

# **Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix Study Guide**

**Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix by J. K. Rowling**

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# Plot Summary

It is another summer away from Hogwarts and Harry Potter is back living with his awful Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia, and his cousin Dudley. Unexpectedly, Harry and Dudley come under attack by terrible demonic beings called “Dementors,” and when Harry utilizes magic to defend himself and Dudley, he is placed under intense scrutiny by the Ministry of Magic and almost expelled from Hogwarts for using magic in front of muggles in their world when he is still under age.

Harry is taken to 12 Grimmauld Place in London, which is both the headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix, as well as Sirius Black’s ancestral home. The Order is a group of wizards that is led by Albus Dumbledore, and its mission is to fight and stand against Lord Voldemort and his evil followers. Because the head of the Ministry of Magic, Cornelius Fudge, is corrupt and refuses to believe that Voldemort has returned, the Order has to do everything in secret and is not sanctioned by the Ministry.

Harry is ordered to stand trial because of his use of magic outside the school. He is vindicated with the help of Dumbledore, and returns to Hogwarts for another year with his best friends, Hermione and Ron. At Hogwarts, however, things have changed. Dolores Umbridge, who is a member of the Ministry of Magic and who voted against Harry at his trial, is slated to be the new teacher for Defense Against the Dark Arts. There is a lot of internal strife at Hogwarts, and the newspapers keep on defaming Harry and his actions by printing false stories about him. What is worse, Harry is now in his fifth year at Hogwarts and will have to sit for the O.W.Ls, which stands for “Ordinary Wizarding Level” examinations, causing him much stress.

Dolores Umbridge does not teach any spells to her students, and they learn nothing new in how to defend themselves. Meanwhile she is appointed “High Inquisitor” of Hogwarts by Cornelius Fudge, ostensibly to evaluate the professors and students. In protest, Harry, Ron and Hermione decide to form their own group to defend against the dark arts. They style themselves as “Dumbledore’s Army,” and manage to get twenty-five other students to join them as well.

Harry wants to get the word out to Sirius Black about what’s going on at Hogwarts, but he is unable to do so since Umbridge is examining all outgoing and incoming Owl mail as well as other methods used for contact. Umbridge then bans Harry from the Quidditch team. Fred and George, Ron’s brothers, leave Hogwarts in protest and they open a joke shop in London.

Harry is having recurring nightmares where he is walking in a corridor in the Ministry of Magic. He sees many spherical glass orbs, but always wakes up before he can ascertain what they are or what they are trying to show him. Another night he dreams that he is a large snake and attacks Ron’s father.

Professor McGonagall knows that something is amiss, and she brings him to see Dumbledore, who raises the alert to save Ron’s father from Voldemort’s evil.



Dumbledore then turns to Snape to teach Harry Occlumency, which will help him to defend his mind against Lord Voldemort's attacks. Unfortunately, Harry is not very successful at Occlumency as he is unable to empty his mind of every thought and cannot close it off from peripheral influences. His link to Voldemort is demonstrated every single time his scar burns when Voldemort is feeling an extreme emotion.

Dumbledore's Army hold regular meetings and their skills are improving rapidly. However, Umbridge catches them one day, and Dumbledore is forced to resign when he takes responsibility for all the group has done. Umbridge is then appointed headmaster. At this point, the student O.W.L examinations begin.

Harry has a new vision of his Godfather Sirius tortured and imprisoned by Voldemort in the Department of Mysteries in the Ministry of Magic. He does not heed Hermione's warnings that this is a trap, as he is too worried about Sirius. After sneaking into Umbridge's office, Harry is then transported to 12, Grimmauld Place, but Kreacher, Black's house elf, informs Harry that Sirius is being held at the Ministry. When Harry goes back to Hogwarts, he finds out that his friends and he are caught in Umbridge's office. Hermione and Harry trick Umbridge into following them into the woods by saying that they have hidden a great weapon of Dumbledore's. Once there, centaurs spirit Umbridge away. Harry and his friends now get onto winged horses (thestrals) and fly off to the Ministry.

At the Ministry, Harry is unable to locate Sirius, and he is forced to admit that Hermione might have been right. He sees a glass orb with his and Voldemort's name on it, and when he grabs it, he is surrounded by Death Eaters who want him to hand it over. The team from Hogwarts has limited success in fighting off the Death Eaters but is mostly outmatched. Fortunately, members of the Order of the Phoenix arrive to aid them. In this fight, the orb is smashed, and Sirius Black is killed by Bellatrix Lestrange, his own cousin.

Dumbledore arrives and subdues the Death Eaters, but Voldemort and Lestrange manage to escape as Cornelius Fudge appears. When he sends Harry back to Hogwarts, Dumbledore tells Harry that the spherical orb was essentially a prophecy, and that Voldemort is unaware of a power that Harry possesses, which is that of love. The prophecy states that there are two possible outcomes: Voldemort destroys Harry, or Harry destroys Voldemort. Dumbledore then reveals to Harry why he has to return every summer to his Uncle and Aunt. His mother had saved him with love, and only blood is able to seal that pact. His mother's sister, Aunt Petunia, took Harry in and kept the pact alive, and as long as Harry stayed with them, he would be safe. At the end of the text, Harry returns to the Dursley's for the summer.



# Chapters 1–2

## Summary

Chapter 1 opens with Harry Potter once again in the suburban home of his Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon in Little Whinging, Surrey. Harry is attempting to listen to the evening broadcast by hiding in the garden in a flowerbed that is directly below the window of the living room. As he listens, he is relieved because there is no news of terrible destruction or any other catastrophe that might be attributed to an evil magical wizard, Lord Voldemort.

As he hides under the window, there is a loud crack that cuts through the area. Shocked, Harry jumps up and in doing so, hits his head on the window, revealing his presence to his Aunt and Uncle. He goes out to discover the source of the crack, convinced that it was done by a wizard apparating or disappearing.

In his wanderings, Harry finally ends up at the playground. He is moody because he has not heard anything from Hermione and Ron, his best friends at Hogwarts. As Harry is sitting on a swing, he is confronted by his cousin Dudley and a gang of misfits, who taunt him. Harry takes the high road and does not threaten Dudley with his wand even though he knows that Dudley is afraid of his magic. A storm looks like it is approaching, and Harry follows Dudley home. The animosity between them results in them starting an argument, but when they are almost home at Magnolia Crescent, everything turns dark and cold, and then the dementors attack. In the ensuing struggle, Harry is able to summon his Patronus stag to drive off the dementors, but Dudley is visibly shaken and unable to respond. When Harry sees Mrs. Figg, a neighbor, coming up to them, he holds his wand behind him as if to hide it, and she tells him to keep it out, as there might be more dementors around.

In Chapter 2 readers find out that Mrs. Figg is actually a Squib, meaning that she was born to wizards, but does not have any magical talent of her own. Mundungus Fletcher was the assigned person to Harry to ensure he was safe, but he might have left Harry momentarily to purchase stolen cauldrons. Mrs. Figg tells Harry that Dumbledore likely knows he has used his magic outside of school, and just at that moment, Mundungus appears with a crack. Mrs. Figg sends Mundungus back to Dumbledore to explain why Harry used his magic, and Harry and Dudley make their way back to home at Privet Drive. On reaching home, Dudley can no longer hold it in, and he vomits and faints. When asked what has happened by his parents, Dudley points at Harry. Harry begins to try to explain, and at that moment, an owl flies in with a letter expelling Harry from Hogwarts because of his unsanctioned use of magic outside the school. However, in just a few moments, Harry receives another letter from an owl from Mr. Weasley, Ron's father, letting him know that he is going to arrange some kind of clarification at the Ministry of Magic. Harry is still attempting to explain what happened to his Aunt and Uncle, and surprisingly, he finds out that Aunt Petunia knows that dementors are the guardians of Azkaban. Yet another owl flies in, and this time it is from the Ministry of



Magic again, summoning him to a hearing and trial on August 12. The fourth owl flies in, and it is a message from Sirius Black, Harry's Godfather, who warns him not to go out of the house. Strangely enough, Aunt Petunia is extremely concerned about the fact that Lord Voldemort has returned. She has never been interested in the world of magic before this. Uncle Vernon is more interested in getting Harry thrown out of the house and wants him gone immediately. At this moment the final owl flies in, but this time, it is a message for Aunt Petunia, not Harry. It is a Howler message, which literally screams a message to the recipient. The howler says, "Remember my last, Petunia." With that, Petunia insists strongly that Harry be allowed to stay, directly contradicting Uncle Vernon. However, she does not reveal to Harry what the howler means. She also forbids him from leaving his room.

## Analysis

The book opens with a dichotomy of worlds and Harry caught between them as they intersect. In the muggle world, Harry is uncomfortable, alone and reviled. In the wizard world, he has friends, learns things, and has prestige and reputation. However, the lines between the two worlds are blurring, and it is becoming dangerous even in the muggle world, as dementors are now crossing over freely. The insistence of the muggles in denying or ignoring as best they can the presence and reality of magic echoes throughout all the books. When Dudley is asked what happened to him, he doesn't blame the dementors, but instead puts the blame on Harry. Harry is a symbol of the world of which Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon want no part. But they might not have a choice if Lord Voldemort comes to power.

As the book opens, Harry is isolated and alone, and he feels abandoned by his friends who have not contacted him. He has heard no more news about the wizard world during the summer, and after the terrible end of his last year at Hogwarts and the return of Voldemort, Harry is understandably nervous and anxious. In this heightened state, as Dudley was tormenting him in the alley, Harry was ready on his own to use magic against him, ignoring all laws of wizardry. He was unable to keep his rage under check, and in a perverse sense the presence of the dementors actually gave him justification—if they had not appeared, Harry might have cast a spell on Dudley anyway against all rules and laws.

Another clear indication that the two worlds are merging is Aunt Petunia and her reaction to Harry when she finds out Lord Voldemort has returned. She clearly recognizes the name, and displays a reaction that is very similar to any other wizard in the wizard world, demonstrating that her knowledge of the wizard world is not as incomplete as we might have thought. She also knows about dementors and their role as guards at Azkaban. And then, we see that Mrs. Figg is also of the magic world, albeit only by birth.

With these opening chapters, Rowling sets the tone for the rest of the text. What is Aunt Petunia's role and what did the howling message mean? What has happened to Hermione and Ron and why have they abandoned Harry? And what are dementors



doing in Surrey out of turn against all laws? This sense of isolation, laws being broken and cross-over of worlds create interesting juxtapositions that demarcate a sense of reality being exactly as it seems, and not. We are set up to anticipate the answers to these questions in the following chapters.

## Vocabulary

endear, nonexistent, grunted, heralded, throb, grimace, livid, expulsion, impulse, formidable, triumphant, scabbed, despairingly, burgeoned, bellowed



# Chapters 3–5

## Summary

In Chapter 3, Harry instructs Hedwig, his owl, to give messages to Sirius, Ron, and Hermione, and to keep on pecking at them until they give him a response. At this point, his Uncle and Aunt leave to go to an event celebrating England's nicest suburban lawns. As they leave the house, Harry investigates a loud crash downstairs and sees nine wizards—Professor Lupin, Kingsley Shacklebolt, Elphias Doge, Mad-Eye Moody, Emmeline Vance, Hestia Jones and Sturgis Podmore—who have arrived to bring him to a place of safety while he is awaiting his trial/hearing.

Harry finds out that Tonks can literally shift-shape and change her appearance as she likes. Lupin informs the Dursleys through a letter that Harry will be returning in the next summer and that he is now safe. Harry and the other wizards fly on their broomsticks and end up at an address, 12, Grimmauld Place, which is the “Headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix.” Harry is instructed to memorize the address.

In Chapter 4, the wizards and Harry enter the building in a rush. It is a dilapidated building with peeling paint and old carpet. Harry sees Mrs. Weasley, Ron's mother, emerge from a room. She goes toward them and embraces Harry before ordering him upstairs to find his friends, Ron and Hermione.

Although Ron and Hermione are very enthusiastic in greeting Harry, he is still upset about how they abandoned him during the summer. He then sees the cuts on their hands where Hedwig pecked at them, and is briefly happy. His friends then explain to him why they've been silent: Dumbledore had told them they were not to keep in contact with him about news that was happening, the Order of the Phoenix being a secret society made up of wizards who had banded together to stand against Voldemort.

The Order is following a mandate to protect Harry and follow Death Eaters. At this point, Harry also finds out that Percy, Ron's brother, is now supporting Cornelius Fudge at the Ministry of Magic, effectively betraying his family. Also, the Daily Prophet has been running a smear campaign against Harry all summer-long, slandering him and calling him a liar. As they go down for dinner, Harry catches sight of Sirius Black, his godfather.

In Chapter 5, after a happy reunion, Sirius gives Harry a bit of history of the house. The house at 12, Grimmauld belongs to the Black family and is now his, and he suggested it be a meeting spot for the Order of the Phoenix. At dinner, Sirius and Mrs. Weasley get into an argument as to how much Harry should know. Mrs. Weasley does not want Harry to know anything, and on the opposing side, Sirius and Lupin eventually manage to convince her that Harry needs to know certain things.

Essentially, Dumbledore and the Order of the Phoenix are convinced that Voldemort is currently building up his army again, but the Ministry of Magic refuses to accept that this





is a possibility, or that Voldemort is back. Instead, Fudge is mired in internal politics and believes that Dumbledore is trying to overthrow him and take his spot. Harry is also told that Voldemort is searching for a secret weapon, but before he can find out more, Mrs. Weasley ends the conversation.

## Analysis

From the juxtaposition between the muggle and wizard worlds, in the following chapters, we now see a juxtaposition of the worlds of adult vs. child. Harry is now back in the wizard world and is looking for answers as to what has happened, but he isn't given straightforward responses. However, to his relief, he finds out that Hermione and Ron did not actually forget about him and abandon him during the summer—they were under explicit orders given by Dumbledore to not give him any of the confidential information they had received. Harry feels that he should not have been kept in the dark since he is a key player in what goes on with Voldemort, but in a classic “keep things from the children” moment, Mrs. Weasley says that Harry is better off with knowing nothing and the members of the order of the Phoenix continue to keep the whole truth from him.

Is this warranted though? After all, Harry has been through a lot, and this might be crucial information that could mean the difference between life and death. He has proven himself over and over again, is intelligent and loyal, yet the adults still do not see him as fit enough to know everything. He even has had full contact with Voldemort and proven his worth, but it still isn't enough for the adults.

In all previous instances, Harry has shouldered the responsibility of representing “good” against “evil,” he is still deemed not responsible enough to learn the secrets of the order. He is still isolated and kept in the dark. Sirius and Lupin seem to recognize this, but they are in the minority. Knowing just enough to make things dangerous, Harry will shape his decisions with the imperfect information that he has.

## Vocabulary

reproachfully, muffled, suspended, gurgled, craning, feeble, cauldron, aerials, sprawling, rickety, candelabra, severed, chandelier, disillusionment, oversight, stupendous, drooling, canvas, balefully, acrid, indignant



## Chapters 6–8

### Summary

In Chapter 6, Harry and his friends are trying to clean the mess of 12, Grimmauld, while Kreacher, the House Elf, is resistant to their efforts: For those items that they throw out, Kreacher sneaks off with them while muttering and growling about them under his breath. We see the coming and goings of different members of the order, and then Sirius brings Harry to see the tapestry that depicts his family line from the middle ages up to present day. Sirius's mother could not stand that he refused to follow Lord Voldemort, and had his name burned off the tapestry. Sirius has a colorful family, and is related to Tonks, Lucius Malfoy, and the Lestranges. They play jokes on each other and Harry has a wonderful time. He almost forgets that he has to attend a hearing on his possible expulsion from Hogwarts. Although Sirius wants to go with Harry, Dumbledore refuses and tells Mr. Weasley to accompany Harry. Harry cleans himself up and prepares to go to his hearing.

In Chapter 7, the morning of the hearing, Harry goes downstairs and sees that Sirius, Tonks, Lupin and Mr. and Mrs. Weasley are already up and awaiting him in the kitchen. After he receives their well wishes, Harry and Mr. Weasley depart for the Ministry by traveling through a telephone booth. There, Harry waits in Mr. Weasley's office, until Perkins, his partner, tells them that the time of Harry's hearing has been changed, and they are already late. They rush off to the venue, and Mr. Weasley leaves him at the courtroom.

Harry has a sense of déjà vu when he arrives in the courtroom in Chapter 8, because he saw it when he was inside Dumbledore's Pensieve, and he saw the Lestranges as they were brought to trial and sentenced.

Fudge rebukes Harry for coming in late for his own hearing. Harry sees that there are a group of fifty wizards and witches staring down at him. They are led by Fudge and Percy Weasley will be transcribing all the proceedings.

As Harry is standing alone and defenseless, Dumbledore bursts into the room. He proclaims that he will be acting as a witness for the defense but he does not even cast a glance at Harry. Although the jury / Wizengamot are fairly impressed by Harry's abilities and how he managed to conjure up a full Patronus, it does not look as if they believe that there was a dementor in Little Whinging. When Mrs. Figg appears as a witness, she testifies to Harry's defense, but Fudge is still adamant that no dementors were present in Little Whinging without the express permission of the Ministry.

At the end of the hearing, when the vote is finally counted, Harry is acquitted but as he goes to thank Dumbledore, Dumbledore leaves quickly.



## Analysis

We obtain a fair amount of Sirius's back-story in these chapters, and also cannot fail but draw a parallel between him and Harry. Even though he has been freed from Azkaban, Sirius is still very much a prisoner in his very own home. When he tries to go with Harry to the Ministry, he is told he cannot, and is stuck inside his home just as Harry was forced to live with his Aunt and Uncle. Rowling also brings to light the strife that is ripe in the Black family, to show the diaspora of relations and how different members of his family have gone on diverging paths. The lone person in the family against Voldemort, Sirius is painted as a noble figure that is tragically alone despite being part of a larger group. This is a foreshadowing of what is to happen to him. He is a tragic figure of this story.

There is a very strong sense of confinement and imprisonment in these chapters with Sirius Black in 12, Grimmauld, which can be compared with Harry and his time with his Aunt and Uncle. In a sense, too, Sirius is an orphan like Harry even though he is actually disowned by his parents and Harry's were murdered. However, both of them lost their parents in some way because of Lord Voldemort.

Harry's hearing goes well, yet Dumbledore behaves strangely and avoids him. The deepening of the tension—Fudge's obvious dislike for Harry as well as the introduction of Dolores Umbridge—are precursors to the denouement of the plot. Dumbledore's aloofness is a testament to how alone Harry feels, and Dumbledore, who has always acted as a father figure and mentor, adds to that isolation. It sets the tone for the rest of the book and Harry's return to Hogwarts.

## Vocabulary

reckon, prowling, immobilized, fleeting, protuberance, lull, garbled, earsplitting, occupational, pacify, catastrophic, sepulchral, ominous



# Chapters 9–11

## Summary

In Chapter 9, post-hearing, Harry and Mr. Weasley return to the Black home, and there is a festive celebration with everyone. However, Sirius does not seem to be completely pleased that Harry will now be going back to Hogwarts, and Hermione has her suspicions that Sirius wanted to keep Harry with him at his home so he wouldn't be alone.

Before their return, Harry and his friends receive booklists from Hogwarts. Both Hermione and Ron are to be Gryffindor prefects at the school but Harry is left out, to the shock of everyone. Ron receives the gift of a new broom from his mother at his achievement. Harry is upset that he is not going to be a prefect and he mentally does a count of why he should have been chosen, and directs his anger at Dumbledore.

Harry is shown a photo of the older members of the Order of the Phoenix by Moody, and Moody also tells him how each one of them died. He sees his own parents and is upset by that sight. He is not pleased with Moody and wishes he hadn't seen the photo.

In Chapter 10, troubled sleep plagues Harry that night, and he is awoken by Ron because they are about to miss their train to Hogwarts. Harry must be accompanied by a guard but no one can find his regular guard, Sturgis Podmore. To replace him, Sirius takes over the position and shifts into a black dog. He is directly contradicting Dumbledore's orders to stay indoors. Before they get on the train, Harry and his friends are warned not to let on to anyone about the Order and what they have been doing. Both Ron and Hermione get to sit in the cabin reserved for prefects, and Harry and Ginny sit with Neville and eventually share a cabin with Luna Lovegood who is reading *The Quibbler*, a tabloid. Harry is informed by Ron that Draco Malfoy has become a Slytherin prefect. At this moment, Malfoy enters their compartment and issues his usual threats against Harry. When the train reaches Hogwarts and they file out, Harry is expecting to see Hagrid again, but Hagrid is nowhere to be seen. Instead, Professor Grubbly-Plank is herding the first-years. One unusual thing that Harry notices is that the horseless carriages are not horseless anymore: Winged, skeletal creatures are actually pulling them. When Harry quizzes Ron about them, Ron thinks Harry is seeing things, but Luna says that she can see them too, ever since her first year.

In Chapter 11, during the arrival of the first-years, the Sorting Hat starts singing to warn the students that they cannot be too divisive. Apparently, as they are told by their resident ghost, Nearly Headless Nick, the hat only gives warnings at times of danger for Hogwarts. Dumbledore then announces after dinner that Professor Grubbly-Plank will be taking over Hagrid's class in the Care of Magical Creatures, and that there will be a new teacher for the Defense Against the Dark Arts, Delores Umbridge, who was present at Harry's hearing and who voted against him. Umbridge breaks into Dumbledore's speech and gives her own speech, from which Hermione thinks means the Ministry will



be very present in everything at Hogwarts this year. When Harry leaves to go back to his dorm, whispers and staring follow him, making him feel uncomfortable.

## Analysis

In these chapters, we see that there is growing strife in Hogwarts marking the return of Lord Voldemort. The Sorting Hat tries to convince the students to not be internally divided—each House strengthens the divide between the students and the system which is similar to a caste system, is condemned strongly by the Hat because all students need to stick together during this time of danger.

We remember then that Harry was actually a strong contender for Slytherin, and was placed in Gryffindor only when he convinced the Hat to do so. Hermione too might seem misplaced as Ravenclaw accepts only the most intelligent and devoted to study, qualities that she epitomizes. However, the fact that all three are in Gryffindor is a testament to their loyalty and courage. The Hat is always right, even though it is sometimes hard to discern its reasons, so the sense of foreboding is increased when it sings of imminent danger and divided Houses.

The rivalry between the four Houses is mostly healthy, but the lines get blurred with the competition between Gryffindor and Slytherin, demonstrated most clearly in the Quidditch matches. It is a classic set up of good vs. evil, and Rowling makes it explicitly clear that members of the Slytherin House like Malfoy are bullies and come from evil families of Death-Eaters who were on Voldemort's side. Even Snape, whom Dumbledore has deemed completely loyal, used to be a Death-Eater himself, although his motivations are very ambiguous.

There can be parallels drawn between actual historical events in England. For example, Cornelius Fudge can be compared to the Prime Minister of England during World War II. Like Fudge denying Voldemort's existence and the imminent danger to the wizard world, Neville Chamberlain refused to believe that Hitler was going to be of real danger to Europe. Meanwhile, there was a lot of internal strife in the country, mirroring the strife at Hogwarts. Hitler wanted to cleanse the world and to espouse an Aryan Nation, made of pureblooded Aryans. The contempt for Voldemort and the House of Slytherin for mixed-bloods is very clear.

Rowling also addresses libel and slanderous accusations when she places Harry under attack by the gossip newspapers like *The Prophet*. She highlights the damage that falsehoods can do, and how it can increase conflict when peace and unity are needed. Hogwarts will have to unite to face Voldemort when he comes—at present, they will be unable to resist his attacks.

## Vocabulary

vandalism, indulgence, agitated, irritably, gloating, ecstatic, rancid, abysmal, pulsating, rummaging, musty, permanence, innovation



# Chapters 12–13

## Summary

In Chapter 12, we learn that the Ordinary Wizard Level exams (OWLs) are mandatory standardized examinations that all fifth-years at the school must take. Harry and his friends are buried in work in preparation for the test. They go to their first class with Professor Umbridge, who, per Ministry protocol, does not want to teach them any defensive spells. Harry is enraged and yells out that they need to learn spells because they must be prepared to face Lord Voldemort, and Umbridge scoffs at him and gives him a week's worth of detention. When Harry is made to see Professor McGonagall, he is told that he needs to remember where Umbridge's loyalties lie, and to be careful.

In Chapter 13, because everyone is gossiping about them and making them uncomfortable, Harry, Ron, and Hermione leave dinner early to escape whispering students. Before going to sleep, Hermione sends clothing out to House elves (They will gain freedom when they obtain clothing for themselves) and she seems to be more concerned with freeing them than finding out whether they want to be freed.

Harry is reprimanded by Angelina Johnson, his Quidditch captain because he had detention and hence missed the keeper tryouts. Then, Harry goes to see Professor Umbridge as ordered and she makes him write, "I must not tell lies" repeatedly. He is told to use a special quill, and as he writes, it pierces the words into his skin. Harry is overwhelmed with the pain, but he grits his teeth and continues, determined not to give her the satisfaction of seeing him weak. When it is way past midnight, Umbridge lets Harry leave. He was not able to complete any of his homework.

Harry keeps his punishment to himself and does not tell Hermione or Ron. It is only when he runs into Ron his third night of punishment and Ron sees the marks on his hand that Harry tells him what has been happening. Ron wants him to tell Dumbledore, but Harry is adamant about keep it a secret. Harry is in Umbridge's office for detention on Friday, the day of Ron's Keeper tryouts. As he strains to see, Umbridge takes hold of his hand to see how much he has written, and as he feels her touch, his scar burns terribly and he has a strange feeling in his stomach. On his return back to the Gryffindor dorm, Harry is told that Ron is now part of the Gryffindor Quidditch. Hermione is let in on what happened during detention and she wants Harry to go to Dumbledore as well, but he still refuses, saying instead he might contact Sirius. However, Hermione reminds Harry that they were warned by the Order about using letters.

## Analysis

Dolores Umbridge is the quintessential evil teacher figure with a sadistic side. Against Harry from the very beginning of the book when she votes for him to be expelled, Umbridge displays her sadistic methods of punishment in how she takes delight in



Harry's pain. Interestingly enough, Harry does not complain to Dumbledore. One could construe this as bravery typical of the Gryffindor House, but it could also be a sign of the growing rift between Dumbledore and Harry. Harry no longer wants to confide in Dumbledore because he feels that Dumbledore has basically abandoned him.

Umbridge's teachings are essentially useless: she does not teach them to defend themselves but instead, relegates their education as unfitting and wants to keep them "safe." This echoes Mrs. Weasley and her insistence that Harry not be told anything. The students will be defenseless when it comes to the showdown with Voldemort, ostensibly under the guise of keeping them "safe."

Harry is also very well and truly a teenager. He is hotheaded, quick to temper, irrational and rash. He picks fights with Umbridge and his relationship with his friends is under strain after he snaps repeatedly at them. He is a very changed character from the previous four books, prior to witnessing the death of Cedric Diggory. One might also attribute the change in his personality to a marked trauma from witnessing Diggory's murder. Harry is in full hormonal rage, and also traumatized. He is in a bad situation—unable to keep up with homework or to attend the Keeper trials. Rowling has set us up for a very tense situation.

## Vocabulary

discord, enmity, asperity, retorted, sodden, conspicuous, draught, flagons, murkier, curriculum, harassed, cronies, defiant



# Chapters 14–16

## Summary

In Chapter 14, Harry sends Sirius a letter. In the letter, he tells him about what's been happening at Hogwarts with Umbridge and the loss of Hagrid. He does not directly mention his scars and punishment, but alludes to it. Later, Harry reads that Sturgis Podmore, who was his guard, has been sentenced to serve six months in Azkaban for attempting to break into the Ministry. Ron believes that Podmore was tricked and brought into the Ministry, and that he was arrested for having ties with the Order of the Phoenix. Ron and Harry go to Quidditch practice, and Ron is especially taunted by the Slytherin team.

Hermione is knitting while Harry and Ron study. A letter from Percy arrives congratulating Ron on his achievement of becoming a prefect, but it also tells him to stay away from Harry Potter. Harry then sees Sirius in the fire, and his Godfather tells him that the burning in the scar happens whenever Voldemort feels a strong emotion. Sirius does not like Umbridge either, but he does not think she is a Death Eater. He also is not sure what has happened to Hagrid, but reassures Harry that Hagrid is very likely able to take care of himself and safe. Sirius wants to transform himself into a dog again to accompany Harry on his next trip to Hogsmeade, but he is met with protests from both Harry and Hermione. Sirius reprimands Harry and says that Harry's father would have enjoyed taking the risk of having Sirius with him.

In Chapter 15, Hermione reads in the Daily Prophet that Dolores Umbridge is now the High Inquisitor and will have tremendous power at Hogwarts. Umbridge will be auditing every class to ensure everything is in order.

At their Divination class, Umbridge harasses Professor Trelawney and demands that she make some predictions. During the class Umbridge teaches, Harry loses his control again and acts out, resulting in another week of detention from Umbridge. She is at Professor McGonagall's class of Transfiguration, and later at the class of Care of Magical Creatures, where she appears to be very pleased with Professor Grubbly-Plank. After his classes that day, Harry goes to report to detention, while Hermione proposes that they should form their own group for the students to study the Defense Against the Dark Arts. Harry will be their teacher. Although he is not too sure about this idea at first, Hermione brings up how he escaped Voldemort using his magic and he agrees to think about it.

In Chapter 16, Harry finally agrees to teach the group, and they agree to all meet during the next Hogsmeade field trip at a pub called the Hog's Head. Although she was only expecting a few people to arrive, the turnout at the pub reaches twenty-five. Hermione gives a speech extolling the fact that they need to learn real magic especially given the return of Voldemort. Some students are not in agreement with this, but they do want to hear about Harry's confrontation with Voldemort, and they all sign up for the group.





## Analysis

The formation of their own Defense Against the Dark Arts group is a strong sign of protest on the parts of the students at their ineffectual learnings and Umbridge's principles. Here, we see that Rowling wants to show us the difference between true power and forced control. Umbridge has technical control over them, but the students refuse to acknowledge it through the formation of this group.

This show of solidarity is a ray of hope for the previously divided students. Even though some of them are still doubtful of Harry and not sure whether Voldemort is truly back, they still recognize the importance of sticking together despite their differing Houses. Harry's abilities are also validated here and everyone recognizes his strengths when faced with foes. While Hermione might excel in everything else involving learning, no one can dispute Harry's mastery at the wand. Umbridge does not deem this as being useful, and she would rather they read books in silence without any practice.

Harry is uncomfortable with being at the forefront and the focus of everyone's attention. However, he knows how important it is for them to have a leader, so he agrees to step up to the plate. When Sirius makes an appearance in the fire during Chapter 14, he reveals more information to Harry. At the same time, we see that there is a reversal of roles, because Hermione, Harry and Ron are able to understand that Sirius will be putting everyone at risk if he transforms into a dog and accompany them to Hogsmeade. Sirius is forbidden to do so by them, which is a reversal of the normal adult-child role.

## Vocabulary

pterodactyl, shuffled, disheveled, aquiver, contorting, aggrieved, beacon, bloodshot, decree, age-appropriate, prickling



# Chapters 17–19

## Summary

In Chapter 17, Umbridge exerts further control at Hogwarts. She forbids all organizations and clubs to meet. This includes the Quidditch teams. Ron and Harry have their suspicions that Umbridge has found out about their Defense group, but Hermione informs them that they would know if someone tells on them, because she put a curse on the parchment.

Harry sees his owl, Hedwig, injured. He takes her to Professor Grubbly-Plank, who agrees to heal Hedwig. There is a letter attached to Hedwig's leg from Sirius, saying "Today, same time, same place."

Umbridge is sitting in on Potions, and Snape is visibly irritated. Later Harry and his friends are in the common room when they see Sirius appear in the fire. He somehow has found out about their Defense group and wants them to continue. Suddenly, Sirius sees Umbridge's hand reaching for him and he leaves.

In Chapter 18, Hermione theorizes that Umbridge was reading Harry's letters, which led to Hedwig's injury. Harry agrees with her. The Quidditch team is allowed to reform and practice during the evening. It is raining and Harry's scar is hurting, which means that Voldemort is feeling upset about something. When Harry falls asleep by the fire that evening, he is awoken by Dobby. Harry finds out from Dobby where his Defense group can practice secretly. There is a place called the Room of Requirement. This room only makes an appearance when it is needed, and Harry schedules a meeting for the next evening.

The group is trying to decide on a name, and finally, they decide on "Defense Association." However, Ginny says that could also stand for "Dumbledore's Army." It is decided, and Hermione inscribes the name on parchment and they start their class.

In Chapter 19 it is time for the first Quidditch game, and it is between Gryffindor and Slytherin. On the day of the game, Ron is so nervous he cannot even speak. Ron is mocked and made fun of by all the Slytherins. He is so upset that he plays terribly and misses shots. However, Harry carries the day for Gryffindor by catching the snitch. Provoked by Malfoy and his friends, Harry and George attack Malfoy. They have to report to McGonagall's office and are given a week of detention each. When Umbridge appears, she announces that she now has a decree from the ministry giving her power over all punishments at Hogwarts. She banishes Harry, George and Fred (who was not involved in the fight) from playing in any other Quidditch games, and also takes away their brooms. Harry is completely devastated by this turn of events. As he returns, he is told by Hermione that Hagrid has returned.



## Analysis

Umbridge is encroaching on everything Harry loves, and represents an unwelcome authority on previously held freedom. Insidious, evil and sadistic, Umbridge wields the authority from the ministry and Professor McGonagall and Dumbledore cannot interfere. However, Rowling has demonstrated to us that she does not have true authority, because the students have gone behind her back to form Dumbledore's Army.

This chipping away at freedom has resulted in Harry's initial anger and rage turning into despondency and depression. Everything he loves, from Hagrid to Quidditch, has been taken away from him. His one redemption is DA, and through the army, he is able to defy Umbridge.

Dumbledore's Army is a sign of loyalty and a jab at Cornelius Fudge. Fudge believes in his paranoia that Dumbledore is leading a resistance against him. This is untrue, but it becomes true when Fudge attempts to assert more control over Dumbledore to the extent that his students rise out to defend him, albeit without his knowledge. The students, whether or not they are from different Houses, still love and revere Dumbledore. They will fight for him, and their loyalty is expressed in the formation of this Army.

The first Quidditch game heightens the tension between the Houses of Gryffindor and Slytherin. Things seem hopelessly divided, with Slytherins going all out to take jabs at Ron, the newest player of the Gryffindors. Each House is well characterized here: While the Slytherins use underhanded tactics to scare and embarrass Ron, the Gryffindors stick to their principles and talent, eventually winning the match fair and square.

## Vocabulary

imminent, barter, dormitory, pulsing, monotonous, dolefully, reproachfully, intercepted, quizzical, crestfallen, knobbly, extinguished, protruding



# Chapters 20–22

## Summary

In Chapter 20, Harry and his friends use Harry's Cloak of Invisibility to look for Hagrid at his cabin. When they find him, they see that he is injured, and his face is bleeding and covered with bruises. Apparently, Hagrid had left to go to the mountains to try to convince the Giants to support Dumbledore. Unfortunately, he failed. At this moment, Umbridge chooses to visit Hagrid. Despite Umbridge's attempts to force him to talk, Hagrid refuses to tell her what happened with the giants. When Umbridge finally leaves, Hermione tells Hagrid about how Umbridge is now sitting in on every class, and that he should take care to not teach anything that might cause her to take action.

In Chapter 21, Hagrid brings his class the following day into the woods, and Harry sees once again the skeletal horses that were pulling the carriages. Hagrid asks the class who can see them, and only Harry, Neville, and a Slytherin boy raise their hands. Hagrid tells the class that these creatures are called Thestrals, and that they can only be seen by people who have witnessed death.

Since Harry is banned from Quidditch, Ginny Weasley is picked by Angelina to replace Harry in the Quidditch team. It is just before Christmas and at their last DA class before the break, Harry is alone with Cho Chang, Cedric's girlfriend. Cho Chang cries and confesses to Cedric that she is still thinking about him even though he is dead. Cedric was murdered by Voldemort. Harry and Cho Chang kiss under the mistletoe.

Harry tells his friends what happened between them. When he is asleep, he has a dream where a snake is moving toward a man that is on the floor. He attacks the man and sinks his fangs into the man's body. At this point, Harry wakes up and he is suffering from a terrible pain. His scar is hurting him more than ever. Professor McGonagall arrives and Harry tells her what he saw in the dream—Ron's father being attacked by a snake. She brings Harry to Dumbledore.

In Chapter 22, Harry recounts his dream to Dumbledore and how he felt himself inside the body of the snake. Dumbledore raises the alarm by sending out the portraits of former headmasters and headmistresses of Hogwarts hanging around his office. They return and tell Dumbledore that the members of the Order of the Phoenix have found Mr. Weasley inside the Ministry, and that he has been taken to St. Mungo's Hospital for treatment. McGonagall collects the Weasley children and they leave for 12, Grimmauld Place. Harry's scar starts to hurt again and has to resist the urge to attack and injure Dumbledore.

Back at 12, Grimmauld, Harry re-tells the story of his dream to Fred, George, Ginny and Sirius. However, he leaves out the fact that it was himself who was inside the snake. Mrs. Weasley sends a letter to them all, telling them that Mr. Weasley is alive. When she arrives, Mrs. Weasley is grateful to Harry for his vision that saved Mr. Weasley's life.



The Weasleys and Harry are to stay with Sirius for the Christmas break, and Harry reveals the entire truth to Sirius about how he was inside the snake as well as the extreme anger he felt toward Dumbledore just as they were leaving Hogwarts. Sirius says he should not worry about it.

When they go to see Mr. Weasley, he is weak but in a good humor. They leave as Tonks and Mad-Eye enter, and eavesdrop on their conversation. Mad-Eye believes that Voldemort is actually possessing Harry. Harry drops the ear in shock and when he looks up at his friends, they are all staring at him in horror.

## Analysis

The dream that Harry has is very significant because it is the first time he has a vision from another body. Voldemort is able to turn into a snake, so Harry realizes that in this particular vision, he was Voldemort attacking Mr. Weasley. What is worse, Harry felt good while attacking Mr. Weasley, so he is feeling exactly what Voldemort is feeling—great pleasure. Although he confesses this to Dumbledore, Harry hides this from the Weasley clan with the exception of Ron, who was with Harry when he told Dumbledore. Harry feels guilty by association and for what he felt, even though it wasn't him feeling it. In a sense, he feels responsible for the attack even though he did not perpetuate it. He cannot separate himself from Voldemort.

Harry is still shocked, but Dumbledore accepts it in his stride and almost seems to know what Harry is going to say in advance, confirming his suspicions by asking Harry various questions. In this instance, we see that once again, the adult-child motif is reinstated, because Dumbledore is clearly more knowledgeable about what is going on, and refuses to give Harry all the information he needs to understand what is happening to him. This lack of information engenders more confusion and fear on Harry's part. He has no recourse but himself.

A little more of the history of Hogwarts is revealed to us when Dumbledore sends out the portraits of the former Headmasters and Headmistresses to save Mr. Weasley. It shows the marriage of the past and present—even though Dumbledore might be the acting headmaster in power, he still listens (or has to listen to) the talking and sometimes bickering portraits. History is alive, in this sense, and so is the experience that comes with it. Dumbledore is not alone.

The scene with the Thestrals serves as a reminder of Voldemort's brutality. The only reason why Harry is able to see them is because he witnessed death. In this case, it was the death of Cedric Diggory at the hands of Voldemort.

Cho Chang and Harry share a brief romantic interlude. We are set up to expect a substantial development, given that both Cho Chang and Harry were traumatized by Cedric's death.

## Vocabulary

gingerly, cagily, bewitched, bloke, remnants, superstition, stubby, dangling, hoarsely, vibrant, essence, corpulent, brandishing, dereliction



# Chapters 23–25

## Summary

In Chapter 23, Harry is beginning to wonder if the weapon that Voldemort is searching for is actually he. He decides then that to save Hogwarts, he should leave it and go back to live with his Aunt and Uncle. However, as he is packing his bag, Phineas Nigellus materializes in his portrait and gives him a message that he has from Dumbledore. Dumbledore wants Harry to stay put exactly where he is, so Harry stops packing.

Hermione rebukes Harry the next evening for his anti-social behavior. Ginny and Ron are also present and Ginny tells Harry that he's not the only one who was possessed by Voldemort—she was. She doesn't believe he's having the same experience. Harry is reassured and he celebrates with the rest of them. At St. Mungo's, the group sees Neville who is with his grandmother. Neville and his grandmother are visiting Neville's parents, who have gone mad after being tortured by Bellatrix Lestrange.

Severus Snape comes to speak to Harry in Chapter 24. He has been ordered by Dumbledore to instruct Harry in the arts of Occlumency. Occlumency is the art of protecting the mind against external penetration. Although Harry is not thrilled with the idea of having to endure more lessons with Snape, he recognizes its utility and agrees. Sirius gives Harry a package when Harry is leaving to go back to Hogwarts, and says that the package is only to be used when Harry needs him.

When Harry gets back to Hogwarts, he organizes a Valentine's Day date at Hogsmeade with Cho. Harry shows up at Snape's for his first lesson in Occlumency. Snape then tells Harry that Voldemort has a very great talent for Legilimency, meaning that he has the capability of extracting feelings and thoughts as well as memories from a person's mind. Harry must defend himself with Occlumency and clear his mind. Snape then empties his thoughts into a Pensieve and uses Legilimency to attack Harry's mind and memories. Harry tries to fight back but fails. Snape attacks again, and Harry fails again. Instead, he gets lost in his own memory and finds himself running through the Ministry of Magic with Mr. Weasley by his side. This time, however, Harry is able to discern that the hallway he is in is one that leads to the Department of Mysteries. When he questions Snape, Snape dismisses it. Later that evening, Harry realizes that Voldemort is ecstatic because he can feel it through his scar.

In Chapter 25, the friends find out the next morning that there has been a prison breakout at Azkaban. Among the missing are ten wizards who were formerly death-eaters and one of them is Bellatrix Lestrange. Harry knows now why Voldemort felt the way he did the night before. He was happy that his followers managed to get free. In the Daily Prophet, Harry reads that a worker by the name of Bode has passed after he was strangled by a plant. Bode was a worker in the Ministry of Magic, and as Ron recalls what his father said, worked in the Department of Mysteries.



The newest educational decree from Umbridge now states that no teacher is allowed to discuss anything outside of class subjects with their students. Umbridge sits in on every single lesson of Divination and Care of Magical Creatures, and the students begin to wonder who will be the first to be fired by her—Trelawney or Hagrid. Hagrid forbids Harry and his friends from visiting him at his cabin because he thinks it will be too dangerous.

Harry has a disastrous Valentine's Day date with Cho because he has to meet Hermione at noon. Cho is upset at the news, and she ends up crying at the end of the date. Harry is very confused but he goes to meet Hermione at the Three Broomsticks. There, he finds her with Luna Lovegood and Rita Skeeter, who is a

Reporter for the Quibbler and one of Hermione's least favorite people. Hermione blackmails Rita, who is an unregistered Animagus, into writing an honest cover story about Harry.

## Analysis

These chapters reveal the growing uncertainty in Harry. He is guilt-ridden and thinks that he is somehow responsible for the attack on Mr. Weasley. Harry begins to believe that he is possessed by Voldemort. Dumbledore does nothing to allay these fears; instead, he sends Harry a cryptic order that explains nothing, adding to Harry's overall uncertainty and fear. Harry needs a strong leader and mentor in his life, but Dumbledore is not fulfilling this role. He continues to keep things from Harry and then sends Snape to teach Harry about Occlumency, resulting in a disastrous lesson. Although Harry does find out more about his dream and the fact that the hallway leads to the Department of Mysteries, Snape does nothing else to enlighten Harry. Snape also doesn't quite explain why Harry needs to be so studied in his approach to Occlumency, and is disrespectful in how he tramples through all of Harry's memories. This process drains Harry emotionally and physically, and all Snape does is repeat over and over again that Harry needs to empty his mind.

The chapters do end on a good note because with Hermione's help, Harry is finally able to regain some control over his life. He is able to tell his side of the story to the Quibbler and defend himself against all the falsehoods being said about him in the Prophet.

Hermione takes a step aside from her high standards of morality to save her friend and stand up for his reputation. These two traits of Hermione mark her strength and her conviction. She meets and blackmails someone whom she finds despicable in order to stand for the principles of truth and friendship.

The failed date with Cho Chang is an affirmation of the fact that both she and Harry are not ready for a relationship with each other, and perhaps never will be. They have an attraction for each other, but their lives have been marked by tragedy and they will probably never be able to get past that to develop a real relationship.





## Vocabulary

tersely, leaden, impertinent, intensified, unabashed, shriek, exuberantly, contempt, remedial, hostility, depriving, dubiously, delusional



# Chapters 26-28

## Summary

When Harry's cover story on the Quibbler appears in Chapter 26, Umbridge bans everyone at Hogwarts from reading it. As Harry goes to sleep that night, his scar hurts him continuously. He is subject to yet another dream vision of Voldemort and himself as Voldemort as he discusses Bode's death with Rockwood, one of the Death Eaters who escaped recently from Azkaban. The dream upsets Harry so much he wakes himself up screaming. Against Ron's advice, Harry refuses to go see Dumbledore.

Through her research, Hermione theorizes that Bode was cursed with something called the Imperius Curse. She believes that Bode was looking for the weapon that is so important to Voldemort, and in his search for it, he became mad, thereby ending up in St. Mungo's.

Harry's lessons in Occlumency continue with Professor Snape. He is not progressing very well although he does manage to get inside Snape's thoughts for a brief instant. However, Professor Trelawney is screaming at the entrance hall and this interrupts their lesson. She has been fired by Umbridge and must thereby leave campus. Dumbledore makes an appearance and tells her that she can still stay on at Hogwarts and live there even if she is not teaching. The new teacher of Divination is then introduced to everyone: It is a centaur and his name is Firenze.

Firenze takes over Trelawney's class in Chapter 27 and he begins by informing the students that no knowledge is foolproof, even the knowledge of centaurs. When the class is over, Firenze asks Harry to relay a message to Hagrid that his attempts are not working and he should give up. When Harry tells Hagrid, Hagrid is unmoved.

Dumbledore's Army is now casting spells to create their Patronuses. Dobby comes and interrupts them one day because Umbridge is coming to catch them. The students run away but Malfoy traps Harry and trips him before turning him over to Umbridge. Harry is brought to Dumbledore, and Cornelius Fudge is also waiting there. Umbridge's informant is a Ravenclaw whose name is Marietta. Because Hermione had jinxed the parchment against snitches, Marietta's face is filled with huge pimple splotches. Dumbledore tells Fudge that the responsibility of this Army belongs to him, and when they try to arrest him to bring him to custody, he disappears after sending a flash of silver into the room.

In Chapter 28, after Dumbledore's disappearance, Umbridge is appointed his successor, and her first order of business is to create a squad of students who act as inquisitors. They are mostly Slytherins, Draco Malfoy included. This squad of students has the authority to deduct points from each house, and Malfoy takes extreme pleasure in doing so. In protest, Fred and George set off a box of fireworks one day in the middle of the Great Hall, and Umbridge is unable to use her magic to prevent them from



exploding. No one in the faculty offers to assist her, and the fireworks continue exploding all day long.

Harry has yet another dream of the Department of Mysteries, and it progresses this time. He enters a room that has many shelves with glass spherical orbs. He goes toward a particular orb but before he gets there, he awakens.

Harry's lessons with Snape continue. When Snape is interrupted to go to see Umbridge, Harry jumps into the Pensieve because he wants to find out what is going on at the Department of Mysteries. Instead, he sees an old memory of Snape. Snape is taking his OWL examinations and James Potter, Sirius, Lupin and Moody are also present. When James and Sirius see Snape, they make fun of him and mock him mercilessly. Lily, Harry's mother, tries to stop them but to no avail, and Snape snaps at her and brands her a Mudblood. She turns and leaves him. Snape comes back and pulls Harry out of the Pensieve. He is extremely upset that Harry has dared to invade his thoughts. Harry is internally very disturbed by what he saw of his father and Sirius.

## Analysis

Despite knowing how important it is for him to become proficient at Occlumency, Harry is still defiant and refuses to truly devote himself to closing his thoughts off to external influences. He is convinced that since he saved Mr. Weasley by seeing through Voldemort's eyes, it might actually be detrimental to some extent to completely close off his mind. Because it has become a trend, Harry thinks that this might be due to the fact that adults are keeping more things from him and he doesn't trust them to tell him the truth.

Dumbledore and the adults are continuing to keep things from Harry, which is having a very adverse effect on Harry's inclination to do as they say.

Dumbledore does show that he is selfless and a true leader when he takes the fall for the formation of the DA even though he had no idea what the students were doing. He does it because the students and Harry will not easily be able to escape the grasp of the Ministry, but Dumbledore can, easily. He is able to do so with such ease that it proves his superiority as a wizard and the depths of his power.

Umbridge is also, conversely enough, a unifying point for the students and faculty who dislike her intensely and even more so when she is appointed as Dumbledore's successor. Only her Inquisitional Squad is loyal to her; the rest try their best to make her life difficult. Her decrees become more and more unbelievable and farcical to the point that she bans a newspaper when it prints something flattering about Harry and goes contrary to the official Ministry stance on the return of Voldemort. This unifies the students even more because they are firmly disinclined to empathize with Umbridge. They despise her and her methods and tyrannical rule, and will be more likely to come to Harry's aid in the future.

## Vocabulary

fervently, toddler, peruse, tenderhooks, greasy, foolproof, jubilantly, curtly, inquisitional, suppressed, mirth, wrenched



# Chapters 29-31

## Summary

In Chapter 29, after Harry invades the Pensieve, Snape now refuses to give Harry additional Occlumency lessons. Harry wants to talk to Sirius about what he saw in the Pensieve but knows it is too dangerous. A notice for Career Advice is posted on all the bulletin boards. Fifth-years must meet with their Heads of House sometime in the following week.

Fred and George suggest to Harry that they create a distraction so that Harry can break into Umbridge's office to speak with Sirius through the fire; Hermione objects because she believes that it is too dangerous. Harry then goes to meet Professor McGonagall for his career advice, but Umbridge is also present. McGonagall likes Harry's idea of becoming an Auror. An Auror is a wizard who tracks dark wizards to destroy them. She advises him to work hard at it, but Umbridge's input is that he would never be hired by the Ministry so he should find another job.

As Harry prepares to break into Umbridge's office he reflects on what Sirius said about how James Potter reveled in taking risks. Harry is disillusioned and wonders if he wants to emulate his father given what he saw.

Harry breaks into Umbridge's office and talks to Sirius at the fireplace. When he asks Sirius about what he saw in Snape's memories, Sirius defends himself and Harry's father by saying that they were simply very young and rash. When Harry tells Sirius that his Occlumency lessons have stopped, Lupin tells him that he needs to continue. When Harry returns to Hogwarts, he sees that Fred and George have somehow made the school into a swamp. When Umbridge threatens them with severe punishment, Fred and George prefer to leave Hogwarts and they get their brooms from her office before flying away from Hogwarts.

In Chapter 30, the last Quidditch match of the season is taking place between Gryffindor and Ravenclaw. As Harry and Hermione sit down, Hagrid comes up behind them and asks them to go with him to the forest. They meet a giant that has come back with Hagrid from the mountains. Hagrid thinks that this giant is actually his half-brother, Grawp, who is small for his size. He is attempting to teach him English so they can communicate.

They are surrounded by centaurs who do not want Grawp in the woods with them. When Harry and Hermione return to the Quidditch match, Gryffindor has won and Ron is in a state of euphoria as everyone is shouting "Weasley is our King," and not in the mocking way the Slytherins did at his first match.

In Chapter 31, they discuss Hagrid's request, and Ron is terrified of seeing a giant but they do not want to disappoint Hagrid. The OWL examinations begin. As he is in the



Astronomy tower, Harry sees a group of wizards going into Hagrid's cabin and try to stun him but they are unsuccessful. Professor McGonagall rushes to help Hagrid but four reddish-colored beams of light hit her and she falls. Hagrid escapes but McGonagall is badly injured. She is brought to the hospital, and that night, Harry has another sleepless night.

Harry falls asleep because he is exhausted in the middle of his Magic OWL. While he is asleep, he dreams again of the room with the glass orbs, and he sees himself as Voldemort instructing a person on the floor to lift the orb. The shape on the floor refuses, saying he would die first. Harry then realizes that the shape is actually Sirius and that Voldemort is torturing him.

## Analysis

Rowling introduces very adult themes of racism, as well as bullying in this chapter—Hagrid is part Giant and he has always had a hard time fitting in with everyone else in the wizard world, even though he is treated as equals by Dumbledore and the rest. He lives apart from the rest of the teaching staff at Hogwarts, and is gruff and unsophisticated. Students like Draco Malfoy also make fun of him and treat him as an inferior, isolating him even more. Even the centaurs do not wish for giants to be in their forest. When he finds his family, he feels less alienated, but his half-brother is creating havoc in the Forest with his violence and his pulling of trees out by the roots. Hagrid tries to teach him English and domesticate him, but he mostly fails.

A deeper sense of disillusionment now enshrouds Harry. He has always hero-worshipped his father, but he realizes when he goes into Snape's Pensieve that his father is not as perfect as he believed, and was a bully to Snape, cruel and mean. Even though Sirius tries to defend him and James Potter, Harry cannot help but view them as similar to Draco Malfoy and how he bullies Harry. However, his image of his mother, Lily Potter, remains unblemished, because Lily is selfless and tries to save Snape. Snape's embarrassment is so complete though, that he lashes out at the person who is trying to save him. Harry cannot reconcile the conflicting pictures of his father, and he is subsequently more confused and depressed.

Despite his disillusionment, Harry is still overwhelmed with fear and the need to protect Sirius when he sees in the vision that Sirius is being attacked by Voldemort. At this point in the novel, the situation at Hogwarts is dire. Fred and George have left, Professor McGonagall is injured, Dumbledore has fled, and Trelawney has been fired. Umbridge is now the all-powerful voice at the school, and this cannot help but bode ill for the students.

## Vocabulary

traipsing, liaise, proximity, aptitude, contradict, perseverance, strode, anguished, pelting, gnashing, misshapen, bracken, vigorously, agility



# Chapters 32–34

## Summary

In Chapter 32, Harry goes to visit McGonagall but he is told that she is now at St. Mungo's. Harry is now truly alone without guidance. He searches for his friends, and Hermione gives Harry a warning that Voldemort might be setting a trap for Harry at the Department of Mysteries.

Harry does not want to listen to her, and he insists that they all go immediately to the Ministry. Ginny and Luna come in and say they will help as well. Hermione manages to convince Harry to at least use the fire in Umbridge's office to check to see if Sirius is truly at the Ministry, and not still at 12, Grimmauld. When Harry sneaks in with the help of Ron, Ginny and Luna, he transports himself to the fireplace in the Black home. As he appears, Kreacher, the House Elf appears, and corroborates what Harry saw in his vision: Sirius is indeed in the Department of Mysteries.

Harry is caught by Umbridge, who insists on knowing with whom Harry was speaking. Harry's friends have also all been captured by Umbridge's Squad. When Snape comes in, Harry shouts out that Padfoot is at the place where it is hidden, hoping that Snape will understand and send for help.

Umbridge now admits that she was the person who sent the Dementors into Little Whinging during the summer. She attempts to curse Harry with an illegal Cruciatus Curse, but Hermione interrupts and screams out that Harry was contacting Dumbledore. Umbridge pauses and demands to know why; Hermione tells her that Dumbledore has been building a weapon with the students, and that it is now ready. Umbridge demands to be led to the weapon.

They troop off into the Forbidden Forest in Chapter 33, and Harry has no clue what Hermione doing. Centaurs surround them, and Umbridge cannot help herself and she insults them. They spirit her away. Grawp enters the scene demanding to know where Hagrid is, and Hermione screams, saying she doesn't know. They escape to safety in the ensuing chaos. They run into their friends who have escaped after using the skills they learned in Defense. Harry's friends want to go with him to the Ministry, and Luna points out some thestrals, who can bring them there.

In Chapter 34, Harry and his friends ride the thestrals and arrive at the Ministry. They use the elevators and get to the Department of Mysteries. Through his dream, Harry knows which door to open but in the next section, there are more doors and he doesn't recognize them. They try a few and finally, find the correct one with the spheres. However, Sirius is nowhere in sight, and Harry realizes that Hermione might have been right.



Ron sees a sphere that has Harry and Voldemort's names on it. As he picks it up, Lucius Malfoy appears and tells him to give it over to him.

## Analysis

Harry is truly without any guidance from the adult world at the end of these chapters. All of his allies—Dumbledore, Hagrid and McGonagall—are all gone. The only exception is Snape, but he has always been an ambiguous character and Harry cannot trust him.

However, Harry's friends rally around him in a show of unity and trust. In this sense, even though he has become increasingly isolated, Harry is not alone in the end, and true friendship and loyalty stand him in good stead. With no help from adults, the group of young wizards proves to be extremely competent, and it shows a coming-of-age of them all as the old guard retreats.

Umbridge gets what she deserves—she is rash and rude, insulting the centaurs, who will not recognize her authority. Her arrogance highlights the fact that authority is not limitless. Bolstered by her immense power at Hogwarts, Umbridge believes that she can order everyone around, but she ultimately fails because she does not hold any authority over the centaurs that do not recognize the Ministry of Magic as their ruling body. Rowling is showing us that arrogance and the misuse of power will beget appropriate punishments.

Harry's rush into the Ministry highlights his love for Sirius, but also his youth and impetuosity untempered by reason. Although Hermione warns him that it might be a trap, he pays no heed to her, and effectively brings all of his friends into the trap. He should have a warning from the fact that the adults were so insistent about him learning Occlumency. Harry has had many previous experiences with adverse effects after he rushed into danger without thinking things through. He is being very rash by not adhering to logic, putting everyone in danger because he is fearful that Sirius might be in trouble. Harry's friends also let themselves be swept along, a powerful testament to the power of crowds and the strength (whether rational or otherwise) of a charismatic leader.

## Vocabulary

tournament, persisted, scuffle, commotion, discrediting, resurgence, inclination, intrigued, miniscule, incredulously





# Chapters 35–38

## Summary

In Chapter 35, Harry confronts Malfoy to find out where Sirius is, but Malfoy insists that Harry hand over the prophecy sphere. Harry refuses and threatens to destroy it instead if the approaching Death Eaters attack him and his friends. Malfoy explains to Harry that only the ones named on the sphere can retrieve it, and that the story of his birth and scar are in the prophecy. Voldemort could not retrieve the sphere himself since the Aurors at the Ministry would have found him immediately, so they decided to obtain it by luring Harry through his dreams and making him believe that Sirius was in trouble.

The students shatter some spheres and Harry runs away with his prophecy, followed by the Death Eaters. The students suffer some casualties and injuries at the hands of the Death Eaters. In the chase, they end up at a Room with a brain jar, and Ron picks up one that has burst open. Tentacles emerge and try to strangle Ron. Neville and Harry are the only ones left able to fight the Death Eaters as the others have been incapacitated. Harry is still holding his prophecy and he runs into the room with an arch and a black curtain. Lestrangle enters and curses Neville with the Crucio curse, torturing him.

At this moment, the members of the Order of the Phoenix appear, led by Sirius. Sirius tells Harry to grab Neville and the prophecy and run. The prophecy falls from Harry's robe and cracks open. Then, Dumbledore appears and he corners the Death Eaters. Lestrangle is dueling with Sirius and she strikes him with a beam of light. He falls back. Harry tries to run to him, but Lupin restrains him and tells him that Sirius is dead.

In Chapter 36, Harry cannot believe that Sirius is dead, but he runs after Lestrangle, threatening to avenge Sirius. When he catches up with her, he yells at her that she will need to face and kill him. At this moment, Voldemort and Dumbledore both appear. Voldemort attacks Dumbledore but his blow is absorbed by Dumbledore's bird, Fawkes. Suddenly, Voldemort disappears, and he enters Harry's body. Harry's scar opens, and using Harry's voice, Voldemort tells Dumbledore that he can kill him by killing Harry. Voldemort then leaves Harry's body and grabs Lestrangle and they escape the Ministry. Fudge enters the room and demands to know what is happening. Dumbledore sends Harry back to Hogwarts with a port key and Harry ends up back in Dumbledore's office.

In Chapter 37, Dumbledore reunites later with Harry in his office, and as he sees Harry's suffering, Dumbledore tells him that the pain that he is feeling is actually Harry's biggest strength. Dumbledore takes the blame for not telling Harry enough, leading to Sirius' death. He finally reveals to Harry the whole story and the truth about the scar.

Voldemort had realized the night of Mr. Weasley's attack that he could see into Harry's thoughts just as Harry could see into his. He began to invade Harry's thoughts, so Dumbledore instructed Snape to give Harry lessons in Occlumency. Knowing that Harry



cared immensely for Sirius, Voldemort manipulated his thoughts and implanted the image of Sirius being attacked by him into Harry's mind. He needed Harry to retrieve the prophecy since he could not get it himself.

Harry was brought as an infant to the Dursleys and not a family in the wizard world because Harry needed to be near someone of his mother's blood in order to be safe. The only one around was Aunt Petunia. Insofar as Harry could call his mother's blood's dwelling home, he would remain safe from Voldemort. Dumbledore sent the Howling message to Aunt Petunia to remind her of her duty. Dumbledore continues to explain that Sybill Trelawney made a prophecy sixteen years ago about a boy born at the end of July whose parents had stood up against Voldemort three times. Although the boy could either be Neville or Harry since both were born at the end of July, it was Harry, since Voldemort had marked him as an equal. Voldemort decided on Harry because of Harry's half-blood status, similar to Voldemort. Voldemort did not hear the second part of the prophecy, which said that this chosen child would possess powers that Voldemort would not know, and that one must die because one cannot survive without the other. Harry's power, the one that Voldemort is unaware of, is love.

In Chapter 38, Harry is now in the hospital with his friends. Umbridge has been saved from the centaurs by Dumbledore and she is at the hospital as well. Harry does not yet tell his friends about the prophecy, telling them he is going to see Hagrid. Instead, he goes to the lake and begins to cry.

McGonagall returns to Hogwarts after making a full recovery, and Umbridge leaves the school. Harry is packing when he comes across the package that Sirius had given him during Christmas. He opens it and inside is a mirror. There is an inscription telling him that this can be used to talk with Sirius. Although Harry shouts at it, he does not get a reply. He shatters the mirror. He looks for a ghost and talks to Nearly Headless Nick. Nick tells him that not every wizard becomes a ghost at death. Harry is upset and he comes across Luna who asks him about Sirius.

The students board the train the next day. When Cho walks past him, they do not speak and Harry tells Ron that their relationship is over, and Hermione says that Cho is now going out with Michael Conner, news that does not upset Harry. As the train arrives at Kings Cross, Harry sees some members of the Order of the Phoenix at the platform, together with the Dursleys. The Dursleys are told to treat Harry well during the summer.

Moody says Harry is to contact him at least once every three days or someone will be sent to check on him. Ron and Hermione make the promise to see each other soon, and Harry goes home with the Dursleys.

## Analysis

We see a standoff between good and evil when the young wizards of Dumbledore's Army stand up against the Death Eaters. Although inexperienced, they hold up well but eventually, the experience and strength of the Order of the Phoenix is needed to save



the day. However, it proves the necessity of learning and using magic to defend against attacks like these which the Ministry was adamantly against. Harry and Neville are the two left standing against the Death Eaters before Sirius and the others arrive, and it is especially fitting since the prophecy could have meant either one of them before Voldemort chose Harry.

The prophecy reveals certain key details to Harry, especially why he needs to spend his summers with the Dursleys and Aunt Petunia, whose blood is a powerful guard since it contains Harry's mother's sacrifice. Harry's scar is an infuriating reminder to Voldemort of Lily Potter's sacrifice, and it is also present in Aunt Petunia's blood. It is ironic to Harry because he has never felt at home with the Dursleys, but that is very true with most families. Perhaps Rowling is attempting to say, "You can't choose your blood, but you can choose your friends." In this case, Harry's chosen family are his friends and the world of wizards, his blood, that protects him still, is the family which he is excluded from, Aunt Petunia and the Dursleys. He understands finally now why he needs to go back to them every summer.

Harry's strength as a wizard is also his greatest weakness. His love for Sirius propelled him and his friends into great danger, but it is also what marks sacrifice, and is something that Voldemort can never understand. Sirius' death marks Harry greatly, and he is truly growing up quickly. When he returns to Hogwarts, he is trying to deal with this death and he is anti-social and prefers to be by himself instead of going to the Great Feast. Sirius was the last real connection that Harry had with his family, and now he only has Aunt Petunia.

Harry feels responsible partially for Sirius' death. If he hadn't been tricked by Voldemort because he hadn't mastered Occlumency, he might not have rushed off to the Ministry and needed Sirius and the other members of the Order of the Phoenix to save him. Harry cannot accept this guilt of his death, and he takes it out on the mirror that Sirius gave him.

The book ends, but in a very unsatisfying, uneasy manner. Voldemort is truly back, getting stronger day by day. The Death Eaters have been returned to Azkaban but LeStrange is free. Sirius is dead and Harry cannot accept it. Making matters worse, he has to go back to the Dursleys' for one more summer while he is still mourning Sirius. Harry has made many bad decisions throughout this novel and is dealing with the consequences. Learning from mistakes is the natural path of growing up. Harry hasn't quite found himself yet, and he is caught between childhood and becoming an adult.

## Vocabulary

stupefy, keeled, dais, blustered, irretrievable, resounding, fragmented, delegated, dredging, unscathed, desisted, sinister, furtive



# Characters

## Harry Potter

Harry is the central person in this novel and the entire series. Harry is a talented wizard born to Lily and James Potter. His destiny is intricately linked to the villain of the series, Lord Voldemort. Harry is surrounded by good friends and although sometimes rash, always seems to be the victor of the day.

## Albus Dumbledore

Dumbledore is the current headmaster at Hogwarts. He is extremely powerful and wise, with a deep knowledge of everything. He is Harry's mentor and often gives him advice and teaches him how to comport himself. He is a true match to Voldemort in terms of skill.

## Dolores Umbridge

An unpleasant woman of insignificant talent save that of torturing others, Umbridge is at first the senior undersecretary to the Minister of Magic, Cornelius Fudge. She then becomes the High Inquisitor of Hogwarts. She resembles a toad and she is cruel, arrogant and tyrannical.

## Lord Voldemort

Once known as Tom Riddle and now also called the "Dark Lord," Lord Voldemort is the ultimate evil in the series of books. He is the most powerful practitioner of dark magic, and he seeks to rule the world and needs to destroy Harry in the process. He was responsible for the deaths of Harry's parents.

## Ron Weasley

Harry's constant companion and one of his best friends, Ron is the ultimate sidekick along with Hermione Granger. He comes from a pureblood family and his entire family is involved very heavily in wizarding affairs. He does not excel in his studies but makes up for it with his loyalty and bravery. His brothers Fred, George and his sister, Ginny, are also attending Hogwarts.



## **Hermione Granger**

Born to muggle parents, Hermione is very intelligent and dedicated to work. She is idealistic and believes wholeheartedly in following them at the expense of what others think. She is very brave and is the most intelligent person in her class.

## **Sirius Black**

Sirius was the best friend of Harry's father, James. He is Harry's godfather. He enjoys a close relationship with Harry, who trusts him implicitly. As an Animagus, Sirius is able to shape-shift into a big black dog called Padfoot. Many years ago, Sirius was imprisoned wrongly for murder. He has since escaped, and has been hiding out in his ancestral home.

## **Severus Snape**

The teacher of Potions and the leader of the Slytherin House, Snape was formerly a Death Eater. He is also a member of the Order of the Phoenix. Dumbledore trusts Snape, but Harry is leery of him.

## **Professor Minerva McGonagall**

McGonagall is the instructor for Transfiguration and is also the Head of House for Gryffindor. Also a mentor-figure to Harry of sorts, she is wise and good, and stands up for the students against Umbridge.

## **Hagrid**

Hagrid is a good and loyal friend of Harry's and also completely loyal to Dumbledore. He is the gamekeeper and also the instructor for the Care of Magical Creatures. He is part giant.

## **Cornelius Fudge**

Fudge is the Minister of Magic. He is weak, corrupt and nervous. He refuses to believe that Voldemort has returned, and he is paranoid that Dumbledore is trying to get his job.

## **Mrs. Weasley**

The matriarch of the Weasley clan, Mrs. Weasley cares strongly for her children and thinks of Harry as part of her brood. She is a member of the Order of the Phoenix.



## **Mr. Weasley**

Mr. Weasley is the patriarch of the Weasley clan, and Ron's father. He works at the Ministry of Magic in the Misuse of Muggle Artifacts Division. He is a good father, calm, kind, and loyal, and he is also intrigued by muggle culture.

## **Neville Longbottom**

Neville is a friend of Harry's at school and not a stellar wizard. His parents were tortured by Bellatrix Lestrange and are now still in St. Mungo's hospital.

## **Luna Lovegood**

With her head in the clouds half the time, Luna is an outsider at Hogwarts. She is made fun of many times at school but she doesn't really care. Her father is the publisher of the Quibbler, a tabloid.

## **Ginny Weasley**

The younger sister of Ron, Ginny Weasley used to have a crush on Harry.

## **Draco Malfoy**

Draco is Harry's nemesis at school, and is a big bully. Racist against mudbloods or half bloods, he is also the seeker for the Slytherin Quidditch team.

## **Lucius Malfoy**

Lucius Malfoy is Draco's father. He is a Death Eater and loyal to Voldemort.

## **Bellatrix Lestrange**

A Death Eater and wholly loyal to Voldemort, Bellatrix is Sirius's cousin.

## **Professor Sybill Trelawney**

Professor Trelawney is the one who made the prophecy about Harry's powers. She is the Instructor of Divination at Hogwarts.



## **Mad-Eye Moody**

Mad-Eye once used to teach Defense Against the Dark Arts, and is a retired Auror. He is loyal to Dumbledore.

## **Remus Lupin**

Lupin is a werewolf and used to be good friends with Harry's father. He also once taught Defense against the Dark Arts at Hogwarts.

## **Dobby**

Dobby used to be the Malfoy House-Elf before Harry freed him. His loyalty to Harry keeps on increasing. He will hurt himself if he feels he has not done a good job.

## **Kreacher**

Kreacher is the Black House-Elf but dislikes Sirius. He is loyal to Bellatrix Lestrange and gives Harry wrong information about Sirius being at the Department of Mysteries.

## **The Dursleys (Dudley, Vernon, and Petunia)**

The Dursleys are Harry's relatives. His Aunt Petunia is related to him by blood, as she is his mother's sister. They are mean people, but the power of her blood protects Harry. They raised him until he started school at Hogwarts when he was eleven.



# Objects/Places

## The Prophecy

A glass sphere with Harry's and Voldemort's name on it, the prophecy is in two parts and foretells that either Harry will kill Voldemort, or the other way around. There is no way one can live with the other on the same earth

## Blood

Ties of family and sacrifice are very evident in this novel. Because of Lily Potter's sacrifice and love for Harry, he was saved, and he is still protected through her blood that runs in Aunt Petunia's veins. The issue of purebloods, half bloods, and mud-bloods are also further explored here. The two most powerful characters of the book are half bloods: Harry and Voldemort.

## Quidditch

The Quidditch matches are scenes that divide the Houses and also Ron's eventual triumph. When he first plays, he is ridiculed and plays badly. At the last match, he is a hero. It shows the triumph of someone who endures bullying and taunting from others to rise up and overcome.

## Department of Mysteries, Ministry of Magic

The location of Harry's recurring dreams and eventually the place of the showdown at the end of the book between Harry and Voldemort. It is where the glass spherical orbs of prophecies are kept.

## 12 Grimmauld Place

Number 12 Grimmauld Place is the ancestral home of the Black family and the current hideout of the Order of the Phoenix. It is in a sense, Sirius' prison as well because he's still on the run and thus unable to leave.

## Occlumency

Harry is taught Occlumency by Snape but does not succeed very well. It is the art of defending the mind against invasion and attack by closing it off and emptying thoughts. Harry finds out about his father bullying Snape during one of these lessons.



## **The Forbidden Forest**

Harry and Hermione lead Umbridge to the Forbidden Forest in search of Dumbledore's secret weapon that does not really exist. Centaurs are guardians of this forest and they take Umbridge away when she insults them and orders them to obey her.



# Themes

## Adulthood vs. Childhood

This novel focuses on Harry's sense of isolation as he leaves the easiness and relative safety of childhood and begins the rocky path toward adulthood. In this text, he must face the consequences of the decisions he makes, and the death of Sirius, as well as Cedric in the previous book, will weigh heavily on him. We see many situations of adulthood contrasted with youth motifs. For example, the students take their education into their own hands because the adults are not teaching them effectively. They also face the Death-Eaters on their own initially. Adults in this particular novel are seen as keepers of knowledge who refuse to dispense this knowledge to the youths. For example, Harry is constantly being given incomplete information. He is told to do things without any explanation of why. This in part contributes to the bad decisions that he makes.

## The Power of Education

Education is a critical theme in the novel, and is absolutely crucial to Harry. The book begins with a threat to Harry's education as the Ministry wants to expel him for using his magic while under aged in muggle world. This education is crucial to the development of Harry as a wizard—he has learned immensely since he began at Hogwarts, and this has empowered him to face Voldemort and survive. However, as the Ministry of Magic takes over the reins of education, we see that education can be corrupt and ineffective in the wrong hands. The students are forced to take matters into their own hands because they are not learning anything useful.

## Unification vs. Division

The students at Hogwarts are divided into Houses, and this division is emphasized with Quidditch matches and rivalry between the houses. At the beginning of the school year, the Sorting Hat sings a song to the students warning them to unite and stand together in the oncoming darkness. There are also different forms of division and isolation. For example, Hagrid has to live apart from the other wizards and does not feel at ease because he is part giant. The centaurs will not stand for others in their forest. Umbridge utilizes these divisions and forms her squad of student Inquisitors to root out people disloyal to her. At the end of the day though, the students unite in Dumbledore's Army and fight the Death Eaters together. Rowling traces this theme throughout the novel, and gives us several contrasting divisions of groups to start out, ending with the unification against Voldemort. Compared to evil, none of the other divisions that have previously separated students matter anymore.



## Truth, Knowledge and Lies

In the wizarding world, we see that untruths abound: false stories about Harry are printed and published in the papers and the scandal sheets also publish stories that have no basis in truth. Harry is also not told the truth about his scar and Dumbledore constantly gives him incomplete information despite having complete knowledge on the situation. This dichotomy serves to create a vacuum of knowledge for Harry, and he is forced to lie in many cases in order to carry out what he needs to do. For example, Hermione and he lie to Umbridge about Dumbledore's weapon in order to lure her to the forest. Knowledge is truly power in this text, and Harry is left powerless in many situations because he does not understand what is happening since the adults continue to withhold information from him.

## Loyalty

Loyalty is a recurring theme found throughout not only "Order of the Phoenix", but through the entire Harry Potter series. Harry, Hermione and Ron are completely loyal to each other, and even the Death Eaters like Bellatrix Lestrange are loyal to Voldemort. Dumbledore is in possession of strong loyalty from many wizards and students despite the Ministry of Magic and their mandates. Rowling shows us that someone like Umbridge might be given authority and power, but she does not hold the loyalty of those over whom she presides, which eventually leads to her ruin. Loyalty arises in the novel for different reasons as well. For Harry, Ron, and Hermione, loyalty comes voluntarily by way of friendship, caring for one another, and support against a great evil. Loyalty to Voldemort comes both voluntarily, by way of love of evil, power, and cruelty, and by fear of Voldemort.

## Family and Blood

Family and blood are powerful themes in the novel. It was because of Lily Potter's love and sacrifice that Harry was saved, and the power of her sacrifice lives on in her blood and her family. Even though Harry detests his Aunt and the Dursleys, the power of Aunt Petunia's blood is still strong enough to keep him safe as long as he calls her home his home as well. Ties of family prove to be strong, yet treacherous in some cases, because in the end, it is Sirius' own cousin, Bellatrix Lestrange, who kills him. Rowling also addresses issue of race with blood: There are half bloods and mud bloods. But if they are equally talented, does it matter? Not to Harry and his friends, but racists and purists like Malfoy and the Slytherins think otherwise. We have to remember also that Voldemort himself is a half-blood. What does that mean, given that pureblood racists like the Malfoys follow him? Does it make sense?



## O.W.L. Exams and Testing

The OWLS are very similar to the standardized tests in England called the “Ordinary-Level” or “O-Level” Examinations. Grueling and long, those examinations cause much stress for students in England, determining their future and what jobs they will eventually qualify for based on the subjects they take. Rowling introduces the OWLs in Harry Potter as a parallel to symbolize the stress that students are forced to endure while having to go through the angst of becoming adolescents and adults. The very fact that the OWLs are focused on book learning and are almost useless in facing Voldemort shows us that theory is not enough; practice and actual magic is needed to defeat Voldemort.



# Style

## Point of View

The novel is in third person and the narrator refrains from giving opinions outright except through the actions and thoughts of the characters. Divided in thirty-eight chapters, the book focuses on Harry Potter and to what his thoughts, actions and deeds lead. The narrator is unknown but recounts faithfully conversations and thoughts of Harry. The motivations of the other characters are not as easily discernable, and we are given insight into their thoughts only through Harry's insights. The narrator is trustworthy, and Harry's point of view is given in detail. Although Harry can be contradictory, it is not due to any fault of the narrator and must be attributed to his angst and the rashness of youth. Harry's frustrations are our own: He is trying to find out information so he can act, but he is not given any by the people he trusts. We too, because we are privy to his thoughts and feelings, feel the same way as he does.

## Setting

The novel is set in modern day wizard world and muggle world, and is predominantly England. The parallel worlds exist with the muggle world having no knowledge of the wizard world. Rowling uses locales familiar to people such as Kings Cross Station and Surrey, England, but at the same time, the world of Hogwarts and the Ministry of Magic is fantastical. In addition, at times, Harry inhabits a dream world and also sees through the eyes of Voldemort.

## Language and Meaning

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix is not a particularly difficult text to read. The language is kept simple and these books can be read by children as well as adults. Good and evil are clearly demarcated by Rowling and there is no ambiguity: Voldemort is evil, and Harry Potter is good. Names such as Malfoy and Voldemort also have deeper meaning in their roots. In Latin, Mal Foy means Bad Faith, and "mort" in Voldemort means "death" in its Latin and French roots. In contrast, Harry has a quintessential "ordinary" English name. He is your English boy next door, who has an extraordinary talent and has been chosen to defeat the world's greatest evil. Although there are various themes in the text, Rowling is very careful to keep the plot the central driver of the text. It is a commercially written text that is highly entertaining.

## Structure

The novel is the longest of the Harry Potter series. It is divided into thirty-eight chapters that revolve around Harry and his adventures and his interactions with the people and events around him. The sense of foreboding is built up in the chapters, and ends with a

showdown in the Ministry of Magic and the Department of Shadows. This was alluded to in Harry's recurring dreams and we expect the denouement of the text to climax at that particular location.



## Quotes

What d'you mean I'm not brave in bed?

I've just been attacked by dementors and I might be expelled from Hogwarts. I want to know what's going on and when I'm going to get out of here.

Don't put your wand there, boy!" roared Moody. "What if it ignited? Better wizards than you have lost buttocks, you know!

...AND I'VE HANDLED MORE THAN YOU TWO'VE EVER MANAGED AND DUMBLEDORE KNOWS IT-WHO SAVED THE SORCERER'S STONE? WHO GOT RID OF RIDDLE? WHO SAVED BOTH YOUR SKINS FROM THE DEMENTORS?

There might be a couple of people fifty miles away who didn't hear you.

But Dumbledore says he doesn't care what they do as long as they don't take him off the Chocolate Frog cards.

Oh, yes," said Luna, "I've been able to see them ever since my first day here. They've always pulled the carriages. Don't worry. You're just as sane as I am.

I have told you, I have warned you... Let the sorting now begin.

No," said Hermione calmly, "I told her to keep her big fat mouth shut about you, actually. And it would be quite a nice if you stopped jumping down Ron's and my throats, Harry, because if you haven't noticed, we're on your side.

I love hearing Mum shouting at someone else.

You should write a book, translating mad things girls do so boys can understand them.

Maybe not, but at least my happiness doesn't depend on Ron's goalkeeping ability.

WHERE HAGGER?

We can still reach him – " Harry struggled hard and viciously, but Lupin would not let go... "There's nothing you can do Harry...nothing...he's gone.

There is nothing worse than death, Dumbledore!

After that, I shall need to return to my school. If you need more help from me you are, of course, more than welcome to contact me at Hogwarts, letters addressed to the Headmaster will find me.

The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches... born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies... and the Dark Lord will mark



him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not... and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives... the one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies...

Give her hell from us, Peeves.

Harry frequently heard students saying things like, 'Honestly, some days I just feel like jumping on my broom and leaving this place,' or else, 'One more lesson like that and I might just do a Weasley.'





# Topics for Discussion

## Topic 1

There are implicit references to slavery and race throughout the text such as when Hermione wants to free the House Elves at Hogwarts who are physically bound to obey. What roles do blood and race play and is imprisonment only physical, or can it be psychological?

## Topic 2

In this text, Harry faces great disillusionment from people he revered—Dumbledore, his father, and Sirius Black. How does this shape his perceptions of that and how does this changed perception affect the decisions he makes?

## Topic 3

Liberty, Unity and Freedom are central themes in this text. How does Rowling show us the importance of uniting together and what that means for freedom? What are the historical parallels she is trying to draw with the Ministry of Magic and its refusal to acknowledge that Voldemort is back?

## Topic 4

Harry's relationship with Cho Chang fails. Does Rowling give us insight as to why? Could Harry have done anything differently?

## Topic 5

How is Harry's character shaped over the course of these thirty-eight chapters? Is he still the same person he is at the first chapter as he is at the end of the book? What has changed, and is this just a normal growing period? How is the dichotomy of adult vs. child elucidated in the text?

## Topic 6

What is the importance of family in this text? Describe and contrast the Black family with Harry's family—does this explain why Sirius and Harry get along so well?