Susan Eloise Hinton was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1948. As a teenager, she was shy and did not like to draw attention to herself, yet she did not conform to the expected pursuits of a teenage girl at that time. She was a tomboy who loved horses, and although she generally did not suffer directly from the social tension that existed between the socioeconomic classes in her town, she felt keenly the effects that such tension had on those around her.

While Hinton was in high school, her father was diagnosed with a brain tumor and was hospitalized for extended periods of time. In response, Hinton threw herself into the novel she had begun writing in order to create the type of realistic fiction she herself craved as a reader. She completed the first draft during her junior year, around the same time her father died. She then polished the work in subsequent drafts but did not consider submitting it for publication until a writer acquaintance advised her to send it to her own agent. The book was quickly accepted, and during the editorial process, Hinton graduated from high school and began attending the University of Tulsa, initially majoring in journalism and later switching to education. It was during this time that Hinton’s publisher encouraged her to use the gender-neutral initials for her byline. Since it was her, she feared that boys wouldn’t read her book if they knew a girl had written it.

Because she couldn’t stand the literature she was forced to read when she was in high school, Hinton was drawn to writing novels for young adults. She was only a freshman in high school when she started what would become her most famous work, *The Outsiders*, the second biggest seller in young adult books even today. Unafraid of exposing teenage rebellion, acts of juvenile delinquency, and social conduct found in teenage subcultures, Hinton went on to write four more novels, including *Rumble Fish*, that spoke directly to teens, expressing their feelings as best she could rather than trying to preach at them. Not surprisingly, Hinton herself is a bit of a rebel. She now refuses to speak or to read in public to promote her books.

**Facts and Trivia**

* One of the greatest directors ever, Francis Ford Coppola, direct the movie version of The Outsiders, but some of the greatest up-an-coming young movie actors starred in it: Emilio Estevez, Patrick Swayze, Matt Dillon, and Tom Cruise.
* Hinton’s realistic depiction of life in her novels changed the trend in books written for young adults, which had previously displayed only sugarcoated versions of the struggles real teens dealt with.
* When it came time for her to write her second novel, *That Was Then, This Is Now*, she was stumped and couldn’t write at all. Her future husband helped out by refusing to take her out on a date until she showed him that she had written at least two pages that day.
* Hinton was trained to be a teacher, but she never taught. After her practice-teaching, she realized she became too emotionally involved with her students’ life stories.

Directions: After reading the article about S. E. Hinton answer the questions below using complex or complex-compound sentences. Pay attention to which subordinating conjunctions you use because they show different types of relationships between ideas. Underline the subordinating conjunction in your sentence.

**Example** QUESTION: Why did we read an article about S. E. Hinton?

ANSWER: Ms. Norr had us read this article because S. E. Hinton wrote our class novel *The Outsiders.*

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| --- | --- |
| **Subordinating conjunctions show these relationships:** | |
| **Time:** | after, as soon as, before, once, when, whenever, while |
| **Reason:** | as, because, since, so that, whereas |
| **Condition:** | as, as though, if, provided that, unless, whether |
| **Contrast or surprise:** | although, even though, than, though |
| **Place:** | everywhere, where, wherever |

**1. When did Susan start writing her book?**

**2. Why did Susan want to make her book different?**

**3. What made Susan make “S. E. Hinton” her byline?**

**4. What about her community/high school angered Susan?**

**5. What makes *The Outsiders* different from other books?**

**6. How did Susan’s boyfriend get her to write?**

**7. Why do you like, or dislike this this book?**