: Students will select appropriate texts for specific purposes and read independently for extended periods of time.

Attachments

- [Lesson Slides—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.pptx](#)
- [Magnetic Statement Mini-Posters—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Magnetic Statement Mini-Posters—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Magnetic Statement Mini-Posters—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.docx](#)
- [Magnetic Statement Mini-Posters—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.pdf](#)
- [Magnetic Statement Summaries—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Magnetic Statement Summaries—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Magnetic Statement Summaries—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.docx](#)
- [Magnetic Statement Summaries—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.pdf](#)
- [Students Give Into Mob Mentality—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Students Give Into Mob Mentality—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Students Give Into Mob Mentality—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.docx](#)
- [Students Give Into Mob Mentality—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.pdf](#)
- [The Outsiders Character Graphic Organizer—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders - Spanish.docx](#)
- [The Outsiders Character Graphic Organizer—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [The Outsiders Character Graphic Organizer—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.docx](#)
- [The Outsiders Character Graphic Organizer—Mob Mentality and The Outsiders.pdf](#)

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- "The Outsiders" Character Graphic Organizer (attached; one per student)
- Magnetic Statements Mini-Posters (attached)
- Magnetic Statement Summaries handout (attached; one per student)
- "Students Give Into the Mob Mentality" Reading (linked below and in the attachments)
- Internet access to view YouTube video

Engage

Teacher's Note: Preparation

Prior to the lesson, post the Magnetic Statements Mini-Posters (found in the attachments) around the room at eye level. Provide enough space around each poster for groups of students to gather around it. If possible, print the mini-posters in color for better resolution.

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Begin with **slide 3**, reading students the essential questions for the lesson: *Why do people follow the crowd in certain situations? How does reality influence fiction?*

Ask for volunteers to answer the first question. Allow time for various responses. Inform students that today they will explore these ideas further. Discuss with students the second question (*how does reality influence fiction?*). Inform students that authors often use real life to write fictional stories, and that the class will explore that connection further in this lesson.

Pass out a copy of the attached **Magnetic Statement Summaries** handout to each student. Ask the class to think about trends for a moment. Allow time for students to read the summaries of a handful of former trends. You may also choose to read or explain each of these trends on the handout. Display **slide 4**. Direct students to the [Magnetic Statements](#) posters that are displayed around the room. Instruct students to walk around the room while using their handouts as guides. Invite them to stand next to the trend that most attracts or interests them. Once they have formed groups, invite students to discuss their choices with others who also chose the same trend. Ask for each group of students to share out why they were attracted to that trend.

Repeat the process (**slide 5**), this time asking each student to move to a trend that they think is ridiculous, silly, or unpleasant. Again, allow time for students who are grouped around each trend to discuss it among themselves and then share out why that trend repelled them.

Have students return to their seats. As a class, ask for volunteers to share what they believe a definition of a "trend" might be after completing this activity. After volunteers have shared, move to **slide 6**. How does the class discussion compare to the dictionary definition? Ask the class to think about why a trend becomes popular and call on volunteers to share their ideas.

Optional Modification for Remote Learning

To make the Magnetic Statements activity accessible in an online or distance learning environment, consider using a website such as [VoiceThread](#). This can allow your students to connect and participate virtually. Upload the statements ahead of time; then, students can choose whether they would like to make a quick video, a voice memo, or a written note to share out why they were attracted to or repelled by that trend. [Download all attachments](#) to use this lesson in [Google Classroom](#).

Explore

Digitally distribute, print or hand out copies of the [Students Give Into The Mob Mentality](#) article. The reading is also found in the attachments for reproducing. You may wish to share with students that this article was written by a ninth-grade student for a high school newspaper. Students should read the article one time through. If students need support with reading informational text, consider reading the text aloud first as students follow along, or "popcorning" the reading as a class.

Display **slide 7** and introduce the [CUS and Discuss](#) strategy for reading and annotating. Ask students to go back through the article, ask them to circle unfamiliar words, underline details that support main ideas, and star main ideas. Once they have finished reading, display **slide 8**. Ask students to share any words that they circled as unfamiliar with the class. Discuss the meaning of these words with the entire class.

Next, pair students together. Invite partners to discuss their main ideas and their supporting details. Ask pairs to share some of the main ideas from the story with the class.

Once the class has shared main ideas, revisit the lesson's Essential Questions on **slide 9**. Lead a class discussion on this topic: Why do people follow the crowd in certain situations? Ask volunteers to also contribute ideas on the second question: *What did we learn from the reading about mob mentality?*

Explain

Pass out the attached "**The Outsiders**" **Character Graphic Organizer**. Using the [Examples and Non-Examples](#) strategy, ask students to think about the characters in "The Outsiders." Display **slide 10**. Are there times when Ponyboy, Cherry, and Johnny go with the crowd? If so, when? Are there times when Ponyboy, Cherry, and Johnny make decisions on their own? If so, when? Ask students to provide examples or evidence from the text when these characters demonstrate mob mentality, and examples of other times when the same character demonstrate non-examples of mob mentality (in other words, they display independent thinking).

Teacher's Note: Supporting Struggling Students

Students may need scaffolding when filling out the graphic organizer. You may choose to scaffold the graphic organizer activity by completing one character's examples and non-examples as a class. You may also pair students to complete the graphic organizer together.

Optional Modifications for Remote Learning

Consider creating multiple copies of the attached "The Outsiders" Character Graphic Organizer using Google Docs. Assign two or three students to each copy of the graphic organizer and have them collaborate virtually. Students can add notes to the document and collaborate as a group using the "chat" feature in the document. You may also consider making this activity a discussion board post to which your students can respond directly. [Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.](#)

Extend

Play the video [Social Conformity, Brain Games](#) for the class (full URL listed in the Resources section below). Afterward, have a class discussion about how "following the crowd" was presented and how people reacted to it. Ask students what pressures "The Outsiders" characters—Ponyboy, Cherry, and Johnny—to go along with the crowd.

Ask students for an example of a time when they have seen or experienced mob mentality in real life, and why they think it exists in our society.

Teacher's Note: Synonymous Terms

It is important to clarify to students the terms "mob mentality" and "herd mentality" are used interchangeably.

Optional Modification for Remote Learning

You may consider making a discussion board for this activity to which your students can respond directly. [Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.](#)

Evaluate

Display **slide 11** and introduce the [Two-Minute Paper](#) strategy. Ask students to choose one of two writing choices:

1. Choose a character from the graphic organizer. How could that character have reacted differently to avoid mob mentality?
2. Write about a time when you have been pressured by mob mentality. How did you react? Now that you recognize mob mentality, would you change your behavior in that circumstance? Why or why not?

Optional Modification for Remote Learning

You may consider making a discussion board for this activity to which your students can respond directly. [Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.](#)

Resources

- Hinton, S.E. (1967). *The Outsiders*. London, United Kingdom: Penguin young readers publishers.
- K20 Center. (n.d.). CUS and discuss. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/162>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Examples and non-examples. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/163>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google classroom. Tech Tools. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/628>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Magnetic statements. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/166>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Two-minute paper. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/152>
- Stathakis, G. (2018). Students give into the mob mentality. *The Coyote Chronicle*. <https://fcuscoyotejournalism.com/770/archive/students-give-into-the-mob-mentality/>
- Squalli, M. (2015). *Social Conformity—Brain Games* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8BkzvP19v4&feature=youtu.be>