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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2019 Volume II: Teaching about Race and Racism Across the Disciplines

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## Teaching “The Outsiders” from a Critical Race Perspective

Guide for Curriculum Unit 19.02.10  
by Sean Griffin

In this unit I lead my Language Arts class through a reading of the classic American novel *The Outsiders* from a Critical Race Perspective (CRP). Starting with the introduction of the terminology associated with CRP, combined with discussions of some examples of institutionalized inequality in our country, I challenge students to look at the novel from a more critical, and fair minded point of view. In order to help students see the relevance of the novel in today’s world, I will lead them through an examination of some of the unfair and often brutal histories of “outsiders” in our country beginning with the dissemination of hundreds of Native American tribes, the sterilization of thousands during the eugenics craze, and the crisis on our southern border in which thousands have been labeled “outsiders” as others have for centuries. Through discussions, journal writing and projects meant to prompt empathy and understanding in my students, this unit will attempt to bring a new interpretation of *The Outsiders* to light.

(Developed for English Language Arts, grade 7; recommended for English, grades 8-9)

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