“Stay gold, Ponyboy. Stay gold.”

Probably the most known quote from “The Outsiders” by S.E. Hinton, this quote is the staple of all things Outsiders. As most people may know, this year’s first play was a theatrical take on “The Outsiders.” In comparison to the book, the play was relatively close, with only a few minor changes.

The play centers around Ponyboy Curtis (sophomore Marshall Parish), Johnny (junior Matt Loudon), and Dallas, played by senior David Lehmkuhl, a group of two brothers, Darry (freshman Preston Erks) and Dandyop (Junior Alex Winters) and Darry (freshman Preston Erks) in urban Oklahoma. The three are part of a close-knit group commonly known as “Greasers,” who live on the east side of town. Their group is in a constant rivalry with another group known as “Socs,” short for “Socialites,” who live on the west side of town. The two had been against each other for so long that no one knew any different, constantly jumping one another on the street and leading two very different lives.

The Greasers are known for living more difficult lives, commonly having less money and rougher home lives. The Socs, on the other hand, are known for their wealth and easy-going home lives. The plot of the play begins when Ponyboy goes to the Drive-In movies with two members of the Greasers, Dallas and Johnny (played by junior Matt Loudon.) This is where they meet Socs Cherry (played by Abi Stine) and Marcia (played by Greta Gessert.)

Cherry and Johnny begin talking, they realize they have a lot more in common than they previously thought. They become friends quickly, bonding over how they both wish things could change between the two groups. As the band of new-found friends leave the drive-in, however, they have a run-in with Cherry and Marcia’s boyfriends. They go, taking the girls with them, leaving just Ponyboy and Johnny. The duo go to a park, where they have yet another run-in with the Socs, where one of them ends up getting killed. This play has a lot of complicated scenes, requiring a very talented cast to make it believable.

Luckily, that is exactly what we have. Ponyboy is a believable character who pulls you into the story and passes as his character extremely well. Characters less prevalent in the story, as well, had to make their characters represented the time in which the play takes place.

“What I find really cool about it though, is for a while you get to be this whole different person and create how you want them to be. Practicing lines and figuring out how you really feel really helps though,” said sophomore Lauren Hinton who played one of Sandy’s friends.

The crew, as well, have a difficult job. This play is different from ones in the past, because the stage is at a slant, and is also seperable. The cast has to wheel out each of the sets, and also make sure to move the stage fast enough to create the illusion that the cast is walking. “The set was easier in the way that it allowed everyone to be seen, it was easy to work on, but when it came to being on the side getting ready to go on it was a struggle because there was a lot of sliders and spaces that had room that really wasn’t accounted for, so there was a lot of actors scrambling trying to get on stage,” said Lehmkuhl.

The stage differences were not only different for the cast, but the crew as well.

“When I first heard the idea for the set changes I thought our set director was crazy, but seeing them come together now it was a really good idea and it came together very smooth,” said Josh Barnett, sound crew chief.

Whether they work with lighting or work backstage, it is not as simple a task as some may think it is, but in the end they do an amazing job pulling the set together and making everything move very easily.

The play was fluid and very close to the book, with no room for mistakes. The crew and actors made it all believable, from sound effects to lighting. The Southwest Theater team is a talented band of kids. Every person pulls it together to make the play an experience that leaves you with something to take home.