

ABOUT THE HARRY POTTER BOOKS AND THIS GUIDE

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

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

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











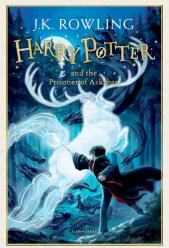




HARRY POTTER and the Prisoner of Azkaban

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION TO HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN



The wizarding world is concerned for Harry Potter's safety when Sirius Black, an escapee from the prison of Azkaban, is believed to be hunting him. Dementors (Azkaban guards) are stationed around Hogwarts as the term begins, and Harry experiences an overwhelming sense of despair and blacks out whenever they are near him. The new Defence Against the Dark Arts teacher, Remus Lupin, takes a special interest in Harry, as does the Divination teacher, Sybill Trelawney, who seems determined to predict his early death.

Harry learns more about his father's career at Hogwarts, and many of his father's friends from that time come forward to help him: Lupin, who has a deep secret, and Sirius Black, who was wrongly imprisoned and is actually Harry's godfather, are the allies who save Harry from the real traitor, Peter Pettigrew.

Hermione's secret Time-Turner, which has allowed her to attend more than the usual load of classes, becomes a key to helping Sirius escape capture, and Harry learns one of the most valuable spells of all: how to invoke the Patronus Charm that allows him to banish Dementors, and his own deepest fears.





DISCUSSION POINTS FOR HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

What does Aunt Marge say that provokes Harry to risk using magic outside of school (Chapter 2, 'Aunt Marge's Big Mistake')? Why does he react so hastily and storm out of the house? How has Harry's attitude changed toward his relatives?

Pottermore Tie-In: Moment 1, Chapter 2. Go to www.pottermore.com

- Why does the Minister for Magic take a personal interest in Harry's welfare when he arrives at the Leaky Cauldron, and why does this surprise Harry (Chapter 4, 'The Leaky Cauldron')?
- Why do the Dementors affect Harry so strongly? Discuss their method of controlling the prisoners in Azkaban. Why is Dumbledore opposed to the Ministry's use of Dementors? What is the effect of the Dementor's Kiss?
- Harry and his friends have three new teachers this year. Compare what they learn in Hagrid's Care of Magical Creatures class, Lupin's Defence Against the Dark Arts class and Trelawney's Divination class. What are the skills that each teacher brings to his or her subject, and what skills do the students learn best from each of them?

Pottermore Tie-In: Moments 2 and 3, Chapter 6, and Moment 1. Chapter 7. Go to www.pottermore.com





DISCUSSION POINTS FOR HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

- Why is Scabbers a good name for Ron's rat? Why is a rat a suitable animal form for Pettigrew to assume? Discuss how all the Animagus forms suit their characters: Prongs, Padfoot and Wormtail. How does an Animagus differ from a werewolf?
- What does the word Patronus suggest? Why does the Patronus only appear if you are concentrating very hard on a happy thought? Why is each one 'unique to the wizard who conjures it' (Chapter 12, 'The Patronus', p. 252)? For Harry to summon his Patronus, he tries several memories. What do we learn about Harry's character during this process? Which memory from your own life could you use to summon a Patronus?
- Discuss the feelings that Harry has when he discovers the truth about Sirius Black in Chapter 19, 'The Servant of Lord Voldemort'. Why does Harry stop Sirius and Lupin from killing Pettigrew? Why did Harry's attitude change from his earlier wish to hunt down Sirius Black for revenge?
- Why is Snape so unwilling to hear anything good about Sirius Black or Lupin? Why does he continue to be mean to Harry, Ron and Hermione?
- Why is the Time-Turner necessary in helping Sirius escape? Why is it so important that Harry and Hermione not be seen when they go back in time?

Pottermore Tie-In: Moment 1, Chapter 21. Go to www.pottermore.com



DISCUSSION POINTS FOR HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

Consider some of the new names in this book and discuss what the names suggest about the characters: Cornelius Fudge, Sirius Black, Remus Lupin, Wormtail (Peter Pettigrew), Sybill Trelawney.

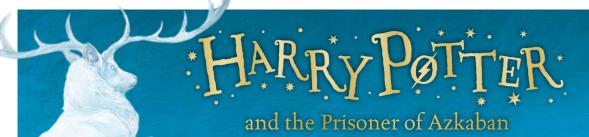
IN DEPTH

PRISON

Sirius Black has been a prisoner in Azkaban for twelve years. Peter Pettigrew has spent those years hiding in the body of a rat. How have these years affected each of them? How did Sirius survive in Azkaban and how was he able to escape? What does this tell us about his character? Is innocence a form of protection?

7 FEARS

A recurring theme in the Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban and the other books in the series is how we deal with our fears. What does Lupin's lesson on Boggarts in Chapter 7 teach about how to face our deepest fears? Discuss with your group what their greatest fears are and how they would apply humour to the image, to make the thing they fear less frightening. When Harry reveals his object of fear would be a Dementor, Lupin tells Harry: 'What you fear most of all is – fear.' (Chapter 8, 'Flight of the Fat Lady', p. 164) What



DISCUSSION POINTS FOR HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

does this mean? What strategies in real life do children in your group use to cope with their fears? How easy is it to overcome them?

3 MEMORIES AND LOSS

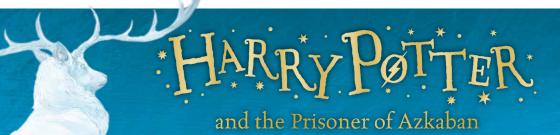
Harry's yearning for his lost parents is one of the major themes in this book and across the series. Just before the end of the book, when Harry tells Dumbledore he imagined he saw his father by the lake, the headmaster tells Harry: 'you did see your father last night, Harry ... you found him inside yourself.' (Chapter 22, 'Owl Post Again', p. 454) What does this mean? What does Harry learn about his father in this book? Lupin tells Harry, 'James would have been highly disappointed if his son had never found any of the secret passages out of the castle.' (p. 451) How is Harry similar and different to his father?

FORESHADOWING

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban is full of surprises, but J.K. Rowling often drops clues to what is going to happen later in the book.

Did children pick up on any of these clues? Use

Lupin's identity as a werewolf as an example. There are several things that foreshadow this – how many can the group think of? Are there any other episodes in the book that foretell something to come?

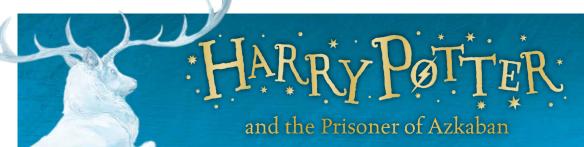


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5 MAGICAL OBJECTS

In this book we see the characters make use of many new magical objects: Hermione comes up with a plan to save both Sirius and Buckbeak, which involves turning back time using a Time-Turner; the Knight Bus is a magical vehicle that arrives to pick up Harry; and the Marauder's Map is a piece of advanced and inventive magic used throughout the story. Such magical objects and devices are each used for good or simple mischief throughout the series. Which was your favourite magical object or device in this book and in the series? Discuss how you think they impact the story?





ACTIVITY AND PROJECT IDEAS

CREATIVE WRITING

OBJECTIVE

To write a diary entry based on a school of your own creation

UK CURRICULUM AREAS

English, Art and Design

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Practise and improve creative writing

START POINT

Explain that each member of the group will need to write a diary entry as if they are attending a school of their own creation.

MAIN ACTIVITY

- Create a template for the diary, with space at the top for child's name and several blank journal-style spaces for each entry. There is no set word limit, but allow space for a long single paragraph for each record.
- 2. Explain the concept of a diary and discuss what they are used for; perhaps some children might keep one already and can say a little about it.
- 3. Outline the task to produce a diary entry as if the child is attending a school of their own creation. Ask them to describe where the school would be, what their daily schedule would entail, what their favourite subject would be and so on? Write a



ACTIVITY AND PROJECT IDEAS

short description, in the first person, of how a series of life-changing events might unfold.

Decorate the journal with sketches that reflect the scenes from the diary. Some children might like to adopt an animated approach to writing the diary, using cartoon-style illustrations in boxes and speech bubbles to convey events and feelings.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Assess each diary and then start a group discussion about the experience of writing them. What did they enjoy about writing a diary? Would they like to keep one of their own now?

FOUR MORE ACTIVITIES

TEST YOUR HARRY POTTER KNOWLEDGE

Divide the group into four teams and ask each to produce a list of ten questions about Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, each with a choice of three multiple-choice answers. Then get each group in turn to read out their questions, with the other three writing down their answers. Once complete, all groups should have thirty answers. Repeat with the answers and find the winning team.

WRITE A HARRY POTTER HAIKU

Explain the concept of a haiku – a short and non-rhyming



ACTIVITY AND PROJECT IDEAS

three-line poem with five syllables on the first line, seven on the second and five on the third. Then get each member of the group to write their own, writing some original text that summarises or interprets a scene. Discuss what they think of haikus. How easy or difficult are they to write? How do they sound when read aloud?

- **2** CHARACTER 'HOT SEAT'
 - Get the children to think of their favourite character from Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban and prepare a few things to say about him or her what their role is in the book, what is likeable or dislikeable about them and so on. Each child then takes a turn in a 'hot seat' in front of the group, first talking for a minute and then answering any questions that others fire at them.
- ↑ PRODUCE A WORD SEARCH

Draw up templates of word search sheets measuring ten blank squares by ten. Get each child to produce a list of about ten characters or key words from Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban and fit them all into the word search, running vertically, horizontally or diagonally. Swap the finished sheets around so children can complete one another's.