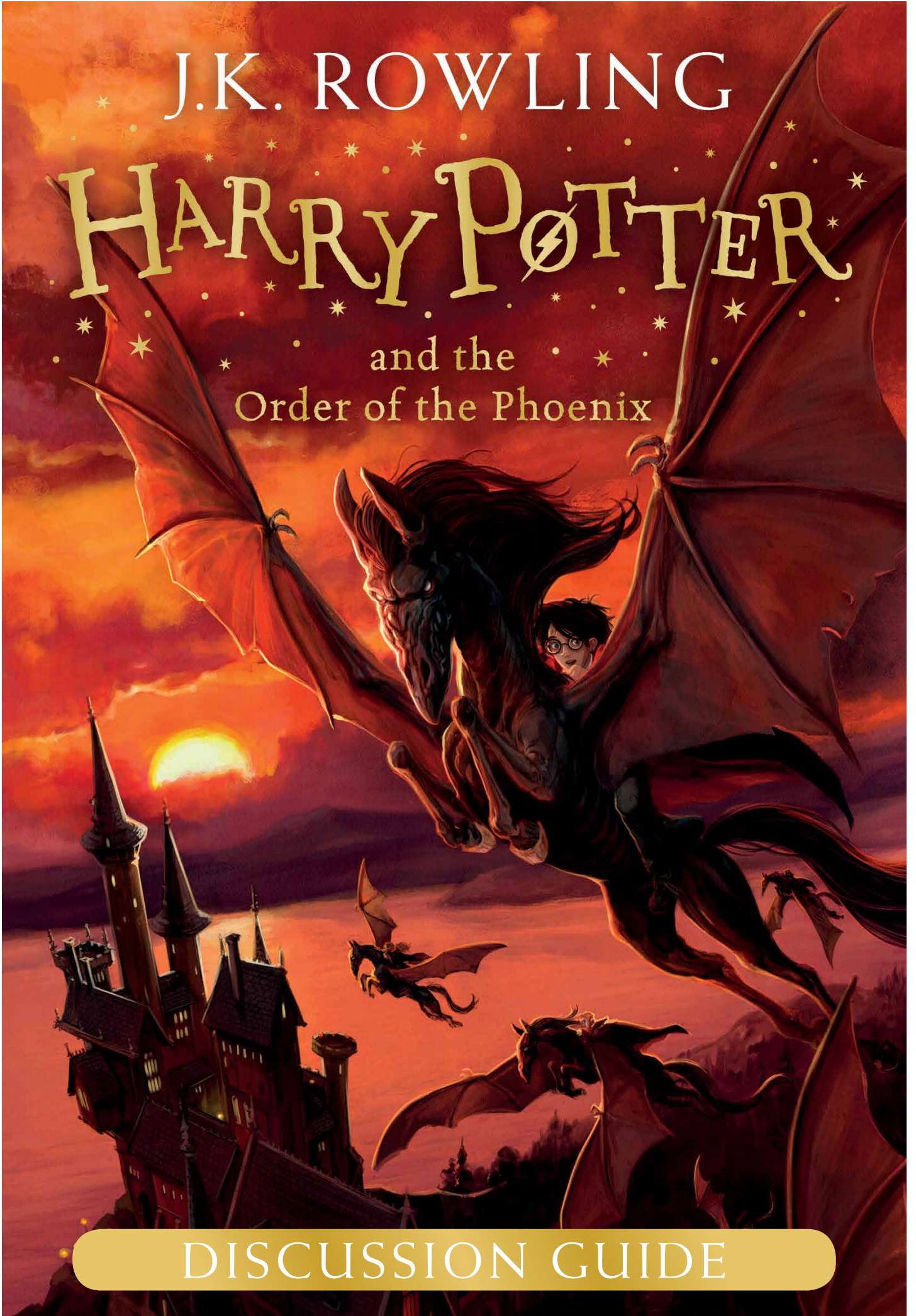


J.K. ROWLING

HARRY POTTER

and the
Order of the Phoenix



DISCUSSION GUIDE



HARRY POTTER

and the Order of the Phoenix

DISCUSSION GUIDE

ABOUT THE HARRY POTTER BOOKS AND THIS GUIDE

J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter books are among the most popular and acclaimed of all time. Published in the UK between 1997 and 2007 and beginning with *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the seven books are epic stories of Harry Potter and his friends as they attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Crossing genres including fantasy, thriller and mystery, and at turns exhilarating, humorous and sad, the stories explore universal human values, longings and choices.

The Harry Potter books are compelling reading for children and adults alike; they have met phenomenal success around the world and have been translated into 77 languages. A whole generation of children grew up awaiting the publication of each book in the series with eager anticipation, and they still remain enormously popular.

The Harry Potter books make excellent starting points for discussion. These guides outline a host of ideas for discussions and other activities that can be used in the classroom, in a reading group or at home. They cover some of the main themes of the series, many of which, while set in an imaginary world, deal with universal issues of growing up that are familiar to all children. You will also find references to key moments on pottermore.com, where you can discover more about the world of Harry Potter. These guides are aimed at stimulating lively discussion and encouraging close engagement with books and reading. We hope you will use the ideas in this guide as a basis for educational and enjoyable work – and we think your group will be glad you did!



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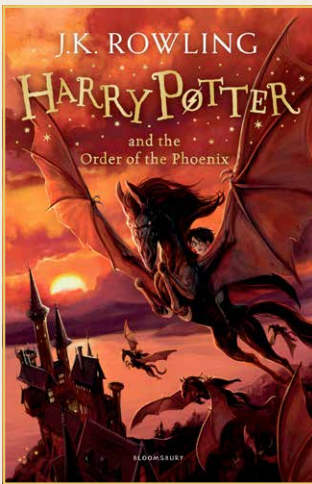


HARRY POTTER

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION TO *HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX*



At the end of summer, Harry is forced to conjure his Patronus outside of school to protect himself and his cousin Dudley from Dementors. Harry is then summoned to appear before the Wizengamot, his first trip to the Ministry of Magic. While the Order of the Phoenix, using headquarters at the home of Harry's godfather Sirius Black, works against the forces of the rejuvenated Voldemort, the Ministry refuses to credit the return of this arch-villain, removes Dumbledore as Headmaster of Hogwarts, and installs Dolores Umbridge, who runs the school by strict and arbitrary rules and unusually cruel punishments.

Hermione rallies a group of students to take secret lessons in Defence Against the Dark Arts from Harry; they call themselves Dumbledore's Army. Harry is disturbed by increasingly vivid images he experiences unwillingly through the eyes of Voldemort and finds it difficult to absorb his lessons in Occlumency, which he takes with Professor Snape in order to learn how to shut his mind. Finally, one of his visions leads Harry and several members of the DA to the Ministry of Magic. Lured into a trap by Voldemort and his Death Eaters, they battle to save a prophecy which tells of the connection between Voldemort and Harry.



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HARRY POTTER

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1. Why is it necessary for so many wizards to accompany Harry to the headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix in Chapter 3, 'The Advanced Guard'? Describe Harry's mood when he learns about the Order and the fact that no one has told him about it. What does he feel when he learns that Ron and Hermione have been made prefects? Compare his mood to that of his godfather, Sirius. How are Sirius and Harry alike and how are they different?
2. What does Harry learn about the Ministry when he attends his disciplinary hearing (Chapters 7/8)? Why have Fudge's feelings toward Harry changed so drastically from the beginning of *Prisoner of Azkaban*? Why is Fudge so antagonistic toward Dumbledore?
3. How is the trip on the Hogwarts Express different for Harry this year? Why can Harry see the Thestrals that he couldn't see before (Chapter 11, 'The Sorting Hat's New Song')? What is the significance of meeting Luna Lovegood at this point in the story? What dimension does Luna bring to the story?
4. How does Dolores Umbridge's teaching style differ from the other professors who have taught Defence Against the Dark Arts? Discuss Hermione's comment after Umbridge's



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banquet speech: 'It explained a lot [...] It means the Ministry's interfering at Hogwarts.' (Chapter 11, 'The Sorting Hat's New Song', p. 198) Compare Harry's difficulties with Umbridge to his difficulties with Snape, both inside and outside the classroom.

5. Why won't Harry tell his teachers about the dreams and visions he is having? Compare Harry's visions to the fake dreams he and Ron concoct for Divination. Why won't Harry share his real dreams in Divination class? Why does he hesitate to go to Dumbledore until he sees Arthur Weasley in mortal danger?
6. How does Harry know that Hermione is serious about him teaching a secret club for students who want to learn defensive spells? Who helps him find the space for the club? Who names the DA? How does the DA help Harry overcome his feeling of isolation from the others? What is the importance of the DA for its members?
7. What is Harry's greatest fear about the dreams he is having? Why does Dumbledore keep his distance from Harry throughout this book until the end? What does Snape mean when he says, 'Time and space matter in magic, Potter.' (Chapter 24, 'Occlumency', p. 490) Why does Dumbledore insist that Snape be the one to teach Harry Occlumency, and why is this skill so difficult for Harry? Compare Snape's lessons in Occlumency to



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Lupin's lessons for producing a Patronus in *Prisoner of Azkaban*. Why was Harry able to learn from Lupin and not from Snape?

8. What do Harry, Ron and Hermione learn from their visit to St Mungo's Hospital (Chapters 22/23)? The visit to see Mr Weasley is a prime example of the way in which Rowling interweaves humour and pathos throughout the series. How does she do it in this scene?
9. Discuss the significance of what Harry learns about his father, Sirius, Lupin and Pettigrew from Snape's worst memory (Chapter 28). How does this knowledge affect Harry? What does this tell us about Harry's character? Compare the relationship of James and his friends in their school days to that of Ron, Hermione and Harry. How are they similar and how are they different?
10. What does Lucius Malfoy mean when he says of Harry, 'He has a great weakness for heroics; the Dark Lord understands this about him.' (Chapter 35, 'Beyond the Veil', p. 720) Why does Harry's attempt to cast the Cruciatus Curse not work on Bellatrix, even though he feels such hatred after seeing her kill Sirius? How does he survive when Voldemort tries to possess him in the atrium of the Ministry of Magic?



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IN DEPTH

1.

ANGER

Anger has been a strong emotion for Harry throughout most of this volume. Review the things that have made him angry in this book. How many of these do you think are justified? How has his anger served him and how has it hampered him? Why does Dumbledore allow Harry to rage against him in his office after the battle at the Ministry is over? Discuss Dumbledore's comment, 'In the end, it mattered not that you could not close your mind. It was your heart that saved you.' (Chapter 37, 'The Lost Prophecy', p. 777) How does Harry feel after learning the parts of his story that Dumbledore has held back from him until now?

2.

POWER

Study the character of Professor Umbridge, who seems to relish her power over other people. How does she demonstrate that power and tighten her grip on it? Look at how she seeks to crush weaker people and deal with anything that might threaten her control. What is the most dangerous aspect of Umbridge's character? What is the effect of her rise to power, from professor, to High Inquisitor, to Headmaster, on both students and staff? How does her behaviour relate to the warnings of the Sorting Hat at the opening banquet? How does Umbridge



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compare to other teachers and figures of authority in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*? Are there any other examples of abuse of power in this book?

3. EXAMS AND LEARNING

How do the upcoming O.W.L. exams affect the mood of Harry and the others in their fifth year at Hogwarts? Do the exams truly measure the knowledge they will need in their careers? What is J.K. Rowling saying about the value of learning from books and of personal experience? What examples of the importance of each can you find illustrated in the plot?

4. PREJUDICE

When Harry first visits the Ministry in Chapter 7, he notices the Fountain of Magical Brethren, a group of statues that includes a centaur, a house-elf and a goblin looking up to a witch and a wizard. After the battle Dumbledore tells Harry, 'The fountain we destroyed tonight told a lie. We wizards have mistreated and abused our fellows for too long, and we are now reaping our reward.' (Chapter 37, 'The Lost Prophecy', p. 767) Discuss the theme of prejudice throughout the first five books and how the abuse of others has harmed wizards.



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DISCUSSION GUIDE

ACTIVITY AND PROJECT IDEAS

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE

To write a detailed analysis of one character from *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

UK CURRICULUM AREAS

English

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learn how to analyse characters and traits and improve close reading of text

START POINT

Discuss the group's favourite characters from *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. Which were their favourites, and which did they like least? Which seemed the most 'real' to them? How do the characters' names, and J.K. Rowling's writing more widely, influence our impressions of them?

MAIN ACTIVITY

1. Distribute pieces of plain paper. Get the children to draw a circle in the middle before dividing the remaining space into four equal squares with pencil and ruler.
2. Ask the members of the group to choose a character from *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* to analyse.



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It need not be a favourite character or a major one – just one that they found particularly interesting.

3. Write the name of the character in bold in the middle circle, along with a head and shoulders sketch.
4. Now get the children to think of four traits that fit the character they are thinking of. For instance, Harry Potter might be adventurous, brave, friendly and impulsive; Voldemort might be evil, powerful, mysterious and destructive. Children should now write the four words at the top of the squares, in bold or colour, so there is one trait per square.
5. The challenge now is to gather evidence of these traits from *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. Children should choose one specific passage of the book that they think best illustrates the trait, and write a paragraph describing it beneath the word in the relevant box. It should explain why and how that part of the book depicts their character in this way. Children can add a line or quotation from the passage if they think it supports their argument particularly well. Repeat for each of the four traits, making sure that each is referenced by a separate passage of the book.
6. Collate the sheets into a display and get everyone to look at them all and review one another's efforts.



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WRAP-UP

Revisit the earlier discussion about characters in the book. Did the exercise teach the children anything new about the characters they chose? Did reading other students' sheets change their views of the characters? How does our perception of characters affect our engagement with *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*?

FOUR MORE ACTIVITIES

1. WRITE A BLURB

Explain the idea of a 'blurb' – the copy on the back of a book that summarises the story and tries to persuade people to read it. Can your group write their own? Read a couple of examples from other books in the Harry Potter series, then challenge everyone to write one for *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, without looking at the one on the back cover first. Set a limit of 100 words and discuss how a blurb should set out the story without giving too much away; should convey the tone; and should aim to appeal to as wide an audience as possible.

2. GUESS WHO

Get each child to think of a character from *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* and then write down five adjectives that they think best describe him, her or it. Divide the children into small groups and ask each child to read out their five adjectives one by one. How quickly can the others guess the identity of the character? The writer's aim



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is to get the group guessing correctly as soon as possible by selecting the most apt adjectives.

3. RATE THE TEACHERS

Draw up a list for the group of all the teachers who appear in the book that your group can think of, then ask them to vote for their most and least favourite. What are the characteristics that they like and dislike? What makes a good teacher in Hogwarts – and how similar are those qualities to teachers in the real world?!

4. HARRY POTTER CHARACTER FACT FILE

Ask your group to compile fact files on key characters from *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. Gathering together all the information they have at their disposal, write a fact file/report giving details about their personality, special talents, interests and so on. They might want to include the following:

- Name
- Age
- Family
- Interests

Everyone must organise a presentation based on their findings and present facts and information about their chosen characters to their classmates.



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