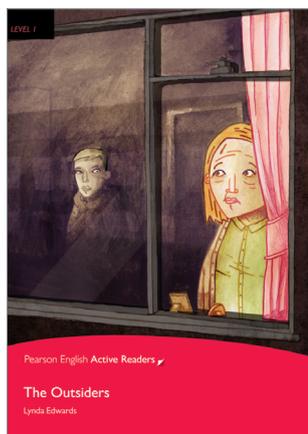


The Outsiders

Lynda Edwards



Summary

A group of aggressive boys arrive outside the home of an old woman called Rose. They threaten her and ask her for money. Then, a police car arrives and they leave. Suddenly, she sees a boy in her bedroom. He (Bailey) explains he is a reluctant member of the gang, and only does bad things so as not to be different. He knows he is different and that Rose is different too. On one of his regular visits to her house, Bailey demands to know why Rose never goes out and she tells him the sad love story of her life. Bailey insists he can help her to go outside and leads her to the front door. Harry, the leader of the gang of boys, is waiting for them. Bailey and Harry have an argument and Harry leaves. A short time later, Harry returns with his friends. A fight breaks out and Harry stabs Bailey. Rose phones an ambulance and a man tells her to go and help Bailey. Despite her phobia of the outside world, Rose goes out to Bailey and covers the wound with her hand. The ambulance arrives and Bailey is going to be OK. Suddenly Rose feels she is no longer afraid of the outside world and she quietly thanks Bailey.

Background and themes

Isolation: Rose has experienced an emotional trauma in her life and Bailey knows he is more intelligent and different from his school friends.

When they meet, there is a bond between them, for they are both outsiders.

Bravery: Bailey takes on Harry and his gang single handedly in order to protect Rose. His bravery resulted in her being able to live a normal life again.

Discussion activities

Chapters 1–2

While reading (page 1, after 'Suddenly, a stone hit Rose on the head.')

- Write and draw:** Put the students in pairs and ask them to write down all the names of parts of the body they know in English. Put their suggestions on the board and add some of your own. Then ask them to draw a person and to indicate each of the body parts with arrows

After reading

- Write and guess:** Write *The boys come to the house every week or two.* on the board. Elicit which word is wrong from the students (day not week). Now students choose a sentence from chapters 1–2 and rewrite it, changing one word. Students walk around the classroom reading out their sentences and the other students have to identify and correct the mistake.

Chapters 3–4

While reading (page 9, after 'The boy took a book from the floor.')

- Discuss:** Put the students in groups and ask them to discuss the following questions: *Do you like reading books? What books do you like? How often do you read books? What book are you reading now?*

(page 10, after 'I was a famous writer and I had a lot of money.')

- Game:** Put the students in groups of four and tell them they are going to play a game of twenty questions. Student A thinks of a famous person they know about. Then the other three students have to ask Student A questions about the famous person to guess who he or she is. Student A can only respond *Yes, No or Sometimes* to the questions. Student A wins if the others can't guess in twenty questions.

After reading

- Game:** Put the students in pairs and tell them there are fifteen words in chapters 3–4 that can be used to describe a person. The pair which find the words the quickest, wins. See the Discussion activities key for the words.

Chapters 5–6

While reading (page 14, after 'You've got a cold heart. Go away.')

- Role play:** Put the students in pairs and tell them they are going to act out a conversation between Bailey and Harry. See the Discussion activities key for an example start.
- Write and ask:** Divide the class into small groups. Tell them each of the groups is going to play against another group. Group A writes down six questions from Chapters 1–3, and Group B six questions from Chapters 4–6. Each group then asks the other the questions. The group with the most correct answers, wins.