



Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone Discussion Guide

GRADES 4 - 8

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Harry is an orphan whose parents were killed before the story begins, and the book has frightening moments (a dark forest, a slain creature, a menacing villain). Preview these for readers who may find them upsetting.
- Frontload vocabulary with the [Vocabulary Guide](#).

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

Chapters 1 - 4

- How do the Dursleys treat Harry differently from Dudley? Use his cupboard, his clothes, and his birthdays as evidence.
- The letters keep arriving no matter what Uncle Vernon does. What does his reaction show about what he's trying to hide?
- When Hagrid says "yer a wizard, Harry," how does Harry's view of himself begin to shift?
- The author waits four chapters before Harry learns the truth. How does that delay change how you feel as a reader?

Chapters 5 - 7

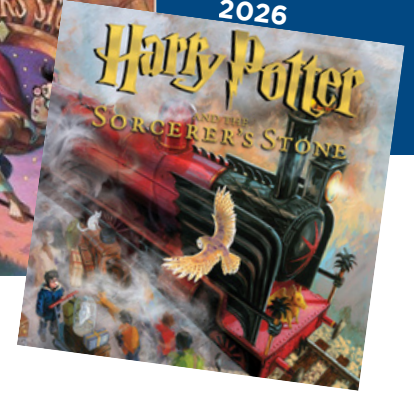
- In Diagon Alley, Harry discovers he's famous. Why might that feel more uncomfortable than exciting to him?
- What clues in Ollivander's shop hint that Harry and the villain are connected?
- The Sorting Hat nearly picks Slytherin but chooses Gryffindor because Harry asks it to. What does this suggest about the difference between who we are and what we choose?
- Compare Harry's first meeting with Draco to how he clicks with Ron. What makes Harry choose Ron?

Chapters 8 - 11

- Snape is cold to Harry from the first Potions lesson. List the evidence that makes Harry suspect him — then name what the book leaves out.
- After the troll, Hermione lies to protect Harry and Ron. Why is this the turning point in their friendship?
- Someone jinxes Harry's broom during the match. Whom do the characters blame, and why is that a reasonable guess even if it turns out wrong?
- What do Harry's choices so far show about the kind of person he is becoming?

Chapters 12 - 14

- The Mirror of Erised shows Harry his parents. Dumbledore warns it can trap people. What is the mirror really revealing about whoever looks into it?
- How do Harry, Ron, and Hermione each contribute to uncovering who Nicolas Flamel is? Give one strength for each.
- Hagrid's wish for a dragon lands the friends in trouble. What does this reveal about Hagrid and about loyalty?



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During Reading Cont: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

Chapters 15 - 17

- In the forest, the friends find a slain unicorn and a hooded figure. How does the author build fear without showing everything?
- Passing the trapdoor takes different talents — logic, flying, chess, courage. Match each obstacle to the friend whose strength solves it.
- The villain is the one character no one suspected. Look back: what clues were there all along, and what pulled your suspicion the wrong way?
- Dumbledore says love is what protected Harry. How does that explain the ending, and what is the book saying about where real power comes from?

After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- Harry begins believing he's ordinary and unwanted. Trace how his idea of himself changes by the end, and name the events that change it.
- The book keeps returning to choices — the Sorting, friendship, facing the villain. What is it saying about choices versus abilities?
- In a few sentences, explain how one small clue from early in the book turns out to matter at the end.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.