

English Literature Activities



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Harry Potter and the Chamber of secrets

Harry looked around. One thing was certain: of all the teachers' offices Harry had visited so far this year, Dumbledore's was by far the most interesting. If he hadn't been scared out of his wits that he was about to be thrown out of school, he would have been very pleased to have a chance to look around it.

It was a large and beautiful circular room, full of funny little noises. A number of curious silver instruments stood on spindlelegged tables, whirring and emitting little puffs of smoke. The walls were covered with portraits of old headmasters and headmistresses, all of whom were snoozing gently in their frames. There was also an enormous, claw-footed desk, and, sitting on a shelf behind it, a shabby, tattered wizard's hat - the Sorting Hat. Harry hesitated. He cast a wary eye around the sleeping witches and wizards on the walls. Surely it couldn't hurt if he took the hat down and tried it on again? Just to see ... just to make sure it had put him in the right House.

He walked quietly around the desk, lifted the hat from its shelf, and lowered it slowly onto his head. It was much too large and slipped down over his eyes, just as it had done the last time he'd put it on. Harry stared at the black inside of the hat, waiting.

Then a small voice said in his ear, "Bee in your bonnet, Harry Potter?"

"Er, yes," Harry muttered. "Er - sorry to bother you - I wanted to ask -"

"You've been wondering whether I put you in the right House," said the hat smartly. "Yes ... you were particularly difficult to place. But I stand by what I said before" - Harry's heart leapt - "you would have done well in Slytherin -"

Harry's stomach plummeted. He grabbed the point of the hat and pulled it off. It hung limply in his hand, grubby and faded. Harry pushed it back onto its shelf, feeling sick.

"You're wrong," he said aloud to the still and silent hat. It didn't move.

Harry backed away, watching it. Then a strange, gagging noise behind him made him wheel around.

He wasn't alone after all. Standing on a golden perch behind the door was a decrepit-looking bird that resembled a half-plucked turkey. Harry stared



at it and the bird looked balefully back, making its gagging noise again. Harry thought it looked very ill. Its eyes were dull and, even as Harry watched, a couple more feathers fell out of its tail.

Harry was just thinking that all he needed was for Dumbledore's pet bird to die while he was alone in the office with it, when the bird burst into flames. Harry yelled in shock and backed away into the desk. He looked feverishly around in case there was a glass of water somewhere but couldn't see one; the bird, meanwhile, had become a fireball; it gave one loud shriek and next second there was nothing but a smouldering pile of ash on the floor.

The office door opened. Dumbledore came in, looking very somber.

"Professor," Harry gasped. "Your bird - I couldn't do anything - he just caught fire -"

To Harry's astonishment, Dumbledore smiled. "About time, too," he said. "He's been looking dreadful for days; I've been telling him to get a move on." He chuckled at the stunned look on Harry's face. "Fawkes is a phoenix, Harry. Phoenixes burst into flame when it is time for them to die and are reborn from the ashes. Watch him . . ."

Harry looked down in time to see a tiny, wrinkled, newborn bird poke its head out of the ashes.



Now pretend you are Harry and you want to narrate this experience to your friend Ron in a message. Write what happened in only 5 lines:



Have you seen any of the Harry Potter films? If yes, what are the things you like about them? If not, what have you heard about them? You can watch the trailer of this one here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bq0qff4iF8>





Read the text about the writer's life and answer the questions that follow:

J.K. Rowling is a highly acclaimed British author, best known for creating the **Harry Potter** series. She was born on July 31, 1965, in Yate, Gloucestershire, England. From a young age, Rowling had a passion for reading and writing, often creating stories about imaginary characters. After completing her education at the University of Exeter, she worked in various jobs, including as a teacher and a researcher, but her dream was always to become a writer.



The idea for Harry Potter came to Rowling during a train journey from Manchester to London in 1990. Over the next several years, she developed the story of a young boy who discovers he is a wizard and is invited to attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The first book, "*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*," was published in 1997 and quickly became a worldwide sensation.

The Harry Potter series consists of seven books, each chronicling Harry's adventures as he learns magic, makes friends, and battles the dark wizard Voldemort. Throughout the series, themes of friendship, bravery, and the struggle between good and evil are explored. The characters are richly developed, with Harry, Hermione Granger, and Ron Weasley forming a close-knit group that faces various challenges together.

Rowling faced numerous rejections from publishers before finally finding one willing to publish her first book. Her perseverance paid off, as the series garnered immense popularity, winning numerous awards and breaking sales records. The books have been translated into over 80 languages and have sold more than 500 million copies worldwide, making Rowling one of the best-selling authors in history.

In addition to the books, the Harry Potter series has been adapted into a successful film franchise, starting with the first movie in 2001. The films brought the magic of Rowling's world to life, introducing the story to an even larger audience. Theme parks, video games, and a stage play, "*Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*," further expanded the Harry Potter universe, allowing fans to immerse themselves in the world of wizards.

Despite her success, Rowling has faced challenges, including personal struggles and controversies. Nevertheless, she continues to write and has expanded her literary portfolio with works for adults, including novels like "*The Casual Vacancy*" and the *Cormoran Strike* detective series under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith.

Today, J.K. Rowling is not only celebrated for her literary achievements but also for her philanthropic efforts. She has donated millions to various charities, including her charity, *Lumos*, which supports disadvantaged children around the world. Rowling's journey from a struggling writer to a global phenomenon is an inspiring story of determination and creativity, making her a significant figure in modern literature.

1 What was Rowling's passion from a young age?

2 How did the idea for Harry Potter come to her?

3 What are some of the main themes explored in the series?

4 What difficulties did Rowling face before achieving success?

5 What do you think makes the Harry Potter series so appealing to readers of all ages?



If you could create your own character in the Harry Potter universe, what would they be like? Describe this character's appearance, their personality and their magic abilities in a paragraph:





Read the text about "The Chamber of secrets" and do the vocabulary exercise that follows:

In "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," Harry returns to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry for his second year. He quickly discovers that strange events are occurring at the school. Students are mysteriously being petrified, and whispers of the Chamber of Secrets—a hidden room within Hogwarts—start to circulate.

As Harry, along with his friends Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley, investigates the mystery, they learn that the Chamber is said to house a terrible monster. With the help of a strange diary that belonged to Tom Riddle, a former student, Harry uncovers the truth about the Chamber and its connection to his own past and legacy.

The climax occurs when Harry confronts the monster, a basilisk, deep within the Chamber. He bravely battles the creature and saves Ginny Weasley, who has been taken by the monster. In the end, Harry learns about the power of friendship and courage while also understanding that he is not defined by his lineage. This adventure strengthens his bonds with his friends and deepens his connection to the wizarding world.

Match the words to their definitions on the right

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Chamber | ...A large, frightening creature, often found in stories and legends. |
| 2. Petrified | ...A secret or unknown situation that needs to be solved. |
| 3. Mystery | ...A place where someone or something is confined or hidden. |
| 4. Monster | ...To face or deal with a difficult situation. |
| 5. Confront | ...A mythical snake that can cause death with its gaze. |
| 6. Basilisk | ...A strong feeling of bravery to face fear or danger. |
| 7. Courage | ...To be turned into stone or unable to move, often due to fear. |
| 8. Legacy | ...Something passed down from previous generations |



Would you like to have magical powers? What would you like to do if this were possible?



Biographical Text

1 What was Rowling's passion from a young age?

From a young age, Rowling had a passion for reading and writing, often creating stories about imaginary characters.

2 How did the idea for Harry Potter come to her?

The idea for Harry Potter came to Rowling during a train journey from Manchester to London in 1990.

3 What are some of the main themes explored in the series?

Throughout the series, themes of friendship, bravery, and the struggle between good and evil are explored.

4 What difficulties did Rowling face before achieving success?

Rowling faced numerous rejections from publishers before finally finding one willing to publish her first book. Also, she faced personal struggles and controversies.

5 What do you think makes the Harry Potter series so appealing to readers of all ages?

Vocabulary exercise about the book:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1 Chamber | 4...A large, frightening creature, often found in stories and legends. |
| 2 Petrified | 3...A secret or unknown situation that needs to be solved. |
| 3 Mystery | 1...A place where someone or something is confined or hidden. |
| 4 Monster | 5...To face or deal with a difficult situation. |
| 5 Confront | 6...A mythical snake that can cause death with its gaze. |
| 6 Basilisk | 7...A strong feeling of bravery to face fear or danger. |
| 7 Courage | 2...To be turned into stone or unable to move, often due to fear. |
| 8 Legacy | 8...Something passed down from previous generations |



The book

[Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets](#) is a [fantasy novel](#) written by British author [J. K. Rowling](#) and the second novel in the [Harry Potter](#) series. The plot follows [Harry](#)'s second year at [Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry](#), during which a series of messages on the walls of the school's corridors warn that the "[Chamber of Secrets](#)" has been opened and that the "heir of [Slytherin](#)" would kill all pupils who do not come from all-magical families. These threats are found after attacks that leave residents of the school petrified. Throughout the year, Harry and his friends [Ron](#) and [Hermione](#) investigate the attacks. (information from [Wikipedia](#)).

The film

[Harry Potter and the Chamber of secrets](#) (is a 2002 [fantasy film](#) directed by [Chris Columbus](#) from a screenplay by [Steve Kloves](#). It is based on the 1998 novel [Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets](#) by [J. K. Rowling](#). Produced by [David Heyman](#), it is the [sequel](#) to [Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone](#) (2001) and the second instalment in the [Harry Potter film series](#). The film stars [Daniel Radcliffe](#) as [Harry Potter](#), with [Rupert Grint](#) and [Emma Watson](#) as his best friends [Ron Weasley](#) and [Hermione Granger](#) respectively. The story follows Harry's second year at [Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry](#), where the Heir of [Salazar Slytherin](#) opens the [Chamber of Secrets](#), unleashing a monster that [petrifies](#) the school's students. (information from [Wikipedia](#)).

If you are a fan of the Harry Potter universe, you could check out this site:

<https://www.wizardingworld.com/>

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