***Harry Potter Chambers of Secret***

***Themes and characters***

**Characters**

**Harry Potter**

Harry is the main character and hero in the novel. He is an orphan. His parents were killed when Harry was only a baby while they were trying to save him from the evil Voldemort. Some of Voldemort's magical powers transferred to Harry when Voldemort was killed, leaving a lightning-shaped scar on Harry's forehead. He lives with the Dursleys during the school holidays. They are related to him through his mother's side of the family but don't treat Harry as family. He is blamed for everything that goes wrong in the house and treated as an inferior. Harry is happiest at Hogwarts, where he can practice magic and be with his friends.

Harry's magical power is renowned after he defeats Voldemort for a second time in his first year at Hogwarts. Harry has concerns about his powers, and fears that he may have been influenced by the dark side. He questions the Sorting Hat about his rightful place in the schoolhouses, but the Hat is still adamant that Harry would do well in Slytherin, the house associated with the dark side. His fears are increased when he learns that he speaks a different language, known as Parseltongue, when he speaks to snakes. Harry didn't realize that this was a very rare ability and is worried to find that it is connected to the dark side, with the only other pupil who has been able to speak Parseltongue being Voldemort, the evil heir to Slytherin. He is assured by Dumbledore that his fears are unfounded. Dumbledore tells Harry that it's his actions that reveal his true personality, nothing else, and as Harry defeats Voldemort again, this time using Godric Gryffindor's sword, it is obvious to Harry that he is not a dark wizard. Harry is a loyal friend and, despite his magical talent, is a modest character. This makes him easy to like and identify with.

**Ron Weasely**

Ron is Harry's best friend. His red hair easily identifies him; a characteristic he shares with the rest of his large family. Ron has five older brothers and a younger sister. Money is a problem for the family, as Mr. Weasley's wages don't go very far with so many children to look after. As a result of this, Ron wears his brothers' hand-me-down clothes and often has second-hand school books and equipment; something that Draco Malfoy often teases him about.

Ron is fiercely proud of his family and defends them when Draco teases him. His loyalty is a strong characteristic and is seen repeatedly throughout the novel. He rescues Harry at the start of the novel, after Mr. Dursley has locked him in his upper-story room. He takes him home for the rest of the holidays and, despite having no money, the Weasleys look after Harry, too. Ron's loyalty can also be seen when he agrees to help Harry solve the mystery of the Chamber of Secrets. He is brave as he faces his fears to help his friends; a good example of this is when he faces the giant spiders in the forbidden forest; since spiders are one of Ron's greatest fears.

**Hermione Granger**

Hermione is the other character closest to Harry and Ron. She is the brightest student in her year and one of the most intelligent students to have attended Hogwarts. She constantly has her nose in a book and, when faced with a problem, goes to the library to find the solution. In *The Chamber of Secrets*, Hermione researches a transforming potion that allows them to investigate Draco Malfoy. Unfortunately, a cat hair is mixed up in the potion, causing Hermione's transformation to go wrong. She is a victim of the Basilisk, being petrified while trying to solve the problem, leaving Ron and Harry to solve the problem without her.

She is Muggle born to human parents with no magical powers. Draco torments her because she is not pure blooded and frequently insults her. Ron and Harry are defensive of Hermione, not that she needs it, being a very independent character capable of standing up for herself. United the three friends present a powerful front that Draco's comments aren't able to destroy.

**Albus Dumbledore**

Dumbledore is the headmaster at Hogwarts. "Albus Dumbledore is the greatest Headmaster Hogwarts has ever had." He is a great and powerful wizard who doesn't abuse his power. Dumbledore is symbolic of the power of good magic and when he is made to step down, it seems as if the dark side is winning. However, his return to power shows that the power of good is stronger than that of evil.

**Voldemort/Tom Marvolo Riddle**

Lord Voldemort is the evil dark lord of magic whose name must not be mentioned because he is so dangerous. Voldemort reappears in the Chamber of Secrets as an ex -pupil of Hogwarts, Tom Riddle. Tom Riddle used to be Head Boy at Hogwarts and was given an award for bravery when the chamber was last opened. He was part Muggle with a human father and a witch for a mother. He was orphaned as a child and grew up amongst Muggles. He became evil when he left Hogwarts and transformed himself into Lord Voldemort, a terrifying and intimidating wizard. Voldemort preserves Tom Riddle in an enchanted diary that is found by Ron and Harry in Moaning Myrtle's toilets. In this diary, he describes how he caught the person who opened the chamber last time, and tries to convince Harry that Hagrid is responsible for the recent attacks. He also enchants Ginny with the diary, using her as a vehicle for his evil attacks. Harry, at the end of the novel, discovers Voldemort's disguise, and his true identity as heir of Slytherin is revealed. Voldemort attempts to kill Harry but is unsuccessful, with good once again succeeding over evil.

**Rubeus Hagrid**

Employed as the Gamekeeper at Hogwarts. Hagrid is half giant and one of Harry's best friends. We first meet Hagrid in Chapter 4 when he finds Harry, who is lost, and shows him the way to Diagon Alley. Later in the novel, we are lead to believe that Hagrid was responsible for opening the Chamber of Secrets the first time, for which he was expelled from Hogwarts. He is suspected of opening the Chamber again and is sent to Azkaban by the governors of the school.

**Professor Severus Snape**

Teaches potions at Hogwarts and is Harry's least favorite teacher. In charge of the Slytherin house. He dislikes Harry as much as Harry dislikes him. He constantly seeks ways to punish Harry but hasn't succeeded in getting Harry expelled despite his best efforts.

**Dobby**

A house elf that helps Harry. He has large ears, bulbous eyes and a long thin nose. He speaks in a high-pitched voice and wears cast-off clothing. He works in the Malfoy household and can only be released by being given a piece of clothing. We first encounter Dobby in Chapter 2 when he visits Harry to warn him that his life is in danger. Dobby reappears on several occasions in the novel, as he attempts to save Harry's life. Through Dobby, we learn that Lucius Malfoy is responsible for helping Voldemort return to Hogwarts. Dobby is freed at the end of the novel when Harry tricks Lucius into giving Dobby a sock. For this, Dobby will be eternally grateful to Harry.

**Ginny Weasley**

Ron's younger sister. New to Hogwarts, in her first year. She is infatuated with Harry. Ginny keeps all her secrets in a little black diary that, unbeknownst to her, belongs to Voldemort. The evil diary enchants her, and her involvement with Voldemort nearly leads to her death.

**Gilderoy Lockhart**

Defense Against The Dark Arts teacher at Hogwarts. Famous for his daring achievements against the Dark Arts, he is keen for publicity at every opportunity, posing for photo shoots and telling everyone how great he thinks he is. His bluff is called when he is needed to solve the riddle of the Chamber of Secrets as he prepares to run away. In the end, he is defeated by one of his own memory charms.

**Professor Minerva McGonagall**

Female professor responsible for the Gryffindor house and teacher of transfiguration. She leads the school in Dumbledore's absence, trying to retain a sense of normality.

**Draco Malfoy**

A pupil at Hogwarts in the Slytherin house. Harry's enemy. Through his underhanded ways, he becomes a Seeker for the Slytherin team. Draco is Professor Snape's favorite pupil, and Snape is as nice to him as he is nasty to Harry. Draco takes every opportunity to be horrible to Harry and tease him. He is proud of his father being evil, and boasts about secret Dark Arts objects hidden in his home. Little does he know that Harry and Ron hear this when they are disguised as Crabbe and Goyle, saving the information for use at a later date.

**Mr. Vernon Dursley**

Harry Potter's uncle. Vernon is a large, overweight man with a moustache. He doesn't like Harry and is wary of his magical skills. He treats Harry extremely badly in comparison to his son Dudley, on whom he dotes.

**Mrs. Petunia Dursley**

Harry Potter's Aunt. Petunia is the sister of Harry's dead mother. Petunia and Vernon Dursley are raising Harry, as there are no other known relations. A thin woman who constantly worries about what people think, she is terrified of Harry's magical powers getting out of control.

**Dudley Dursley**

Harry's cousin. Although Harry and Dudley are cousins, they are completely opposite in character and physique. Dursley is blond and extremely plump; he is spoilt by his parents and always gets his own way. He is sly and sneaky, often telling tales on Harry and running to his parents when he feels threatened by Harry.

**Mr. and Mrs. Mason**

Business associates of Mr. Dursley.

**Fred and George Weasley**

Ron's brothers, older than him and twins, they share the same red hair as Ron and have an appetite for mischief and adventure.

**Percy Weasley**

Ron's brother and a prefect at Hogwarts.

**Mr. Arthur Weasely**

Ron's father, who works at the Ministry of Magic in the "Misuse of Muggle Artifacts" office.

**Mrs. Molly Weasley**

Ron's mother, a small, plump woman who, despite her size, keeps her large family under control.

**Bill and Charlie Weasley**

Ron's oldest brothers, who have left Hogwarts. Charlie studies dragons and Bill works for Gringotts Bank.

**Lucius Malfoy**

A powerful wizard who used to support Voldemort, he now works for the Ministry of Magic and is father to Draco. He looks down on Mr. Weasley because the Weasleys aren't rich like he is. He tries his best throughout the novel to defeat Dumbledore, helping Voldemort to access the school.

**Cornelius Fudge**

The Minister of Magic.

Godric Gryffindor, Helga Hufflepuff, Rowena Ravenclaw, and Salazar Slytherin

Co-founders of Hogwarts.

**Professor Sprout**

Professor of Herbology at Hogwarts.

**Professor Dippet**

Head teacher when Tom Riddle was a pupil at Hogwarts.

**Mr. Filch**

Caretaker at Hogwarts.

**Madame Pomfrey**

Matron in school sanatorium.

**Madam Hooch**

Quidditch teacher.

**Professor Flitwick**

Teacher at Hogwarts.

**Neville Longbottom**

Pupil in Harry's year and house.

**Ernie Macmillan**

Pupil in Hufflepuff who suspected Harry of being the heir of Slytherin.

**Colin Creevey**

Pupil at Hogwarts in Gryffindor. A big fan of Harry's, he follows him everywhere, taking photographs until he is the second victim to be petrified.

**Justin Finch-Fletchley**

Muggle-born pupil in Hufflepuff. Harry saves Justin from being attacked by a snake. Third victim to be petrified.

**Oliver Wood**

Captain of the Gryffindor Quidditch team.

**Marcus Flint**

Captain of the Slytherin Quidditch team.

**Millicent Bulstrode**

Slytherin pupil who was Hermione's dueling partner and whom Hermione tried to transform herself into.

**Lee Jordan**

Friend of the Weasley twins.

**Crabbe and Goyle**

Friends of Draco. Harry and Ron transform into these characters when they go undercover to see if Draco is the heir to Slytherin.

**Muggles**

People with no magical blood in their veins.

**Mudblood**

An insulting term to someone who is Muggle-born.

**Squib**

A person born into a wizard family with no magic powers.

**Parselmouth**

A person who can talk to snakes.

**Nearly Headless Nick**

Ghost that haunts Gryffindor tower. Fourth victim to be petrified by the Basilisk.

**Peeves**

School poltergeist.

**Moaning Myrtle**

Ghost that haunts the girls' toilets in Hogwarts. Original victim of the Basilisk.

**The Fat Lady**

Animated portrait that controls entrance to the Gryffindor common room

**Aragog**

Huge spider that lives in the forbidden forest. Believed to have been the original monster in the Chamber of Secrets and the reason why Hagrid was expelled from Hogwarts when the chamber was opened initially.

**The Basilisk**

Giant serpent responsible for the attacks. Those who look into its eyes are killed instantly.

**Hedwig**

Harry's pet owl.

**Scabbers**

Ron's pet rat.

**Errol**

Owl belonging to the Weasley family.

**Fang**

Hagrid's dog.

**Mrs. Norris**

Mr. Filch's cat. First of the Basilisk's victims.

**Fawkes**

Dumbledore's pet bird, a magical phoenix with healing powers. Fawkes rescues Harry in the Chamber of Secret by bringing him the magical Sorting Hat, pecking the Basilisk's eyes out and healing Harry's wound with its tears.

**Fluffy**

Dog with three heads that used to belong to Hagrid

**Objects/Places**

**Ravenclaw**

School house at Hogwarts

**Hufflepuff**

School house at Hogwarts

The forbidden forest

Forest that surrounds and protects Hogwarts

**The Chamber of Secrets**

Underground cavern hidden beneath Hogwarts

The cupboard under the stairs

A cupboard located in the Dursleys' house, under the stairs. This used to be Harry's bedroom and is now used by Mr. Dursley to hide all of Harry's magical possessions.

The Ministry of Magic

Ministry that controls all rules and regulations related to magic.

**Ottery St Catch Pole**

Village where Ron's family live

**The Burrow**

Family home of the Weasleys.

**Diagon Alley**

Street in London that is not visible to Muggles. Shops in this street sell magical items to wizards and witches.

**Knockturn Alley**

Street near Diagon Alley.

**The Leaky Cauldron**

An inn popular among wizards and witches in Diagon Alley.

**Flourish and Botts**

Bookshop in Diagon Alley.

**Azkaban**

Prison for wizards.

**The Great Hall**

Majestic hall in Hogwarts where the sorting takes place each year. It has a fantastic ceiling that mirrors the sky. It is not only used for celebrations and grand occasions; the pupils use this room daily at meal times.

**The Whomping Willow**

A large willow tree at Hogwarts whose dangerous branches wave wildly and trap careless people.

**Platform Nine and Three Quarters**

Platform at King's Cross Station, London. Located between Platform Nine and Ten, unseen to the Muggle eye, this is the platform that the Hogwarts Express leaves from to take pupils back to Hogwarts.

**Hogwarts Express**

Train that takes pupils to Hogwarts.

**The flying car**

Used by Ron and the twins in Chapter 2 to rescue Harry.

**O.W.L.s**

Acronym for exams taken by wizards. "Ordinary Wizard Levels."

**Gringotts Bank**

The wizards' bank.

**Galleons, Sickles and Knuts**

Denominations of Wizard money.

**The Daily Prophet**

Wizard newspaper.

Quidditch

A popular game at Hogwarts, played on broomsticks; there are two teams of seven players, with four balls and six goal posts.

Nimbus 2000

Harry's previously top-of-the-range broomstick.

Nimbus 2001

New range of broomstick. Lucius Malfoy buys every member of the Slytherin Quidditch team one, in return for them accepting his son Draco on the team.

**Floo powder**

Powder used to transport wizards from place to place via fireplaces.

**The Sorting Hat**

Magical hat placed on the head of new pupils at Hogwarts. Used at the start of each year in the Sorting Ceremony, this hat determines which schoolhouse a pupil will be placed in.

**Howler**

A lettter that shouts and screams. Usually sent to express displeasure with the recipient.

**Mandrakes**

Plants with magical properties, grown for their healing properties and studied in Herbology.

**Cornish Pixies**

Blue pixies studied in Defense Against The Dark Arts.

**The Golden Snitch**

A ball that flies at alarming speeds and is hard to catch. It is the role of the Seeker to catch the snitch .The game of Quidditch is won instantly if either Seeker catches the Snitch; Harry is the Seeker for Gryffindor.

**Quaffle and Bludgers**

Balls used in the game of Quidditch.

**Pepperup Potion**

Potion used by Madam Pomfrey.

**Polyjuice Potion**

Potion that transforms the person who drinks it into someone else.

**Moste Potente Potions**

Magical book.

**Skele-Grow**

Potion used to grow bones.

**Bicorn Horn & Boomslang Skin**

Rare objects used in the Polyjuice Potion.

**Magic Diary**

Found in Moaning Myrtle's toilets. Holds secrets and records about the last time the chamber was opened.

**Invisibility Cloak**

Magic cloak belonging to Harry. The cloak used to belong to his father, and whoever wears the cloak is invisible.

**Godric Gryffindor's Sword**

Sword used by Harry to defeat the Basilisk.

**Setting**

Most of the action in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets occurs at Hogwarts during the years 1992 and 1993. The realism of the non-magical Muggle world, particularly the Dursleys' home, dramatically contrasts with the fantastical possibilities presented at Hogwarts where the medieval castle's structure is constantly changing to accommodate its inhabitants. While the stone walls symbolize strength, the castle's inner mazes and secret passages hint at complexities that are often hidden to casual observers. People and places are either mortal or magical, with both spheres intersecting along significant peripheral junctures such as King's Cross station and the Leaky Cauldron. Rowling's imaginary settings, whether boring Muggle houses or intriguing magical realms, are vividly depicted, making Harry Potter's environment seem plausible to readers. Rowling intersperses real geographical places with make-believe sites to increase the believability of her fantasy world.

Harry's movement between Muggle and magical settings signals the beginning and conclusion of his annual adventures. Harry loathes the Dursleys' Privet Drive house in the fictional town of Little Whinging which is located in the factual English county of Surrey. Harry's Muggle home is like a prison; the windows in his room are barred.

Ironically, despite Harry's derision for his repulsive, parsimonious guardians, he is safer at their house than he is at Hogwarts, which serves a dual role as sanctuary and battlezone. Both settings test Harry's integrity and maturity. The Dursleys' home is an incubator, where his magic is dormant during his childhood. Hogwarts stimulates Harry's supernatural powers to emerge.

Harry attends Hogwarts in northern Scotland from September to June, enjoying the school's abundances and creativity as compared to the limitations and dreariness of his unimaginative Muggle home. His personality metamorphoses when he moves between the two settings, gradually gaining self-confidence at Hogwarts. The barren Dursley home stifles Harry, while Hogwarts gives birth to his potential and invigorates him. The Chamber of Secrets is the most significant setting within Hogwarts.

It is similar to an Egyptian tomb with snakewrapped stone pillars and a giant statue of a wizard. Like a womb, it nourishes the fledgling Harry and protects and strengthens him as he expands emotionally and spiritually to become autonomous. The chamber is also like a dangerous cave or mine that smothers or collapses anyone inside it. The dungeon where Nearly Headless Nick's Deathday Party is held foreshadows Harry's later descent into a metaphorical Hades.

Harry and Hogwarts symbiotically preserve each other from destruction and nurture each other to grow. Surrounded by the Forbidden Forest, home to centaurs and unicorns, Hogwarts sits on a cliff above a large lake that rests above the subterranean chamber, insulating it from external interference. Lacking technology, Hogwarts is self sufficient, isolating itself like an island which can only be reached by the Hogwarts Express and magic.

The Gryffindor and Slytherin common rooms are pivotal to plot development and symbolize the characteristics of each house.

The noble Gryffindors live in a tower, while the vile Slytherins live in a dungeon much like the classroom of their faculty sponsor, the bitter potions master Severus Snape.

Harry shares his dormitory with four boys; he considers the turret room his home and resolves some of the puzzles that confound him, such as deciphering Tom Riddle's diary, in that sheltered space. House membership represents characters' traits and motives, initiating conflicts that propel plots forward.

The Quidditch field is a sanctioned site for the resolution of many disagreements.

The Great Hall serves as a place where students gather to replenish their energy with food and entertainment as well as engage in combative taunts and duels. This is where Harry learns that he can talk to snakes. The ceiling mirrors the sky and it often reflects the moods of the students.

Corridors serve as passages not only to classrooms but also as transitions in story lines. The girls' bathroom, home to Moaning Myrtle, is the portal to the Chamber; its moistness suggests Harry's vigor to pursue the basilisk.

Other significant settings include Knockturn Alley where Harry overhears the Malfoys discussing racist ideology. Harry's accidental arrival in the alley suggests his own potential for evil. The Weasley house offers Harry a temporary refuge from his guardians, and he delights in "degnoming" the garden and discovering how a magical family lives. The Dursleys' orderly house represents those characters' focus on accruing wealth, and the Weasleys' ramshackle home symbolizes their commitment to family. The flying car is personified, using its lights and exhaust pipes to express its anger at the boys whom it has both rescued and abandoned.

**Social Sensitivity**

Although not blatantly didactic, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets delivers several moral messages to readers. Resisting racism is the most crucial social issue discussed in the book. Harry refuses to discriminate against other students because of factors, such as lineage, that they cannot control. Instead of encouraging inequality, Harry promotes cooperation through teamwork. He avoids controversial causes endorsed by dubious classmates and does not succumb to peer pressure. Rowling incorporates several moral themes in her novel, and she wants to show how character and integrity influences an individual's decision-making processes, noting that most people are innately good unless they have suffered extreme emotional or physical abuse. She stresses that her novels reveal the consequences of evil and how innocent people are often victimized unfairly.

Harry has the courage to give voice to his concerns and distinguish right from wrong.

He is a role model for his fictional cohorts as well as his readers and establishes acceptable standards for behavior. Keenly aware of what is fair and just, he is accountable for his actions, justifying when breaking rules is permissible for the greater good.

Harry tries to work within established guidelines without harming the Hogwarts community. He opposes favoritism among professors and students, disliking cliques that are a part of most school environments. The hierarchy of wizard castes at Hogwarts repulses Harry, whose mother was a Muggle.

He resents classmates who passively permit such ostracism to continue. Interestingly, no professors are targeted as outcasts.

Harry's compassion for individuals' differences and his sense of social responsibility might make readers aware of any harmful prejudices they have or encounter and strengthen them to voice their concerns.

Harry displays socially acceptable behaviors such as respecting his elders and strives to maintain the honor of Hogwarts through his actions, refusing to cheat on class assignments or sports despite academic pressures and provocations. A diligent, self-disciplined worker, Harry is committed to earning grades and achieving goals rather than being granted privileges that might weaken his character like the spoiled Draco Malfoy. He worries about the well-being of other wizards and witches as well as animals, and places their needs over individual desires and ambitions, altruistically sharing his food and belongings and freeing Dobby from his servitude to the Malfoys. Harry values knowledge as being more powerful than the illusions of magic.

Admitting that he is imperfect, he urges his classmates to become better people and is loyal to his friends even when they disagree with him. Harry bravely pursues his course of action despite ridicule, risks of losing possessions, or encountering hazards.

Unfortunately, Rowling sometimes casts characters, albeit the more loathsome ones, with stereotypical descriptions. Harry's offensive male relatives are heavy-set to indicate their stupidity and laziness. The buffoonish classmate, Neville Longbottom, is also described as plump which his surname seems to suggest. Sexism and racism often are intertwined, and, while Rowling does not endorse discrimination, subtle sexism occurs when Hermione becomes is transformed into a cat after creating the Polyjuice Potion. Also, Ginny is depicted as a stereotypical helpless, foolish, confused female who is rescued by a male.

Risk-taking by male characters is rewarded, while that undertaken by females is punished.

**Literary Qualities**

Rowling's intricate writing style incorporates a variety of techniques which add texture and layers to her characters and settings. By using symbolism, motifs, and puns, Rowling combines humor and the macabre to create storytelling that fulfills readers' desire for adventure and intrigue.

She allegorically comments on modern society while alluding to universal concerns such as social acceptance. The Harry Potter saga is told by an omniscient narrator, in the form of an oral, tragic-comic ode to a hero. And although the stories are based on legends, mythology, and fairy tales, the heroes and villains have characteristics that cross cultures and time periods.

Rowling invented jargon unique to the Harry Potter novels such as "Quidditch" and bureaucratic names which blend the fantastical with the mundane, aiding readers' acceptance. Although the wizard realm is exclusive to those with magical talents, Rowling's literary style, using figurative words and descriptive passages which personifies objects and humanize characters, invites readers to become part of Harry's world. Her most effective stylistic device is names. Rowling realizes the power of names and chooses designations that hint of the personalities and traits of the characters.

For example, Tom Marvalo Riddle's name represents Lord Voldemort rearranged, and Draco refers to the Latin word for serpent.

Names are sometimes alliterative and often rhythmic, enhancing the literary tone, particularly when read aloud.

In Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Harry undergoes the traditional quest cycle, beginning action in the normal Muggle setting before relocating to the fantastical arena of Hogwarts where he undergoes an apprenticeship and resolves a conflict with his archenemy Voldemort in the underground chamber. Rowling skillfully creates suspense through plot pacing, which results in Harry being in jeopardy for almost unbearable lengths or time. Cliffhangers close each chapter, heightening the reader' emotional involvement with the characters.

The illusions cause readers to feel as if they have magically entered the story. Like Hogwarts' twisted subterranean tunnels, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets presents predicaments and enigmatic clues to confuse readers such as Arthur Weasley and Lucius Malfoy fighting at Flourish and Blotts and Ginny forgetting to pack her diary. Rowling builds tension that intensifies to the climax by fully developing confrontations such as Harry and Riddle repeating their statements. The multiple story lines, such as Ginny's bizarre behavior and stolen diary, are resolved by the conclusion which shows how everything was significant to the main plot.

Rowling's fluid prose enables readers to read the novel quickly then return to find the hidden clues which foreshadowed the solution. By intersecting horror with humor, she establishes an unsettled tone which causes readers to distrust their perception of events. Several stylistic devices intensify the reading experience. Rowling casts her main characters as outsiders, reinforcing the themes of acceptance and discrimination. Harry is branded by a scar that shows his differences from the other wizards. He often seems lonely and confined by his uniqueness. Characters are limited by their self- and peer-assigned definitions and discover inner strengths to achieve individually and benefit the community. Memory symbolizes the truth. Voices, especially dialects, create authentic dialogue to enhance omniscient narrative. Speaking and listening also reinforce the racism theme when Draco ignores those he thinks are his inferiors and Harry speaks and understands Parseltongue to open the secret chamber.

Rowling's literary motifs of magic and secrecy dominate Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. Illusions and deceptions reveal which wizards are gifted, like Dumbledore, which ones are inept, such as Lockhart, and which ones are malicious, like Voldemort. Temperature indicates good (warmth) and evil (cold). The term "Mudblood" suggests that those students are muddied or dirty and thus undesirables.

Rowling poetically names spells to specify their purpose such as "Expelliarmus" meaning to disarm an opponent. The literary use of duality reveals that people and actions often are more complex than first appearances imply and that good and evil are closely related such as the Mandrakes having deadly shrieks but being the main ingredient of the petrification antidote. Magic exposes braggarts like Lockhart as cowards. Invisibility conceals evil such as the blank diary pages but also suggests how good characters are metaphorically overlooked.

Significant literary motifs include family, blood, adolescence, gender, colors, metals, numbers, time, size, movement, moonlight, plants, food, music, animals, and precious stones. Fairy tale elements, religious imagery, and historical allusions contribute to the story's cautionary nature. Mythologist Joseph Campbell might describe the secret chamber as a netherworld where supernatural guides like Fawkes would assist heroes like Harry. Psychological analyses might interpret Harry's adventures as Freudian suggestions about sexuality and repressed desires or Jungian imagery of the stairways, tunnels, and tomb-like chamber representing Harry's fears and introverted personality. The Chamber of Secrets might reflect the individual's internal agony and conflict within their psyche. These diverse literary motifs reinforce the idea that imagination is the primary source of magic.

**Themes**

**Loyalty**

Loyalty is a theme central to the novel and the main characters. Those characters that are loyal and faithful are the strongest characters. Harry remains loyal to his friends and to the power of good magic, even when it seems as if this is the wrong thing to do. Tom Riddle tries to influence Harry and convince him of Hagrid's guilty part in opening the Chamber of Secrets but Harry remains loyal to Hagrid. Harry's loyalty to Dumbledore also helps him to defeat Voldemort. Fawkes, Dumbledore's magical phoenix, comes to help Harry when he most needs it, and this is a direct result of Harry's loyalty to Dumbledore. Harry's loyalty towards his friends is also what motivates him to enter the Chamber of Secrets, to defeat the Basilisk, and to save his friends**.**

Loyalty can also be seen in the dark characters, giving them strength in their beliefs and the motivation to succeed. Lucius Malfoy remains loyal to Voldemort and Slytherin despite risking punishment. His faith in his beliefs nearly leads to the successful defeat of Dumbledore and, despite being beaten this time, there can be no doubt in the mind of the reader that Malfoy will try again.

Dobby is another character whose loyalty is exemplary. He remains loyal to his beliefs and his faith in Harry, as he knows that this is the right thing to do. He betrays his master and the dark side at great risk to his own personal safety because he knows that what they represent is evil. Dobby's reward is his freedom, proving that to be loyal is always the best choice.

**Power**

The role of power and the misuse of power is an important topic. Lots of characters are powerful for different reasons but what is interesting is how they use their power. The characters who abuse or misuse their power are often linked to the dark side and are therefore ultimately unsuccessful. The characters that use their power for good and don't abuse it are often the successful and more popular characters.

Examples of characters who misuse their power are Lucius Malfoy and Severus Snape. Snape tries to use his power as a teacher at Hogwarts to expel Harry, attempts that are unsuccessful when contradicted by Professor McGonagall and Dumbledore, who don't take advantage of their power and treat everyone fairly. Lucius Malfoy abuses his power by blackmailing the other governors into making Dumbledore step down as head teacher. His sneaky and underhand ways are revealed at the end of the novel, and Dumbledore is reinstated.

Characters who place too much faith in their own power and are vain or conceited are also revealed to be weak, like Lockhart, who is always boasting about his powers as a great wizard yet, when put to the test, fails miserably. On the other hand, characters who are modest about their powers and abilities are often the most powerful. Harry is never heard bragging about the fact that he has defeated Voldemort twice. Instead, Harry shies from publicity and prefers to keep quiet about his achievements, yet he is incredibly powerful and defeats Voldemort for a third time. Power is achieved through actions and belief in self, not through corrupting or manipulating others.

**Themes/Characters**

Heritage, love, loyalty, and betrayal are the dominant themes in this novel. Harry focuses on avenging his parents' murders and learning more about his family's magical past. Rowling's fully developed characters participate in events and react to conflicts and danger to develop the novel's plot. Recurring characters from the first Harry Potter book consistently aid or hinder him. These archetypal characters represent extremes of good and evil. The battle between those two forces is the basic theme of the Harry Potter saga. Some characters seem stereotypical and derivative but their predictability aids readers in understanding their purpose. Many characters are polar opposites, such as Harry and Tom Riddle, yet they paradoxically share some traits and, like the settings, experience opposing characteristics within themselves, presenting an amalgam of good and bad.

Harry realizes that Riddle is actually Voldemort when he confronts him in the Chamber of Secrets. During their conversation, Harry becomes aware that he and Riddle share similar biographical details, such as being orphans, despite their obvious disparity and hatred for each other.

Harry is oblivious to his magical abilities prior to being invited to attend Hogwarts.

In Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Harry has a deeper appreciation of his heritage and is more self-confident. Both he and Voldemort are cognizant of their half-blood genetic background. Harry virtuously chooses to befriend people based on their personality, while Voldemort sinisterly elects to discriminate against anyone whom he feels threatened by, especially Harry, whom he tried to murder with his martyred parents James and Lily Potter. Harry's parents are also significant characters in the books because of how they motivate their son to pursue justice, fulfill his destiny, and redeem his legacy.

When the chamber monster is released and petrifies students, Harry vows to find Slytherin's heir who is blamed for opening the Chamber of Secrets. Despite false accusations that he is Slytherin's heir, primarily because of his ability to communicate in Parseltongue and proximity to petrification sites soon after incidents occurred, Harry is determined to locate the true culprit. Distractions such as homework and Quidditch matches delay Harry's progress. In Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, an enchanted Bludger knocks Harry off his broom and breaks his right arm. The ineffective Lockhart casts a spell which inadvertently causes Harry's arm bones to vanish, causing him to become temporarily powerless. The school nurse, Madam Pomfrey, regrows Harry's bones, symbolizing the strengthening of his character. Sacrifice and human fragility are frequent themes in the Harry Potter saga.

Harry develops relationships with his closest friends, Ron and Hermione (whom he is especially protective of because of her Muggle parentage), and adults who serve as mentors such as the wise headmaster Albus Dumbledore, good-natured Rubeus Hagrid, strict teacher Minerva McGonagall, and affectionate Arthur and Molly Weasley.

Their involvement with Harry, however, has repercussions such as Dumbledore's suspension and Hagrid's imprisonment.

Several characters have prominent roles in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. A thousand years ago, Hogwarts founder, Salazar Slytherin, built the secret chamber beneath the school after a disagreement with other school founders about admitting Muggle-born students. He planned for his heir to release the basilisk to slay future students that might be inferior and threatening to his ideas. Gilderoy Lockhart, the narcissistic Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher, boastfully claims to be able to subdue evil creatures and craves publicity. He resents Harry's fame and is passive-aggressive in his efforts to wound Harry's ego.

Lockhart's name suggests that he is like a gilded locket, something that is attractive to gaze at but shallow. When he has the opportunity to become a true hero, Lockhart tries to injure Harry and Ron and loses his mind. Twins Fred and George Weasley help Harry escape from his room at the Dursleys' house by driving the flying car and repulsing Vernon Dursley's attempts to control Harry. This action mimics their position as Beaters on the Gryffindor Quidditch team.

Herbology Professor Sprout prepares the antidote to revive petrified students, and the ghostly Mr. Binns, who teaches the history of magic, provides clues about the chamber's history. Ginny Weasley has a crush on Harry and is easily manipulated, resulting in Voldemort invading Hogwarts and holding her hostage in the Chamber of Secrets. Hermione Granger is especially insecure after threatening messages warn that Muggle-born students will be exterminated. Her erratic behavior reinforces stereotypical images of females being moody and unreliable, yet she assertively procures ingredients to brew the Polyjuice Potion and figures out that the chamber's monster is a basilisk. Draco Malfoy, who promotes genocide at Hogwarts, seems draconian but is fooled to reveal his insecurities when Harry and Ron transform into his sidekicks, Goyle and Crabb, in an attempt to learn who Slytherin's heir is. Harry encounters Draco's father Lucius Malfoy (an ally of Voldemort) whose name suggests an allegiance with Lucifer and who is extremely elitist and pretentious. When the Dursleys' business associates, the rigid Masons visit (foreshadowing later petrification in the novel), Harry is banished to his room, but Dobby causes Harry to be falsely accused of using magic off campus, alerting the Dursleys to this prohibition and intensifying their abuse of Harry.

By time-traveling through the enchanted diary, Harry learns why Hagrid was expelled from Hogwarts and encounters the behemoth spider Aragog, whom Hagrid saved from certain slaughter. Hagrid's love for creatures does not extend to Mrs. Norris, or squib (a non-magical wizard) caretaker Argus Rich's spying cat—who is the basilisk's first victim. The basilisk is an ancient serpent representing mythological beasts whose stare was deadly, signifying the blindness of racism (some modern lizards are also known as basilisks). Most animals are helpful. Dumbledore's pet phoenix Fawkes (suggesting Guy Fawkes and the historic British gunpowder plot) saves Harry in the Chamber of Secrets and represents the cycle of rebirth at Hogwarts as new students matriculate. Ghosts, including Nearly Headless Nick and Moaning Myrtle, propel the plot forward by providing characters crucial information and reinforcing themes of exclusion and tolerance.

**Style**

**Point of View**

Rowling narrates "The Chamber of Secrets" through a third-person omniscient narrator. This means that we as readers often know more than the characters, and this creates suspense as we wait to see when the characters will discover what we already know. A good example of this is the character of Gilderoy Lockhart. Lockhart brags to the other characters throughout the novel that he is the best wizard at defeating the Dark Arts—something we know as readers to be untrue. He is finally put to the test when told to find the chamber and solve the problem of the attacks. We know he is incapable of doing this and are kept in suspense to find out how he escapes from the situation.

Although the narrative style is third person, we often identify with Harry and see the story through his eyes. We clearly identify with Harry when he has doubts about his true place in Gryffindor, and the animosity of other characters towards Harry when they believe he is the heir of Slytherin can also be keenly felt. Our perceptions of characters are influenced by Harry's attitude towards them; therefore, we admire Dumbledore and feel closer to Ron and Hermione than we do to Draco Malfoy, Snape or even Filch the caretaker, characters who clearly don't like Harry for their own personal reasons. Rowling's own viewpoint on different topics can also be discerned through the characters of Harry and Hermione. Harry's feelings towards his parents mirror Rowling's own in losing her mother to MS at an early age. Hermione is similar to Rowling in personality, and Rowling herself admits to identifying most with Hermione, so through Hermione we have an insight to the personality and character of JK Rowling.

**Setting**

The main setting of "The Chamber of Secrets" is the fictional location of Hogwarts. Hogwarts is a magical castle where wizards go to study for their OWL and NEWT exams. Although fictional, the education system at Hogwarts is very similar to the modern UK education system. Pupils attend Hogwarts for five years, and then sit standard for OWL exams; they then remain at school for a further two years to complete their higher NEWT exams.

Hogwarts and the world of magic exist in a parallel universe with that of the normal Muggle world. The setting for the Muggle world in "The Chamber of Secrets," is England. The station that the Hogwarts Express leaves from is King's Cross, a famous London train station. The streets where the friends buy their school equipment are also in London, Harry having traveled by underground to get his school things in the previous year. The Dursley's house and lifestyle is also typical of an English middle-class suburb.

Although the plot for the novel is a timeless theme of the battle of good and evil, the setting is clearly modern. Clues such as the modern transport system (the train to Hogwarts, the flying car) and the use of modern technology (Colin Creevey's camera) set the novel firmly in modern times in the twentieth and twenty-first century.

**Language and Meaning**

The language used by Rowling is powerful and evocative for many reasons. Written in modern English in a fictional style to entertain readers, Rowling cleverly uses language to grab attention and paint clear pictures of events for her readers. Her writing style is highly descriptive and figurative. Her descriptions make use of a whole spectrum of techniques, from simple use of adverbs and adjectives to more complicated descriptions involving metaphors and similes. Rowling's figurative language allows us to understand exactly what the characters are experiencing. For her example, her powerful use of simile when describing the Basilisk attacking Fawkes on page 235 is extremely effective and vivid.

Another clever technique used by Rowling is her use of puns. Rowling uses pun for comic effect. Her words can be read on different levels. Whereas, a younger reader may not appreciate her subtle use of puns, an older reader is able to enjoy the humorous effect of her clever use of language. Good examples are the names of the streets where Harry and his friends go to shop. "Knock Turn Alley," is a street with a dark or evil reputation and when read phonetically is "nocturnally," with clear links to the night and dark doings. Another example is "Diagon Alley," which phonetically is "diagonally;" supposedly, this is the direction you travel when using Floo powder! Once these puns are noticed and appreciated by the reader, it is easy to spot more. An excellent example is "Voldemort," which when broken down into three different words, "vol-de-mort ,"can be translated from French to mean "full of death," These subtle uses of pun add a depth to the novel that make it popular with people of all ages.

Rowling also uses imaginary words and unusual words to create a unique effect. Some words she makes up herself, like "Muggle" and "Quidditch." Other words are taken from very old English, such as "Dumbledore," which is an old English word for "bumblebee," and "Hedwig," which is the name of a saint. Rowling's creative use of language makes her novels absorbing, with the reader transported to another world, a world where anything can and does happen, keeping the reader entertained and engrossed in the imaginative plots.

**Structure**

*The Chamber of Secrets* has a linear structure, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. The beginning of the novel reminds readers of previous events in the prequel novel, *The Philosopher's Stone,* and sets the scene for the action in *The Chamber of Secrets*. The beginning of the novel creates an exciting atmosphere where tension and suspense keep the reader on edge. Harry is imprisoned by the Dursleys, then rescued by Ron; the platform won't open to let them catch the train to Hogwarts so Ron and Harry fly to Hogwarts in an enchanted car. The pace from the very beginning is fast, and the reader is hooked.

The middle of the novel is where the plot complications develop. The battle of good against evil is the main focus, with the good side struggling to succeed from the outset. Events escalate, with the good side suffering, The main tension lies in whether the good will succeed and rid the school of the evil Basilisk.

The ending of the novel is tense, centered on the battle between good and evil. Harry faces the evil Voldemort once more, and the reader is uncertain whether Harry will win. The ending is traditionally happy, with the good side defeating the evil side and celebrating the success.

The structure for "The Chamber of Secrets" is that of a modern fairy story. There is a hero, Harry; a villain, Voldemort; an impossible quest, defeating the Basilisk; a victim to be rescued, Ginny; and magical weapons used by the hero to help him succeed, Godric Gryffindor's sword, the Sorting Hat and Fawkes the phoenix. As in most fairy stories, we know that good will triumph over evil. The enjoyment lies in the impossible challenges faced by the hero and discovering how they are overcome.

**Hannah Abbot**

Hannah Abbot is a second year Hufflepuff who is friends with Ernie Macmillan and Justin Finch-Fletchley. When Ernie argues that Harry Potter must be the Heir of Syltherin, Hannah comes to Harry's defense.

**Aragog**

Aragog is a blind spider the size of a small elephant who lives in the Forbidden Forest. Hagrid acquired Aragog as an egg from a traveler from distant lands, and hid him in a cupboard in Hogwarts. Tom Riddle blamed the death of Moaning Myrtle on Aragog, which caused Hagrid to be expelled. Hagrid released Aragog into the forest, and found him a mate: Mosag. Together they had many children. Aragog instructs his children not to eat Hagrid out of friendship, but he has no such qualms about Ron and Harry, who barely escape with their lives.

**Professor Binns**

Professor Binns is the History of Magic teacher at Hogwarts. He is the only ghost teacher at the school. He enters the classroom through the blackboard. After dying in front of the fire in the staff room, he got up the next morning and continued to teach as usual, leaving his body behind. His lessons are generally considered to be the dullest. He frequently gets the names of his students wrong. When Hermione asks him about the Chamber of Secrets, he is very surprised and somewhat reluctant, but relents and tells the students both the history and the legend.

**Mr. Borgin**

Borgin is the proprietor of "Borgin and Burkes," a shop in Knockturn Alley, London. He is obsequious to Lucius Malfoy while he is serving him as a customer. But when Malfoy leaves, Borgin makes a disparaging remark about him under his breath.

**The Bloody Baron**

The resident ghost of Slytherin Tower.

**Katie Bell**

Katie Bell is a Gryffindor girl a year older than Harry, one of the three Chasers on the Gryffindor Quidditch team.

**Millicent Bulstrode**

Millicent is a Hogwarts student in Slytherin house, in Harry’s year. She is large and square with a heavy jaw. Harry and Ron consider her ugly. When, in the dueling club, Snape partners Millicent with Hermione Granger, Millicent puts Hermione into a painful headlock. She leaves hair on Hermione's robe in the process, which Hermione saves for her Polyjuice potion. But the hair turns out to be from Millicent's cat, causing unfortunate side effects for Hermione.

**Colin Creevey**

Colin is a first-year Hogwarts student in Gryffindor House. He is short, with mousey brown hair. Colin is from a Muggle family. He takes a lot of pictures to send home to his father, a milkman. He is easily excited and a huge fan of Harry Potter. He constantly takes Harry's picture and asks him a lot of questions, which, conveniently for new readers, leads Harry to explain important information, like the rules of Quidditch. When Colin becomes petrified, Ernie McMullen accuses Harry of attacking Colin for annoying him and being Muggle-born. In fact, he was petrified when he saw the basilisk through his camera's lens.

**Vincent Crabbe**

Crabbe is a Hogwarts student in Slytherin house. Along with Goyle, he is one of Draco Malfoy's henchmen. He is thickset with a pudding-bowl haircut. He is mean, slow, and greedy. Ron Weasley turns into Crabbe by drinking Polyjuice potion.

**Sir Patrick Delaney-Podmore**

Sir Patrick is the leader of the Headless Hunt. He excludes Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington from the hunt because Nick's head is not fully severed from his body. Sir Patrick arrives at Nearly Headless Nick's deathday party with a team of headless horses and rudely upstages Nick's speech by beginning a game of head hockey. Nick asks Harry Potter to tell Sir Patrick that he finds Nick very frightening. But when he does this, Sir Patrick doesn't believe him.

**Professor Armando Dippet**

Professor Dippet was the headmaster of Hogwarts before Albus Dumbledore. He was manipulated by Tom Riddle to believe that Hagrid was responsible for Moaning Myrtle's death.

**Dobby**

Dobby is a house-elf with green eyes the size of tennis balls and bat-like ears who wears an old pillowcase. He speaks about himself in the third person and uses unusual syntax. He serves the Malfoy family, and will only be freed when they gift him clothing. His magical abilities include being able to apparate, disarm, and make objects levitate. He also seals the portal to Platform 9 3/4 and fixes the Bludger to attack Harry in Quidditch. Dobby is a trickster figure who disrupts norms and transgresses boundaries. He tries to protect Harry Potter, at great risk to himself, because Harry's defeat of Voldemort improved the lives of "lowly" magical creatures. His attempts to help Harry end up interfering in Harry's life and force Harry to overcome obstacles. He constantly punishes himself for betraying his master by protecting Harry. In the end, he is rewarded for his loyalty when Harry helps him get free of Malfoy through the exchange of Harry's sock.

**Albus Dumbledore**

Dumbledore is a wizard and the headmaster of Hogwarts. He is tall and thin with blue eyes and a long silver beard. He wears a long purple cloak and half-moon spectacles, and has a crooked nose. He has a pet phoenix named Fawkes. Harry Potter describes him as "the greatest wizard in the world." He was a Professor at Hogwarts fifty years prior to this story, when Tom Riddle and Rubeus Hagrid were pupils. He has a calm, kind, wise disposition.

**Dudley Dursley**

Dudley is a Muggle and Harry Potter's cousin, the son of Vernon and Petunia Dursley. He is overindulged by his parents, lavished with the attention and affection the Durselys deny to Harry. He attends a private school named Smeltings. He taunts and bullies Harry.

**Petunia Dursley**

Petunia is a Muggle and Harry Potter's aunt, the sister of his mother Lily. She is married to Vernon Dursley and is the mother of Dudley Dursley. She overindulges both her husband and her son as she neglects and punishes Harry.

**Vernon Dursley**

Vernon is a Muggle and Harry Potter’s uncle by marriage. He is married to Petunia and is the father of Dudley. He is large, with a very short neck and a bushy mustache.

He works as the manager of a drill-making firm and is conventionally ambitious. He is prejudiced, frequently enraged, and cruel to Harry.

**Errol**

Errol is the Weasley family’s pet owl. He is quite elderly, and exhausted but dedicated. He is a comical figure, often barely managing to deliver messages, and landing in odd places. He looks like a moulting grey feather-duster.

**Fang**

Fang is Rubeus Hagrid's Boarhound (which is another name for a Great Dane). He is lovable, loyal, and affectionately slobbering. He accompanies Harry and Ron into the forrest, where he is terrified of the spiders.

**Fawkes**

Fawkes is Dumbledore's pet phoenix. He is a magical bird who on his Burning Day bursts into flames and then is reborn from the ashes. He has beautiful red and gold plumage, with long golden tail feathers. He sings an "eerie, spine-tingling, unearthly" song. He is very loyal, can carry immensely heavy loads, and has tears that possess healing powers. All of these qualities help rescue Harry Potter from the Chamber of Secrets. His name is an allusion to Guy Fawkes Day, which is celebrated in Britain with fireworks and bonfires.

**Argus Filch**

Filch is the caretaker of Hogwarts. He has a pet cat called Mrs. Norris who helps him patrol the school. He is a Squib, meaning that he was born into a wizard family but with no magical abilities. This is why, according to Ron, he is bitter and hates Hogwarts students. He tries to learn magic trough a Quickspell course, which embarrasses him when Harry finds out. He blames Harry for the petrification of Mrs. Norris.

**Justin Finch-Fletchley**

Justin is a Hogwarts student in Hufflepuff house in the same year as Harry. He is initially friendly to Harry, and tells him that he was also accepted to Eton, implying that he is Muggle-born and of the upper class. During the Dueling Club, Justin is threatened by a snake until Harry Potter calls it off in Parseltongue, which Justin misinterprets as egging it on. Justin becomes afraid of Harry, convinced that Harry is the Heir of Slytherin. Ernie advises Justin to hide in his dorm. Justin becomes petrified when he sees the basilisk through Nearly Headless Nick. After he is revived he writes to Harry and apologizes for suspecting him.

**Professor Filius Flitwick**

Flitwick is the Charms professor at Hogwarts and Head of Ravenclaw house. He is a small wizard of goblin ancestry who has to stand on piles of books to see over his desk. He is the accidental victim of Ron's broken wand. When Ginny Weasley is taken into the Chamber of Secrets, he bursts into tears.

**Seamus Finnigan**

Seamus is a Hogwarts student in the same year as Harry, also in Gryffindor house. He and his best friend Dean Thomas enjoy laughing at Lockhart together.

**Cornelius Fudge**

Fudge is the Minister for Magic. He is a short, portly wizard with grey hair. He wears a pinstriped suit, scarlet tie, long black traveling cloak, pointed purple boots, and lime green bowler hat. Under pressure from the Governors Fudge arrests Hagrid because he has "got to be seen doing something." He protests when Lucius Malfoy wants to suspend Dumbledore as headmaster, but doesn't stop him. He is therefore complicit in injustice through lack of will.

**Godric Gryffindor**

Godric Gryffindor was one of the four founders of Hogwarts. Gryffindor house was named after him. When Harry Potter is in the Chamber of Secrets he pulls Godric Gryffindor's sword out of the sorting hat, which Dumbledore explains is a sign that Harry truly belongs in Gryffindor house.

**Gregory Goyle**

Goyle is a Hogwarts student in Slytherin House in the same years as Harry Potter. He has bristly hair and long, gorilla-like arms. He is stupid and mean. Along with Crabbe, Goyle is one of Draco Malfoy's henchmen. Harry Potter transforms into Goyle when he drinks the Polyjuice potion.

**Hermione Granger**

Hermione is a Hogwarts student in Harry Potter's year, also in Gryffindor House. Along with Ron Weasely, she is one of Harry's closest friends. Hermione's parents are Muggle dentists. She is an excellent student who studies hard to get the best grades in school. Hermione has an analytical mind: She is good at suspending judgment, being observant, and figuring out the truth. Her devotion to books leads her to believe the false tales of Professor Lockhart, however, whom she develops a crush on. Draco Malfoy is threatened by Hermione's intelligence, and taunts her for being a "Mud-blood." Normally a rule-follower, she breaks many rules to find out the truth when Muggle-borns and Squibs are threatened. She is brave enough to steal ingredients from Snape's office, and competent at creating Polyjuice Potion, except for one mistake that gives her cat features. She also figures out that the monster in the Chamber of Secrets is a basilisk and how it moves about the school through the pipes. Even when she is petrified, her research helps solve the mystery.

**Rubeus Hagrid**

Hagrid is the groundskeeper at Hogwarts. He is a half-giant who is almost twice as tall as most people and about five times as wide, with a wild tangled beard. He lives in a cottage near the Forbidden Forest with his boarhound Fang. He is proud of his pumpkin patch, which he assists through a magic wand hidden in his umbrella. Hagrid has a fondness for large, dangerous creatures such as Fluffy the Hellhound and Norbert the Dragon (in the first book in the series), and Aragog the spider. Hagrid is very kind, and loyal to Dumbledore and Harry Potter. He was a student at Hogwarts, but was expelled by Armando Dippett after being framed by Tom Riddle as Slytherin's heir who unleashed the monster in the Chamber of Secrets. Minister Fudge arrests him on the same charge fifty years later as a scapegoat. Dumbledore defends him, but it takes Harry's defeat of Voldemort for Hagrid to return to Hogwarts.

**Hedwig**

Hedwig is Harry's pet owl. Hagrid bought Hedwig from Eeylops Owl Emporium as a present for Harry's eleventh birthday. The Durselys lock Hedwig in her cage to prevent her from carrying messages to anyone in the wizarding world. As a result, she is bored and makes a noise that wakes up Vernon Dursley. She is disgusted by the soggy vegetables which are all that Harry has to feed her when Vernon has locked them in Harry's room. She is so wisely quiet during their escape that Harry forgets her and has to go back. Then she is happy to fly behind the car. She causes quite a scene when they crash into the wall trying to get onto the train platform to Hogwarts. And she becomes angry at Harry when they crash the car into the Whomping Willow, but forgives him by Christmas, when she nibbles his ear affectionately.

**Madam Hooch**

Madam Hooch is the flying teacher and Quidditch referee at Hogwarts.

**Angelina Johnson**

Angelina is a Hogwarts student, two years ahead of Harry. She is a Chaser for the Gryffindor Quidditch team.

**Professor Gilderoy Lockhart**

Gilderoy Lockhart is a new Hogwarts Professor, teaching Defense of the Dark Arts, who is revealed to be a charlatan. He wears colorful clothes, curls his hair, and writes with a peacock feather pen. He built his career with self-promotion and charm. For example, he is the five-time winner of ‘Witch Weekly's’ Most-Charming-Smile Award. He attempts to get close to Harry Potter to capitalize on Harry's fame. Lockhart is the author of best-selling autobiographies, which he wrote by taking credit for the brave exploits of other witches and wizards, after erasing their memories. At Hogwarts, he alienates the other professors with his empty boasting, and is an entirely inept teacher. His ineptitude has real consequences, as his dueling club creates a dangerous episode with a snake, and his attempt to mend Harry's bones after a sports injury removes them instead. After Harry and Ron discover that he is about to flee rather than trying to rescue Ginny from the Chamber of Secrets, they force him to accompany them on their quest. He tries to blast them with a memory charm, which ironically backfires, erasing his own memory instead. Lockhart is often the vehicle for ironic humor early in the story, but towards the end, he is punished for his selfishness.

**Neville Longbottom**

Neville is a Hogwarts student in Harry's year, also in Gryffindor House. He is round-faced and accident-prone, with a terrible memory. He has a pet toad named Trevor. He comes from a magical family, and was raised by his grandmother. He was discovered to be a wizard late in his childhood, when his uncle accidentally dropped him out of a window and he bounced. Snape mocks him in Potions class. Cornish pixies lift him into the air by his ears in and Defense Against the Dark Arts. Neville has little self-confidence. During the school panic over the Heir of Slytherin he buys talismans to protect himself because "everyone knows I'm almost a squib."

**Draco Malfoy**

Draco is a student at Hogwarts in Harry Potter's year, in Slytherin House. Draco is a thin boy with a pale, pointed face. He is often accompanied by two henchmen: Crabbe and Goyle. He is jealous of Harry for his fame and Hermione Granger for being the top student. Draco is the son of Lucius Malfoy, and feels entitled due to being from a wealthy pure-blood wizard family. His father buys his way on to the Syltherin Quidditch team by providing the fastest broomsticks. He insults Hermione with the slur "Mudblood" and declares "You'll be next, Mudbloods!" after Mrs. Norris is attacked. Harry and Ron suspect Draco of being the Heir of Slytherin, but this turns out to be incorrect. Draco enjoys the terror at Hogwarts. When his father manages to remove Dumbledore as headmaster, Draco struts around the school with pride. When Dumbledore returns, he sulks.

**Lucius Malfoy**

Lucius Malfoy is both Draco Malfoy's father and the Chairman of the Board of Governors of Hogwarts. He is a pure-blood wizard who once supported Voldemort, before the Dark Lord went into hiding. Under pressure from the raids conducted by Arthur Weasley in his job at the Ministry of Magic, Malfoy sells some of his Dark Magic items at Borgin and Burkes' shop. In an attempt to discredit Weasley, and so thwart his proposed Muggle Protection Act, Malfoy plants Tom Riddle's diary on Ginny Weasley. He manages to get Dumbledore suspended temporarily as Headmaster of Hogwarts by threatening to curse the other governors' families. Malfoy mistreats his house-elf Dobby, until Harry Potter frees Dobby from servitude by tricking Malfoy.

**The Masons**

On Harry Potter's twelfth birthday, Mr. and Mrs. Mason are dinner guests at Number 4, Privet Drive, the home of the Durselys. Vernon Dursely hopes to make a major business deal on behalf of his employer Grunnings, a drill manufacturer, with Mr. Mason, who is a builder. The plan goes awry when the party is disrupted by Dobby destroying Petunia Dursley's pudding and an owl delivers a letter to Harry from the Ministry of Magic on Mrs. Mason's head. She has an intense fear of birds.

**Professor Minerva McGonagall**

Professor McGonagall is Head of Gryffindor House and is the Transfiguration teacher at Hogwarts. She becomes Deputy Headmistress in Dumbledore's absence. She has jet-black hair worn in a tight bun and wears square glasses and an emerald-green cloak. In the first book, she turns herself into a cat. She is both strict and kind.

**Moaning Myrtle**

Myrtle is a ghost who haunts the first-floor girls' bathroom. She was Muggle-born and squat with lank hair, pimples, and thick glasses. When she was alive she was teased by Olive Hornby, so she returns to haunt her after death. She feels sorry for herself and takes pleasure in the misfortune of others. She attends Nearly Headless Nick's deathday party, where Peeves taunts her. She is very pleased when Hermione partially turns herself into a cat. When Ginny throws Riddle's diary into Myrtle's toilet, Harry discovers it through Myrtle's moaning. She was killed by the basilisk when the Chamber of Secrets was opened for the first time. She helps Harry and Ron find the entrance to the Chamber.

**Ernie Macmillan**

Ernie is a Hogwarts student in Harry's year in Hufflepuff House. According to Ernie, he is a pure-blood wizard, going back nine generations. He spreads rumors that Harry Potter is the Heir of Slytherin. He also advises Justin Finch-Fletchley to hide from Harry. When Justin is petrified, Ernie accuses Harry of being responsible. After Hermione is also petrified, Ernie apologies to Harry publicly for his accusation.

**Nearly Headless Nick**

Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington is the resident ghost of Gryffindor Tower who lived around 500 years ago. He has a dangerously wobbly head, a plumed hat, and a tunic with a ruffle. He is known as Nearly Headless Nick because his beheading was not completely successful. He was hit forty-five times in the neck with a blunt axe, leaving him only partially decapitated. Sir Patrick Delaney-Podmore excludes Nick from the Headless Hunt because his head is still (barely) attached to his body. Nick kindly helps Harry Potter escape Filch by convincing Peeves to create a diversion. In exchange, Harry agrees to attend Nick's deathday party and to tell Sir Patrick, ironically, how frightening he finds Nick. Although Nick is dead, the stare of the basilisk petrifies him, causing his normally transparent body to become smokey. Justin Finch-Fletchly escapes death from the basilisk stare by looking through Nearly Headless Nick.

**Mrs. Norris**

Mrs. Norris is Argus Filch's cat. She is a scrawny dust-colored cat with bulging yellow eyes. Hogwarts students must be careful not to break rules in front of her as she has a very strong connection to Filch, so he will know immediately. She is the first victim of the Monster in the Chamber of Secrets. Harry and Ron find her petrified, hanging by her tail, on Halloween night.

**Peeves the Poltergeist**

Peeves is a poltergeist at Hogwarts, blending humor and malice to stir up trouble whenever possible. He wears a bell-covered hat and an orange bowtie. He disrupts order and causes messes, frustrating Filch. This comes in handy when Nearly Headless Nick convinces Peeves to divert Filch from punishing Harry. He loves to instigate conflict, as when he informs Myrtle that Hermione was talking about her at the death day party. Peeves alerts the school when Justin and Nick are petrified, immediately blaming Harry Potter. Afterward, he mocks Harry Potter relentlessly with a rhyming song: "*Oh Potter, you rotter, oh what have you done? You're killing off students, you think it's good fun –"*

**Madam Pince**

Madam Pince is the librarian at Hogwarts. She is thin and irritable. Highly suspicious of the students, she guards the books zealously.

**Madam Poppy Pomfrey**

Poppy Pomfrey is the Hospital Matron at Hogwarts. She is very competent. She regrows Harry Potter's bones, restores Hermione's appearance after she accidentally gains cat features, and revives the students who were petrified by the basilisk. She is also firmly protective of her patients, often insisting that visitors leave so that they may rest.

**Harry Potter**

Harry Potter is a twelve-year-old wizard in his second year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, in Gryffindor House. He is skinny with untidy black hair, green eyes, and round glasses. He has a pet owl named Hedwig. He grew up at Number 4 Privet Drive with the Dursleys: Aunt Petunia, Uncle Vernon, and cousin Dudley. Harry was unaware of his magical abilities until one year before, when his true past was revealed to him. He is the son of James and Lily Potter who were killed by Lord Voldemort when he was a baby. Harry survived Voldemort's attack and so is famous in the wizarding world as "The Boy Who Lived." Voldemort left him with a scar in the shape of a lightning bolt on his forehead. At the end of *The Chamber of Secrets,* Harry learns that Voldemort left a part of himself in Harry as well, which is why Harry is a Parselmouth with the ability to speak with snakes. In contrast to his fame in the wizarding world, Harry is isolated, neglected, and abused in the mundane Muggle world. His two best friends are Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger. When the Dursleys lock Harry in his room Ron comes to his rescue, bringing him home to his family at the Burrow, where Harry experiences a loving household for the first time. Harry is insecure about his identity. He secretly worries that the Sorting Hat placed him in the wrong house at Hogwarts and that he could be the heir of Slytherin. During the panic over the monster in the Chamber of Secrets, other Hogwarts students become afraid of Harry. As he endures the same social isolation in the wizarding world that he endured at home, he becomes angry. He is initially fooled by Tom Riddle because he relates to Riddle's experience of being an orphan. He is willing to break rules, assume responsibility beyond his years, and take risks to find out the truth and defeat Voldemort. He remains both brave and loyal to his friends. As an infant, Harry was saved by the love of his mother. Love allows him to emerge a triumphant hero of the story.

**Salazar Slytherin**

Salazar Slytherin is one of the four founders of Hogwarts. Slytherin house is named after him. He was a Parselmouth, meaning that he could speak with snakes. According to Dumbledore, he prized resourcefulness, determination, and a disregard for rules. Professor Binns explained that "Slytherin wished to be more *selective* about the students admitted to Hogwarts. He believed that magical learning should be kept within all-magic families. He disliked taking students of Muggle parentage, believing them to be untrustworthy. After a while, there was a serious argument on the subject between Slytherin and Gryffindor, and Slytherin left the school." Before departing, he created the Chamber of Secrets, with a monster inside that would purge the school of those "unworthy" to study magic, which could only be opened by his heir.

**Professor Severus Snape**

Professor Snape is the Potions Master Hogwarts and Head of Slytherin House. He has black, greasy shoulder-length hair, black eyes, and a long hooked nose. He is cold and sarcastic and has a particular dislike for Harry Potter. When Harry and Ron crash the car into the Womping Willow, Snape wants them expelled, and is disappointed when Dumbledore gives them another chance. In the dueling club, Snape easily overpowers Professor Lockhart, blasting him against the wall. He arranges for Harry to duel Draco Malfoy. Right before they start, Snape whispers something in Draco’s ear. Draco then casts a spell that summons a snake. When Harry speaks Parseltongue, Snape gives him “a cold and calculating look he didn’t like." While a minor character in this particular book, Snape is a major figure in the Harry Potter series overall.

**Alicia Spinnet**

Alicia is one of the Chasers on the Gryffindor Quidditch team. She is two years above Harry at Hogwarts. She tries to convince Oliver Wood to take Harry Potter out of the Quidditch match for his protection when the rogue Bludger is after him. She also defends Hermione when Draco calls her a "Mudblood."

**Professor Pomona Sprout**

Sprout is Herbology Professor at Hogwarts and head of Hufflepuff House. She bandages the Whomping Willow, and fashions slings for its branches after Ron and Harry crash the car into it. She also tends to the Mandrakes so that they may revive the petrified students. Professor Sprout is an earthy witch, short and squat with fly-away hair and a patched hat.

**Dean Thomas**

Dean is a Hogwarts student in the same year as Harry, also in Gryffindor house. His best friend is Seamus Finnigan. Dean comes from a Muggle family, and like Harry, has difficulty knowing which classes to choose. He is a Chaser in Quidditch.

**Lord Voldemort/Tom Riddle**

Voldemort is a powerful wizard, Harry Potter's nemesis and a symbol of evil. Those who fear Voldemort refer to him as 'He Who Must Not Be Named,' 'You-Know-Who' or 'The Dark Lord.' His birth name was Tom Marvolo Riddle, which he changed via anagram into Lord Voldemort. The son of a witch and a Muggle, Voldemort changed his identity out of resentment for his father, who abandoned his mother. She died shortly after childbirth so Tom Riddle grew up in a Muggle orphanage. When he was a student at Hogwarts, fifty years before Harry, he opened the Chamber of Secrets and used the basilisk to terrorize Muggle-born students, killing Moaning Myrtle. (He was the Heir of Slytherin, related to Hogwarts founder Salazar Slytherin through his mother.) He got away with it by framing Hagrid, who was then expelled from school. When Harry was a baby, Voldemort killed Lily and James Potter, Harry's parents. But he was unable to kill Harry, who was protected by his mother's love. Voldemort left Harry carrying a portion of himself, along with a lightning-bolt scar on his forehead.

**Arthur Weasley**

Mr. Weasley is a wizard who lives at the Burrow. He has thinning red hair, and wears glasses and a long shabby robe. He is married to Molly Weasley. Together they have six children: Bill, Charlie, Percy, Fred, George, Ron, and Ginny. He works for the Ministry of Magic in the Misuse of Muggle Artifacts Office. He appreciates the ingenuity of Muggle technology, and is thrilled to meet Hermione's Muggle parents to learn more about everyday Muggle inventions such as bus stops. He enjoys enchanting Muggle objects, such as his Ford Angola car. He doesn't mind bending the Ministry's rules, as he wrote a loophole into a law to allow him to enchant the car as long as he doesn't intend to use it. He is the author of the Muggle Protection Act. Although he is a pure-blood wizard, he is opposed to the pure-blood supremacist ideology espoused by Lucius Malfoy.

**Bill Weasley**

Bill is the eldest son of Arthur and Molly Weasley and brother of Ron Weasley. He was a past Head Boy in Gryffindor House who got twelve O.W.L.s. Bill works as a curse-breaker for Gringotts Bank. Mr. and Mrs. Weasley visit him in Egypt over the Christmas holidays.

**Charlie Weasley**

Charlie is the second-oldest Weasley sibling. He is training dragons in Romania.

**Fred and George Weasley**

Fred and George are Ron Weasley's twin older brothers. They help Ron rescue Harry from his imprisonment at the Durselys'. When many students at Hogwarts suspect Harry of being the Heir of Syltherin, Fred and George lighten the mood by turning it into a joke. They also try to cheer up Ginny by jumping out at her, which frightens her instead. They are both Beaters for the Gryffindor Quidditch team, and protect Harry when the rogue Bludger pursues him.

**Ginny Weasley**

Ginny Weasley is a Hogwarts student in her first year in Gryffindor House. She is small with bright red hair. She is the youngest child of Arthur and Molly Weasley, and the sister of Bill, Charlie, Percy, Fred, George, and Ron Weasley. Ginny has a crush on Harry Potter and is shy around him. But she is brave enough to send Harry a singing telegram on Valentine's Day. She seems to be a minor character in the plot, but is in fact central to the truth of what's unfolding: Voldemort uses Ginny to terrorize Hogwarts by manipulating her through his diary. She discovers the diary in her school books after Lucius Malfoy planted it there. She begins confessing her secrets to the diary, and then Tom Riddle (aka Voldemort) writes back to her, and comes to possess her. Under the power of Riddle/Voldemort, she opens the Chamber of Secrets, unleashes the basilisk, kills the roosters, and paints the threatening messages on the walls. She tries to get rid of the diary by flushing it down the toilet. And she attempts to tell Harry and Ron the truth, but is scared away by Percy. Voldemort also uses Ginny to lure Harry Potter into the Chamber of Secrets. When Ginny sees that Harry has defeated Voldemort and the basilisk, she looks "bemused." Her father admonishes Ginny in the end for not learning his lesson to "Never trust anything that can think for itself if you can't see where it keeps its brain." Malfoy is also using Ginny to undermine her family’s power, and in an effort to change the government of both Hogwarts and the Ministry of Magic.

**Molly Weasley**

Mrs. Weasley is a pure-blood witch who lives at the Burrow. She is short and plump, with red hair and a kind face. She is married to Arthur Weasley. Together they have six children: Bill, Charlie, Percy, Fred, George, Ron, and Ginny. As a mother, Molly is loving and strict. She is very kind and welcoming to Harry Potter. She is worried when Ron, Fred, and George steal their father's car, and furious when they arrive back home. She yells at them, and also feeds them. When Ron and Harry steal the car again and crash it into the Whomping Willow, she sends Ron an explosive humiliating Howler. She is a fan of Gilderoy Lockhart. She makes all of her children, and Harry, hand-knit sweaters at Christmastime. She is ecstatic when Harry and Ron save Ginny from the Chamber of Secrets.

**Percy Weasley**

Percy is one of Ron's older brothers and a Gyffindor prefect. He is studious and ambitious. Ron also finds him pompous, as he constantly enforces the rules. Ron says that Percy wants to be the Minister of Magic. It turns out that a lot of Percy's odd behavior in the book is to hide his romance with the Ravenclaw prefect Penelope Clearwater.

**Ron Weasley**

Ron Weasley is a student at Hogwarts in the same year as Harry Potter, and also in Gryffindor House. He has red hair and freckles. He is particularly adept at wizard chess and terrified of spiders. His pet rat is named Scabbers. Along with Hermione Granger, Ron is one of Harry's two best friends. He writes to Harry over the summer repeatedly, but his letters are intercepted by Dobby. Concerned, he rescues Harry from imprisonment at the Dursleys' and brings him home to stay with his family. Ron is the youngest son of Molly and Arthur Weasley. He has six siblings: five older brothers, Bill, Charlie, Percy, twins Fred and George, and a younger sister, Ginny. The Weasleys are a loving family of pure-blood wizards who live at the Burrow. Ron's bright orange room is on the fifth floor, right below the attic containing the family ghoul. The Weasley family struggles with poverty, which makes Ron insecure. When Ron breaks his wand he makes do for the rest of the school year, suffering through frustrations and indignities. In a twist, his broken wand ends up preventing Lockhart from erasing his and Harry's memories in the end. Ron exhibits conventional prejudices against Squibs and Parselmouths. He is a loyal friend to Harry, accompanying him through many trials, including drinking the Polyjuice Potion, which disgusts him, and entering the Forbidden Forest, which terrifies him, and entering the Chamber of Secrets to rescue his sister Ginny.

**Oliver Wood**

Oliver is the Captain and Keeper of the Gryffindor Quidditch team. He is very driven to win, and so wakes his team up early to practice and devises elaborate game plans. Before a Quidditch match against Slytherin, he tells Harry Potter: "Get to that Snitch before Malfoy or die trying, Harry, because we've got to win today, we've got to."

## Basilisk (Symbol)

The basilisk represents fear and hatred. It was placed in the Chamber of Secrets by one of the founders of Hogwarts: Salazar Slytherin. His intention was for his heir to one day release the giant snake to terrorize and/or kill everyone at the school without pure wizard blood. For much of the book, the identity of the basilisk is unknown. It is referred to as "the monster." The idea of it was as terrifying as the reality. Because the students are ignorant of what is petrifying their classmates, they make up rumors that perpetuate fear and prejudice.

## Broomstick (Motif)

Flying brooms have been a symbol of witchcraft since the 15th century. In Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets brooms symbolize status in the wizarding world. Harry's Nimbus 2000 broomstick is far superior to Ron's Shooting Star, which was "often outstripped by passing butterflies." Harry's wealth has given him greater power. But he shares it, as they take turns practicing on his broomstick at the Burrow. Later Harry is dejected when the Gryffindor House Quidditch team struggles to keep up with the speed of Slytherin House's Nimbus 2001 broomsticks. These have been gifted by Lucius Malfoy as a bribe to place his son Draco as a Seeker on the Slytherin team, and so represent the unearned advantage of legacy wealth.

## Car (Symbol)

Mr. Weasely's car represents the independence of adulthood. It provides the means of escape from Harry's childhood bedroom at the Dursleys. When Ron and Harry are unable to go to school on the Hogwarts Express, they steal the car, which gives them great freedom and joy at first, until they find they don't have the same resources that they did on the train: they get hungry and thirsty. The car's faulty invisibility booster represents the tenuousness of their adolescent position.

For Mr. Weasley, his car is a quiet rebellion from his wife and from the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Magic. It also represents his adult hybrid sensibility. He appreciates the Muggle design ingenuity of the vehicle and also has the magical chops to enchant it to have a bigger trunk and backseat, to fly and become invisible.

Ron and Harry make Mr. Weasley's quiet rebellion public, which has serious consequences for the Weasley family. When the car is seen by Muggles, Lucius Malfoy claims that Arthur Weasley is unfit to draw up their laws, and wants to scrap the Muggle Protection Act. This consequence displays Ron and Harry's adolescent position, unaware of the political world they inhabit.

The car is personified, but not anthropomorphized. Because it was enchanted by Arthur Weasley, it likely behaves towards Ron and Harry as a parent would. It is peeved when they crash it into the Whomping Willow, but swoops in to rescue them from death by Aragog.

## Cauldron (Motif)

J.K. Rowling wrote of cauldrons on the Pottermore website: "Cauldrons have had a magical association for centuries. They appear in hundreds of years' worth of pictures of witches, and are also supposed to be where leprechauns keep treasure. Many folk and fairy tales make mention of cauldrons with special powers, but in the Harry Potter books they are a fairly mundane tool. I did consider making Helga Hufflepuff's hallow a cauldron, but there was something slightly comical and incongruous about having such a large and heavy Horcrux; I wanted the objects Harry had to find to be smaller and more portable. However, a cauldron appears both in the four mythical jewels of Ireland (its magical power was that nobody ever went away from it unsatisfied) and in the legend of The Thirteen Treasures of Britain (the cauldron of Dyrnwch the giant would cook meat for brave men, but not for cowards)."

In Harry Potter and The Chamber of Secrets, two cauldrons have a special significance in the plot: Ginny's cauldron is where Lucius Malfoy plants Riddle's diary, which is the inciting incident that catalyzes the plot. And Hermione's cauldron is where she concocts the Polyjuice potion over a fire in the girl's toilet. In this Hermione uses her skills in secret, against the rules of the institution, to create magic to empower herself and her friends, as witches have done before her.

## Sock (Symbol)

Harry’s sock is a symbol of Dobby’s service to Harry. The humble object is slimy from Harry’s ordeal. It’s of little value to Harry and disgusting to Lucius Malfoy, but for Dobby the sock is priceless. It sets him free. The sock also represents Harry's goodness. Harry tricks Lucius Malfoy: he frees Dobby by forcing his sock into Malfoy's hand, who in turn throws it to Dobby, and since house-elves are freed if their owner gives them an item of clothing, Dobby is thus liberated. Harry has followed the letter of the rule while showing no respect for its spirit, because he judges it to be cruel. One of Harry’s gifts is to see justice apart from the rules of societal convention. He has no problem disregarding authority when authority is wrong. Harry frees Dobby even though the elf has been an inconvenience to him, because he empathizes with him.

## Colors (Motif)

On her website Pottermore J.K. Rowling explained the meaning of colors in Harry Potter:

"Witches and wizards often reveal themselves to each other in public by wearing purple or green, often in combination. In Britain (and much of Europe) purple has an association with both royalty and religion. Purple dyes, being costly, were once worn only by those who could afford them; bishops’ rings are traditionally set with amethysts. Green has long had a supernatural connection in the UK. Superstition says that it ought to be worn with care; the fairies are supposedly possessive of it, as it is their proper colour. It ought never to be worn at weddings, due to a further association with misfortune and death. Green is the colour of much ‘Dark’ magic; of the ‘Dark Mark,’ of the luminescent potion in which Voldemort conceals one of his Horcruxes, of many ‘Dark’ spells and curses, and of Slytherin house. The combination of purple and green, therefore, is suggestive of both sides of magic: the noble and the ignoble, the helpful and the destructive. The four Hogwarts houses have a loose association with the four elements, and their colours were chosen accordingly. Gryffindor (red and gold) is connected to fire; Slytherin (green and silver) to water; Hufflepuff (yellow and black, representing wheat and soil) to earth; and Ravenclaw (blue and bronze; sky and eagle feathers) to air. Colours like peach and salmon pink are distinctly un-magical, and therefore much favoured by the likes of Aunt Petunia. On the other hand, shocking pink, as sported by the likes of Nymphadora Tonks, conveys a certain punky ‘yes, I’ve got a Muggle-born father and I’m not ashamed of it’ attitude. Colours also played their part in the naming of Hagrid and Dumbledore, whose first names are Rubeus (red) and Albus (white) respectively. The choice was a nod to alchemy, which is so important in the first Harry Potter book, where ‘the red’ and ‘the white’ are essential mystical components of the process. The symbolism of the colours in this context has mystic meaning, representing different stages of the alchemic process (which many people associate with a spiritual transformation). Where my two characters were concerned, I named them for the alchemical colours to convey their opposing but complementary natures: red meaning passion (or emotion); white for asceticism; Hagrid being the earthy, warm and physical man, lord of the forest; Dumbledore the spiritual theoretician, brilliant, idealised and somewhat detached. Each is a necessary counterpoint to the other as Harry seeks father figures in his new world."

## Diary (Symbol)

The memory of Tom Riddle is preserved in his diary for fifty years. It is enchanted to be interactive, a site of exchange of soul. As Riddle explained: "Ginny poured out her soul to me, and her soul happened to be exactly what I wanted...I grew powerful...Powerful enough to start feeding Miss Weasley a few of my secrets, to start pouring a little of my soul back into her." Ginny is weakened by this exchange. When Harry corresponds with Riddle in the diary, he is fooled into believing Riddle's bogus accusation against Hagrid, and into sympathizing with Riddle, which causes Harry to isolate himself and be manipulated by Riddle. This represents a mediated relationship, and scholars have seen parallels with the dark side of social-media relationships.

## Forbidden Forest (Allegory)

The Forbidden Forest represents all that is dark, hidden, and mysterious. Both Carl Jung and Bruno Bettelheim interpret the forest in fairy tales and mythology to represent the human unconscious. Joseph Campbell writes about entering the forest as an essential part of the hero's journey. In Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets Ron encounters his worst fear in the Forbidden Forest: Enormous spiders who want to eat him.

## Glasses (Symbol)

When asked on the BBC why Harry Potter wears glasses, J.K. Rowling replied that she wore glasses throughout her childhood and wanted to write a bespectacled hero. She also said that his glasses have "a symbolic function: Harry is the eyes on to the books in the sense that it is always Harry’s point of view." Harry's glasses are repeatedly broken, especially in the Muggle world at the Dursleys, and then repaired by magic.

## Golden Snitch (Symbol)

The golden snitch is similar to the winged sun symbol in the Ancient Near East (Egypt, Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Persia). it represents divinity, royalty, and power. Gold is also a metal that is traditionally associated with the sun.

## Hogwarts Express Platform (Symbol)

Platform 9 ¾ at Kings Cross Station, where students board the train to Hogwarts, is a symbol of magic: irrational, invisible to Muggle eye, it requires faith the first time Harry encounters it.

## Invisibility cloak (Symbol)

The invisibility cloak, gifted to Harry Potter by his father via Dumbledore, represents the necessity of breaking the rules in order to do what is right. Harry uses the cloak to move about unseen by authority figures, which turns out to be ultimately essential to the survival of the school.

## Lightning bolt scar (Symbol)

Harry Potter's lightening-bolt scar is a symbol of his difference from other wizards. When he defeated Lord Voldemort as an infant he became both chosen and cursed. It also represents the connection between Harry and Voldemort.

## Mandrakes (Allegory)

The Mandrakes are a symbol of maturation, which fits with the coming-of-age theme. When they are babies, they have mottled skin and bawl at the top of their lungs, squirming, kicking, flailing their sharp little fists, and gnashing their teeth. When they are young children, Professor Sprout fits them with socks and scarves against the cold, as a mother would bundle up her child. As adolescents, they grow moody and secretive and have acne. Then as young adults, they throw loud and raucous parties and move into each other's pots. The growth of the Mandrakes also acts as a timeline in the book. The Hogwarts community, somewhat gruesomely, waits for them to mature enough to use them as a restorative. Their maturity coincides with the end of the term, and with the resolution of the mystery.

## Number four, Privet drive (Allegory)

The home of the Dursleys represents the mundane or “Muggle” world. Number 4, Privet Drive is situated in a suburb reflecting middle-class values: determined to be conformist, and therefore hostile to magic. In this world, Harry is neglected, unloved, isolated, and powerless.

## Owls (Motif)

In the Harry Potter books, owls are both pets and messengers. J.K. Rowling wrote: "Of course, owls have been associated with magic for a long time, and feature in many old illustrations of witches and wizards, second only to cats as Most Magical Creature. The owl’s association with wisdom was established in Roman times, for it is the emblem of Minerva, goddess of wisdom."

## Parseltongue (Symbol)

Both Salazar Slytherin and Lord Voldemort are known for being Parselmouths, with the ability to speak to snakes in Parseltongue. Because this is a rare skill associated with these Dark Arts wizards, the rest of the wizarding world views the skill with suspicion. When Harry turns out to be a Parselmouth, he experiences both a crisis of identity and a social crisis. He worries that this is evidence that he is Slytherin's heir. And he experiences the same social exclusion he felt at the Dursleys, also as a result of prejudice against his abilities. His ability to speak to snakes is a symbol of his difference.

## Phoenix (Symbol)

The phoenix is an ancient Greek symbol of renewal. Dumbledore’s description of Fawkes foreshadows the qualities that allow the bird to save Harry in the end: strength, mercy, faith, and loyalty. Harry’s friendships with Fawkes and with Dumbledore cause the bird to weep at Harry’s death. Fawkes' tears provide the grace that brings Harry back to life.

## Polyjuice potion (Symbol)

The Polyjuice potion represents transformation through imagination. Its literary antecedent is Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, where a special potion allows the benevolent Dr. Jekyll to turn into a violent man named Mr. Hyde. On the Pottermore website, J.K. Rowling writes, "I remember creating the full list of ingredients for the Polyjuice Potion. Each one was carefully selected. Lacewing flies (the first part of the name suggested an intertwining or binding together of two identities); leeches (to suck the essence out of one and into the other); horn of a Bicorn (the idea of duality); knotgrass (another hint of being tied to another person); fluxweed (the mutability of the body as it changed into another) and Boomslang skin (a shedded outer body and a new inner)."

## Pure-blood Ideology (Allegory)

The pure-blood supremacist ideology espoused by Salazar Slytherin and Lucius Malfoy, and supported by the weakness of the Minister of Magic, has been read as a political allegory for historical fascist xenophobia, and applied to analyze contemporary politics.

## Gryffindor Sword (Symbol)

Godric Gryffindor's sword is a symbol of bravery. When Harry asks for help in the Chamber of Secrets, Gryffindor responds with the sword, through the Sorting Hat. Harry's loyalty to Gryffindor helps him. His tribe helps him. The sword is an allusion to the legend of Excalibur, the sword of King Arthur which must be drawn from a stone by the rightful king. Harry must be fit to carry the sword, so it also represents his identity.

## Sorting Hat (Symbol)

The Sorting Hat represents the combined will of the Hogwart's founders. The magic of the Sorting Hat is ambiguous. It is unclear if it sorts people based upon their true natures. If so, is nature is determined by blood? Harry’s anxiety about the Sorting Hat’s decision represents his anxiety about his place in the world, whether it is determined by fate or his own free will.

## Wands (Motif)

In Harry Potter, a wand reflects both its owner’s personality and fate. Psychoanalytic critics have written about the wand as a phallic symbol, representing power. The disfunction of Ron's wand is part of his coming-of-age narrative.

## Animal metaphors and similes

Rowling uses animal metaphors and similes throughout the book to make the qualities of her characters vivid. Uncle Vernon's large size and pugnaciousness are made clear when he is described as a rhinoceros (p. 3). The Dursleys' disgust and suspicion towards Harry lead them to treat him as if he's "a dog that had rolled in something smelly" (p. 5). When Harry meets Dobby for the first time, the elf's large ears take on a slightly dark, Gothic quality with the descriptor "bat-like" (p. 12). Fred and George's ability to climb through Harry's window stealthily to rescue him is "catlike" (P. 26). As Mrs. Weaseley becomes powerful in her anger, she "swelled like a bullfrog" (p. 39). In a moment of foreshadowing of what is to come with the basilisk in the Chamber of Secrets at Hogwarts, Harry and Ron see “The Hogwarts Express [...] streaking along below them like a scarlet snake” (p. 71). The tininess of the Muggle world seen from their great height in the flying car is imagined as "a great city alive with cars like multicolored ants" (p. 72). But then as their fortunes change and they run into the Whomping Willow, it hits them with "the force of a charging bull" (p. 75). When Snape and McGonagall seek to punish them, Snape shoots "a look of pure venom at Harry and Ron," true to his affiliation with the snake-themed Slytherin House, while McGonagall is "eyeing them like a wrathful eagle" (p. 82). Professor Binns’ slow, elderly and possibly wise nature is emphasized when he "paused again, pursing his lips, looking like a wrinkled old tortoise” (p. 150). The magical animation of Wood’s quidditch diagram is illustrated by this simile: “Wood was holding up a large diagram of a quidditch field, on which were drawn many lines, arrows, and crosses in different colored inks. He took out his wand, tapped the board, and the arrows began to wiggle over the diagram like caterpillars” (p. 108). Sometimes, Rowling actually states which qualities she is trying to emphasize through the adjectives she uses right before comparing a person to an animal, for example, with "Madam Pince, the librarian, was a thin, irritable woman who looked like an underfed vulture" (p. 163) and with “Snape, gliding over like a large and malevolent bat" (p. 194). Finally, this simile in Ginny Weasley’s valentine for Harry Potter refers to color, but adds a whimsical witchy twist: "His eyes are as green as a fresh pickled toad” (p. 238).

## Plant similes

Moments of magic in the book are often described with images from everyday life, to make them possible to visualize. For example, Rowling uses plant similes to describe several scenes: Garden gnomes are as "small and leathery looking, with a large, knobby, bald head exactly like a potato" (p. 37). When Malfoy is spattered with swelling solution, his head droops "with the weight of a nose like a small melon” (p. 187). And Professor Sprout's understatement is described, appropriately, with a botanical metaphor: "'As our Mandrakes are only seedlings, their cries won’t kill yet,' she said calmly as though she’d just done nothing more exciting than water a begonia" (p. 93).

## Self-referential similes

The book uses several metaphors that are self-referential, referring to other images in the book to create a unified coherent world. As Harry becomes concerned about Mr. Weasley getting into trouble for bewitching the car, he feels "as though he’d just been walloped in the stomach by one of the mad tree’s larger branches" (p. 79). When Percy fights with his brother, “he strode off, the back of his neck as red as Ron’s ears” (p. 158). Ginny Weasley, on the verge of telling Harry and Ron about the Chamber of Secrets "was rocking backward and forward slightly in her chair, exactly like Dobby did when he was teetering on the edge of revealing forbidden information" (p. 285). And when Ron gets embarrassed he becomes "as brightly pink as Lockhart’s valentine flowers" (P. 331).

## Celestial metaphors and similes

The Chamber of Secrets makes use of celestial metaphors and similes to describe light. For instance, Dobby the house-elf’s eyes are frequently referred to as orbs, which are spherical celestial bodies: “Harry Potter is humble and modest,” said Dobby reverently, his orb-like eyes aglow” (p. 15). Ginny Weasley’s warm, red embarrassed face is imagined as a sunset: “she dived under the table to retrieve the bowl and emerged with her face glowing like the setting sun.” And Harry sees Dumbledore’s glowing glasses as moons: "Harry’s eyes wandered past him to where Professor Dumbledore, the headmaster, sat watching the Sorting from the staff table, his long silver beard and half-moon glasses shining brightly in the candlelight" (p. 77).

## Military metaphors and similes

The book uses figurative language derived from warfare to create tension and illustrate conflict. For example comparing Harry to a bomb from Vernon’s perspective conveys his fear: “Ever since Harry had come home for the summer holidays, Uncle Vernon had been treating him like a bomb that might go off at any moment, because Harry Potter wasn’t a normal boy” (p. 3). Many different items are compared to swords, which contributes to establishing a swashbuckling adventure genre: “Mrs. Weasley had appeared, holding a long poker like a sword" (p. 38). This is especially true in the section about the Dueling Club: “Then they raised their wands like swords in front of them” (p. 190). As the tension inside of Hogwarts increases, the feeling of threat is enhanced by this military metaphor: "Raindrops the size of bullets thundered on the castle windows for days on end..." (p. 122). The conflict between Gryffindor and Slytherin house on the Quidditch field is heightened by similes such as this: “They reported that the Slytherin team was no more than seven greenish blurs, shooting through the air like missiles" (p. 123). And in the final confrontation between Tom Riddle and Harry Potter, the life-or-death nature of the conflict is conveyed with a simile of a gunshot: "Riddle was pointing Harry’s wand at Fawkes; there was a bang like a gun, and Fawkes took flight again in a whirl of gold and scarlet” (p .322).

## Uncle Vernon looking stupid (Dramatic Irony)

“‘Do I look stupid?’ snarled Uncle Vernon, a bit of fried egg dangling from his bushy mustache” (p.1).

In this moment of dramatic irony, Uncle Vernon’s question is answered in the affirmative by the narrator’s description of him. This framing of his absurd appearance undercuts the tension caused by the power he holds over Harry. Uncle Vernon may think he is in control, but he definitely looks stupid. This broad humor provides some relief in what would otherwise be a miserable situation. Vernon doesn’t know it, but the story is not on his side.

## Harry Potter (Situational Irony)

“‘Proud?’ said Harry. ‘Are you crazy? All those times I could’ve died, and I didn’t manage it? They’ll be furious. . . .’” (p. 341).

The book ends in situational irony, as Harry Potter, who has just saved Hogwarts with his brave acts of heroism, returns home to the Dursleys, who detest him. He will not receive a hero’s welcome, or even the love of a proud family. Instead, he imagines that they will be angry he didn’t die. There is nothing he could do to win their affection. So after the climax of the Hogwarts feast, this return to the Muggle world adds an anticlimactic melancholy to the end of the story.

## Nearly Headless Nick (Situational Irony)

“'My dear boy! Harry Potter, at my deathday party! And'—he hesitated, looking excited—'do you think you could possibly mention to Sir Patrick how very frightening and impressive you find me?' 'Of—of course,' said Harry. Nearly Headless Nick beamed at him" (p. 130).

This moment is ironic because Nearly Headless Nick is being very kind to Harry, while asking him to vouch for how frightening he finds him. Nick has just helped Harry escape trouble with Filch by convincing Peeves to create a distraction. He and Harry were also commiserating about their mutual social discouragement. Nick is very approachable, polite, and friendly—the exact opposite of what he is expected to be to gain status as a ghost.

## Gilderoy Lockhart (dramatic irony)

“Still, if ever you feel the need for a little private training, don’t hesitate to ask. Always happy to pass on my expertise to less able players. . . .” (p. 163).

Much of what Gilderoy Lockhart says in the book is ironic, in that everyone (the other characters and the reader) knows that he can’t do everything that he claims. His hyperbole becomes absurd as he tries to make inroads by pretending to have an impossible array of skills. He also makes these claims at the expense of whoever he is talking to, which undermines his friendly gesture. In this quote, he is posing to Harry Potter as an expert in Quidditch.

# Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets Imagery

## Olfactory Imagery

Smells represent belonging or disgust, being part of an in-group or out-group, and so life or death. The Dursleys treat Harry as if he smells gross. They clearly do not love him: “...he was back with the Dursleys for the summer, back to being treated like a dog that had rolled in something smelly” (p. 5). When Ron and Harry crash the car into the Whomping Willow, they get in trouble and are lead away from the welcoming smell of the feast: “A delicious smell of food was wafting from the Great Hall, but Snape led them away from the warmth and light, down a narrow stone staircase that led into the dungeons.” In Hogwarts classes, Harry enjoys the smells of the greenhouse: “Harry caught a whiff of damp earth and fertilizer mingling with the heavy perfume of some giant, umbrella-sized flowers dangling from the ceiling” (p. 90), while Ron’s struggles with his wand and his studies are stinky: “...every time Ron tried to transfigure his beetle it engulfed him in thick gray smoke that smelled of rotten eggs” (p. 95). In Filch’s office, his fishiness is represented literally: “A faint smell of fried fish lingered about the place” (p. 125). As Harry, Ron, and Hermione try to enjoy the deathday party, they realize it's not quite for them when they discover the table of rotting food: “they approached it eagerly but next moment had stopped in their tracks, horrified. The smell was quite disgusting” (p. 133). When Harry hears the basilisk for the first time, he is horrified that the snake is talking about smelling its human prey: “I smell blood. . . . I SMELL BLOOD!” (P. 138). The dramatic and bizarre petrification of Colin is intensified by the smell of his burnt camera: “Harry, three beds away, caught the acrid smell of burnt plastic” (p. 180). In the resulting panic, students try to ward off danger with talismans, including one smelly one: “Neville Longbottom bought a large, evil-smelling green onion” (p. 185). In the climactic battle in the Chamber of Secrets, Tom Riddle tries to manipulate the basilisk even after Fawkes has blinded it by reminding it of its sense of smell: “YOU CAN STILL SMELL HIM! KILL HIM!” (p. 319) and “KILL THE BOY! LEAVE THE BIRD! THE BOY IS BEHIND YOU! SNIFF — SMELL HIM!” (p. 320). In the end, Harry’s disgusting stinky sock repulses Lucious Malfoy so much that he discards it immediately, inadvertently setting Dobby free. Harry uses his olfactory reaction against him: “...he forced the smelly sock into Lucius Malfoy’s hand” (p. 337).

## Gustatory Imagery

When Harry arrives at the Burrow, he is immediately fed well. Even though Mrs. Weasley yells at her sons, she also feeds them. Food represents the love that the Weasleys have for each other and share with Harry. In Mrs. Weasley's kitchen, cooking is a form of magic.

This scene at the Burrow also provides a direct contrast with the breakfast scene which opens the book at the Dursleys, where Petunia tries to hit Harry with a frying pan, and with his subsequent imprisonment in his room with cold soup.

Gustatory imagery is used to convey a contrast in status between characters. The Dursleys overfeed Dudley and underfeed Harry Potter. They also reserve their most elaborate delicious food for the Masons. Harry's hunger represents his neglect. When Harry reaches London, and is able to access his wizard wealth at Gringotts, he buys his friends and himself large ice creams. Harry's higher status in the wizarding world is represented by his ability to buy sweet treats. His generous nature is reflected in wanting to share this happiness with his friends.

Food presented to others represents kindness and hospitality throughout the book.

The bits of Crabbe and Goyle that Ron and Harry are required to consume in the Polyjuice potion represent the discomfort of empathy. Ron is deeply disgusted with having to become his enemy in order to learn the truth.

Feasts at Hogwarts bring the community together in ritual and to mark the Sorting Ceremony and holidays such as Halloween and Christmas. Missing a feast means being out of step with the community. Harry and Ron miss the initial feast when they must take alternative transportation to Hogwarts. The toffees that Harry and Ron enjoy in the car represent the luxurious freedom of independence they find in the flying car. When they grow thirsty, this represents the consequence of detachment from the community on the train. Snape is suspicious when they find a petrified student during the Halloween feast. And it is a sign that the crisis at the school has passed when Dumbledore calls for a feast after Harry has rescued Ginny from the Chamber of Secrets and defeated Tom Riddle.

## Auditory Imagery

Sounds at times represent social transgression, as when Hedwig screeches, disturbing Uncle Vernon's sleep, and when Dobby makes noise that disrupts the Dursleys' dinner party with the Masons. Both demonstrate Harry's precarious, powerless position in the household. When the Weasleys' car removes the bars from Harry's window, it does so with a loud crunch, representing the ultimate transgression: freedom. Harry and Ron run into the Whomping Willow with a loud crash that gets them into trouble with Hogwarts professors, and makes them heroes among the students.

## Tactile Imagery

Tactile imagery in this book often represents the unexpected—whether horrifying, gratifying, or merely awkward. When characters feel something touch their bodies, this sensation reveals something about their relationship with their environment that they were too preoccupied or unaware to notice before. Sometimes this is benign, like Ginny putting her elbow in the butter dish; sometimes it is awful, like being seized by a giant spider; and sometimes it is wonderful, like the feeling of Fawkes and the Sorting Hat brushing Harry's face as they help him in the Chamber. A few examples:

“She nodded, blushing to the roots of her flaming hair, and put her elbow in the butter dish” (p. 44).

“Then, with a thrill of horror, he realized that someone was sponging his forehead in the dark” (p. 176)

“Harry blundered up the corridor, barely noticing where he was going, he was in such a fury. The result was that he walked into something very large and solid, which knocked him backward onto the floor.‘Oh, hello, Hagrid,’ Harry said, looking up” (p. 201).

“Something wet touched Harry’s hand and he jumped backward, crushing Ron’s foot, but it was only Fang’s nose” (p. 273).

# Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets “Harry Potter: A History of Magic”

The British Library and the New York Historical Society co-created an exhibit inspired by the [Harry Potter](https://www.gradesaver.com/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/study-guide/character-list#harry-potter) books called “Harry Potter: A History of Magic.” It ran from October 20, 2017 to February 28, 2018 in London and October 5, 2018 to January 27, 2019 in New York. The exhibit contained magical objects that inspired the Harry Potter series; original material from Scholastic, who published the series; drafts and drawings from [J.K. Rowling](https://www.gradesaver.com/author/j-rowling)’s archives; and original Harry Potter book illustrations. Century-old treasures on display included rare books, manuscripts, and folkloric objects such as medieval descriptions of dragons, mandrakes, and the sorcerer’s stone. Artifacts and editorial content from the exhibit have been reproduced in an official companion book, and expanded in an audio documentary available on Audible, and as an interactive feature on Google Arts and Culture.

**Main Ideas**

## Themes

**Main Ideas** Themes

### Tolerance of People who are Different

The idea of tolerance within a community is highly important in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets.* The plot of the novel explores this idea through Salazar Slytherin's intention to wipe out "mudbloods," or wizards with non- magical ancestors, from Hogwarts. Harry himself is only half-wizard, and Hermione's parents are both "Muggles," non-magical people. However, Harry and Hermione are better wizards than Malfoy, who is from a family of generations of pure wizard blood, showing that dedication and work, rather than genetic heritage, are the important factors in guaranteeing success. Rowling describes the Slytherin students as inbred: all are oversized, strange-looking, mean and unintelligent. But their blood is pure, and that is what matters most to them, their final torch of victory when they have nothing else in their favor. The Dursleys too add to this theme with their inherent intolerance-they are a pitiful lot, terrified of magical people, mean to Harry, nosey and ill-tempered, and yet extremely proud of themselves for being, in their opinion, normal.

### Reliance on a Community

In the novel, almost nothing is achieved by a single person alone. Harry, Hermione, and Ron break the secret of the Chamber, find the entrance, and defeat the beast inside by working together. Each of the three adds a special element to the trio, and all depend on the others for support and assistance. When Harry and Ron are about to be eaten by spiders, Ron's car saves them; when Harry is about to be eaten by the basilisk, Dumbledore's phoenix saves him. Although the three main characters are courageous, they are also able to seek help when necessary, either from each other or from outside sources. Although Harry is the protagonist and hero, he must rely on others to succeed.

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### The Importance of Choices

Dumbledore explains the importance of choices when he reassures Harry that Harry is meant to live in the Gryffindor dormitory. Although it is important for wizards to have inborn skill and astute minds, knowing how to use ability and knowledge is ultimately a more important trait. Harry, although famous from the beginning, is impressive because he does not count on his special abilities to protect him. Harry uses each moment as a springboard for the next test of his will and courage, making choices that shape his life, not waiting for his life to shape itself.

### Framing

The plot of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* frequently suggests that one character is guilty when another actually turns out to be responsible for causing distress at Hogwarts. This motif of framing reminds us that rarely are things as easy as they may appear. The wizard world is full of secrets and deception, requiring Harry to be careful in his research and accusations. These framings also teach the main characters to be persistent; when they reach a dead end they back up and try again.

### Names

Some of the most fascinating and colorful aspects of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* reside in the names of the characters. Some of the names the names have clear origins of significance. Lucius Malfoy's name suggests evil; "mal" is a latin root meaning "bad," and Lucius, echoes Lucifer. Lockhart's name describes his locked heart, or secret identity. Other names, like Dumbledore, are actual words; "dumbledore" is an old English word for bumblebee. Dumbledore, who is an ancient, wise wizard, works hard to sustain his community, at Hogwarts.

### Warmth

Hogwarts is an insular, secure place. The sense of Hogwarts as a place of comfort is furthered by images of warmth: Gryffindors studying around the fireplace, hot chocolate being the end all cure for ailments, plentiful food appearing magically on the Great Hall's tables. At a very basic level, Hogwarts is a provider and haven, and through the images used to illustrate this, we understand more clearly what Harry is fighting to protect.

**haracters**

## Characters

**Characters** Characters

### Harry Potter

The hero and protagonist, Harry is a twelve-year-old boy with messy hair and glasses who became famous within the wizard community by surviving the curse of a powerful wizard. Harry frequently finds himself entangled in dangerous adventures but he always lives to tell the tale. Harry's character represents good intentions, innocence, and the fantasies of childhood.

Read an [in-depth analysis of Harry Potter.](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/potter2/character/harry-potter/)

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### Ron Weasley

Ron is tall, red-haired, and from a respected but poor family. Ron is one of Harry's two best friends at Hogwarts. He is loyal to Harry, and belligerent to their enemy, Malfoy. Ron uses experience and a process of trial-and-error to solve most mysteries. Ron's character is often overshadowed by Harry's, but Ron always manages to succeed.

Read an [in-depth analysis of Ron Weasley.](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/potter2/character/ron-weasley/)

### Hermione Granger

Hermione is always the top student in her class. She is clever and well-read. Most spells come easily to her and remain in her encyclopedic mind. Her insight leads her to discover that the monster within the Chamber is a basilisk and that Polyjuice potion will allow the group of friends to spy on Malfoy. Principled and fond of rules, Hermione unwillingly follows the boys on their illicit adventures in order to unravel the mystery of the Chamber of Secrets.

Read an [in-depth analysis of Hermione Granger.](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/potter2/character/hermione-granger/)

### Voldemort

Once a student named Tom Riddle who attended Hogwarts fifty years before Harry, Voldemort became the most powerful dark wizard ever. When Harry was a baby, Voldemort killed Harry's parents and tried to kill Harry, only to have his curse backfire and render him powerless. He is an embodiment of pure evil.

### Tom Riddle

Tom's past and appearance resemble Harry's. Tom, who grew up to become Voldemort, is the last remaining descendent of Salazar Slytherin. Through his old diary he enchants Ginny Weasley to perform his dark tasks.

### Hagrid

The gamekeeper at Hogwarts and a good friend of Harry's. Hagrid is a giant, hairy man with a strong accent and a great liking for strange and dangerous creatures. Tom Riddle frames him as responsible for the monster within the Chamber of Secrets.

### Albus Dumbledore

The headmaster of Hogwarts. Dumbledore is a wise, powerful, elderly man with a long silver beard. He is one of the most impressive characters Harry has ever met. He has a calm, secretive demeanor and is extremely intuitive and trustworthy. He also is an egalitarian wizard, believing that all wizards, whatever their blood, have the same potential for greatness. This notion infuriates Lucius Malfoy, who tries to get Dumbledore fired from the position of headmaster.

### Draco Malfoy

Slimy, smirking, and snobby, Draco is Harry's greatest Hogwarts nemesis. Because his family is very wealthy, he is able to buy himself a position on the Slytherin House Quidditch team, but even though he has the fastest broomstick, he cannot play the game well.

### Lucius Malfoy

Draco Malfoy's father, a mean, hissing man who mistreats Dobby, his house-elf, and encourages meanness and bigotry in his son. He is the head of the school governing board, and he uses his power to (temporarily) remove Dumbledore from power. Lucius is responsible for having slipped Riddle's diary into Ginny Weasley's books at the beginning of the story.

### Ginny Weasley

Ron's younger sister. Ginny is a shy red-haired girl with an enormous crush on Harry. She finds Tom Riddle's diary. The magic diary manipulates her into opening the Chamber of Secrets and releasing the basilisk.

### Percy Weasley

Ron's brother. Percy is a prefect who is in charge of a group of younger students. He is annoying, nagging, and pompous, but has good intentions.

### Fred Weasley

One of Ron's older brothers, Fred is a beater for the Gryffindor House Quidditch team. Fred and his twin brother George are troublemakers. Fred has a louder sense of humor than George, but they are almost identical and usually inseparable.

### George Weasley

One of Ron's older brothers, George is a beater for the Gryffindor House Quidditch team. He and his twin brother Fred are troublemakers. George is subtler and more tongue-in-cheek than his twin. Together, the Weasley twins are an infamous, amusing, and charming pair.

### Molly Weasley

Ron's mother. Molly is very maternal and protective, but also quite strict.

### Arthur Weasley

Ron's father, who works in the Misuse of Muggles Artifacts Office within the Ministry of Magic. He Muggle artifacts, and has a buoyant, childlike enthusiasm.

### Vernon Dursley

Harry's stuffy, nasty-tempered Muggle uncle.

### Petunia Dursley

Harry's unpleasant Muggle aunt.

### Dudley Dursley

Harry's spoiled, overweight Muggle cousin.

### Minerva McGonagall

The head of Gryffindor House, a stern but deeply concerned witch, and a great aficionado of Quidditch.

### Severus Snape

The Potions teacher, and a slimy, ill-tempered man, Snape is the head of Slytherin House and gets great pleasure out of trying to get Harry into trouble.

### Gilderoy Lockhart

The teacher of the class called "Defense Against the Dark Arts." Lockhart is the author of many magical books, and the five-time winner of *Witch Weekly*'s Most Charming Smile Award. An incompetent, astonishingly vain man, Lockhart offers much of the comic relief in this story.

### Professor Sprout

The Herbology teacher who is in the process of growing Mandrakes to save the petrified victims.

### Argus Filch

The Hogwarts caretaker, who is grouchy and adores nothing but his cat.

### Mrs. Norris

Filch's beloved cat, petrified by the basilisk.

### Cornelius Fudge

The Minister of Magic, who visits to apologetically remove Hagrid.

### Oliver Wood

The Gryffindor Quidditch captain and keeper.

### Colin Creevey

A first year boy who follows Harry around, taking his photographs and embarrassing him tremendously; The first person to be petrified.

### Neville Longbottom

A sweet, pudgy, and very clumsy Gryffindor boy; a friend of Harry.

### Goyle

One of Draco Malfoy's unintelligent, lumbering cronies; Harry uses Polyjuice potion to transform himself into Goyle.

### Crabbe

The other of Draco Malfoy's unintelligent, lumbering cronies; Ron uses Polyjuice potion to transform into him.

### Millicent Bulstrode

A belligerent Slytherin girl who has to duel with Hermione during the dueling club meeting. Hermione tries to transform into her, but becomes her cat instead.

### Justin Finch-Fletchley

A Muggle-born boy in Hufflepuff House who is petrified.

### Penelope Clearwater

Percy's girlfriend, a Ravenclaw prefect who is petrified.

### Dobby

The Malfoy house-elf. Dobby tries to get Harry out of Hogwarts to keep him away from the danger that lurks there. he almost kills Harry by trying to save his life so many times.

### Ernie Macmillan

Justin's friend, who suspects Harry to be responsible for the suspicious occurrences at Hogwarts.

### Nearly-Headless Nick

The friendly Gryffindor ghost whose Deathday party Ron, Harry, and Hermione attend.

### Moaning Myrtle

A ghost who haunts the girls' toilet. Myrtle was killed by the Chamber of Secrets basilisk fifty years earlier.

### Peeves

A poltergeist that causes harmless trouble at Hogwarts.

### Hedwig

Harry's pet owl.

### Aragog

A giant spider raised in captivity by Hagrid.

### Fang

Hagrid's large but friendly dog.

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The protagonist of the series. This second book in the series follows Harry as he tries to solve the mystery of what is causing the attacks on Muggle-born students at Hogwarts. Harry also spends much of the book trying to come to terms with who he is and who he is growing to be. Harry often worries about his identity being out of his hands: many people in the wizarding world (for example, [**Ginny**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ginny-weasley) and [**Colin Creevey**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters)) treat Harry like a celebrity because he was almost killed as a baby by the dark wizard [**Voldemort**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort). Meanwhile other people, such as **[Gilderoy Lockhart](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/gilderoy-lockhart)** and [**Draco Malfoy**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy) (Harry’s nemesis) believe that Harry is only concerned with his fame, viewing him as bigheaded—even though Harry is actually humble and tries as much as possible to stay out of the spotlight. Harry also worries about his identity being left to fate, as the Sorting Hat thought about putting Harry in Slytherin House a year prior (a House notorious for the number of dark witches and wizards that have been in it). As the story goes on, Harry worries that he might somehow be connected with Salazar Slytherin because he discovers that he can speak to snakes just as Slytherin could. Additionally, he worries about being very similar to Tom Riddle (whom Rowling eventually reveals is a younger version of Voldemort). But over the course of the book Harry proves that he is unlike Slytherin and Riddle in many ways as well. While they choose to be prejudiced against Muggle-borns, Harry treats everyone around him with respect as long as they are kind as well. Harry is also deeply loyal, both to his best friends [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) and [**Hermione**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/hermione-granger), and to mentors like [**Dumbledore**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-dumbledore) and [**Hagrid**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid). These relationships imbue Harry with courage as they support him on his quest to find information about the attacks, ultimately allowing him to kill the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk) and destroy Riddle.

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| Hermione GrangerCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley)**  [Ron Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) |

One of Harry’s best friends, along with [**Ron Weasley**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley). Hermione is Muggle-born (she has non-magic parents) and is known for her intelligence and magical abilities: she is the top of the class at Hogwarts. This disproves some of the prejudices and stereotypes that people like [**Lucius**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/lucius-malfoy) and [**Draco Malfoy**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy) have about Muggle-borns; they believe that Muggle-borns are inferior to “pure-blood” wizards, but both [**Hagrid**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid) and [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) assure Hermione that this prejudice is unfounded. When attacks begin on Muggle-born students, Hermione is understandably nervous, and she works to stave off her fear in two different ways. First, unlike many other students who spread rumors about the Chamber of Secrets and the Heir of Slytherin, Hermione seeks out concrete information in the library and from [**Professor Binns**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-binns) so that she can learn the truth about the attacks. Additionally, she comes up with a plan to brew Polyjuice Potion, which will allow herself, Harry, and Ron to transform into Slytherin students and interrogate Draco Malfoy about the Heir of Slytherin. Brewing the potion involves breaking many school rules and stealing from Snape’s personal store. This is unlike Hermione, who is usually adamant about following the rules, but like Harry and Ron she understands the value of breaking the rules when she feels that what she is doing is morally right—and to her, preventing the attacks is paramount. Hermione eventually pieces together what is causing the attacks (the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk)), but before she can tell Harry and Ron, she is attacked and is petrified. However, Harry and Ron’s loyalty to Hermione spurs them to solve the mystery of the Chamber of Secrets so that they can make sure other students do not experience the same fate. At the end of the book, Hermione recovers from the attack and is delighted that her friends used the information she found to finish solving the mystery.

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| Ron WeasleyCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort)**  [Tom Riddle/Voldemort](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort) |

One of Harry’s best friends, along with [**Hermione Granger**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/hermione-granger). Ron is a second-year student in Gryffindor and he has red hair and freckles. Ron is the youngest son in the Weasley family, and he has five older brothers (including [**Percy**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters), [**Fred**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/fred-weasley), and [**George**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/george-weasley)) and a younger sister, [**Ginny**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ginny-weasley). Ron and his family contrast sharply with [**Draco**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy) Malfoy and his family: both the Weasleys and the Malfoys are “pure-blood,” but Ron understands that blood status has little to do with magical talent, and therefore he does not share the prejudice that pure-blood wizards are superior to others. Ron also experiences his own form of discrimination and prejudice because his family is quite poor. He worries that he will be judged for his lack of money, but Harry is always loyal to Ron. Ron, in turn, accompanies Harry on nearly all of his adventures, and often provides Harry with the support that enables him to succeed. For example, at the beginning of the book, Ron worries that he hasn’t heard from Harry all summer and so he, Fred, and George, fly the car to Harry’s house in order to free him from the Dursleys’ clutches. Ron also follows the spiders into the Forbidden Forest along with Harry to help him find information about the Chamber of Secrets, despite the fact that he is terrified of spiders. At the end of the book, Ron and Harry go to the Chamber of Secrets together in order to rescue Ginny from the clutches of [**Tom Riddle**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort). Like Harry, Ron has a bit of a rule-breaking streak in him, but also like Harry, he usually only breaks the rules when he feels that doing so is the morally right thing to do.

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| Tom Riddle/VoldemortCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-dumbledore)**  [Professor Dumbledore](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-dumbledore) |

Tom Riddle was a student at Hogwarts fifty years prior to [**Harry**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter); his fifth-year memories are preserved in a diary that eventually makes its way into Harry’s hands. Riddle bears some mysteriously resemblances to Harry: he is half-blood, an orphan, has jet-black hair, can speak Parseltongue, and considers Hogwarts to be his home. When Harry picks up his diary, Riddle shows him a memory of his time at school in which he catches [**Hagrid**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid) and gets him expelled for opening the Chamber of Secrets. But ultimately, several revelations about Tom Riddle come to light: he is in fact the Heir of Slytherin and he opened the Chamber of Secrets fifty years prior and framed Hagrid for doing it. In the present, Riddle’s diary takes possession of [**Ginny**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ginny-weasley) and he uses her to control the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk) to attack Muggle-borns. The second revelation is that Tom Riddle is the young version of the dark wizard Voldemort, who killed Harry’s parents and tried to kill Harry as a baby. Tom’s full name, Tom Marvolo Riddle, is also an anagram of “I am Lord Voldemort.” Harry confronts Riddle in the Chamber, slays the basilisk with the help of Fawkes the phoenix, and destroys Riddle’s diary (and thus the memory of Riddle himself). The revelation that Riddle is a young Voldemort causes Harry to worry that he might be too much like Tom Riddle, and that he, too, could be destined to become a dark wizard. However, [**Dumbledore**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-dumbledore) emphasizes that Harry’s choices make him very different from Riddle, who always chooses self-interest and power where Harry chooses bravery and kindness.

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| Professor DumbledoreCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/gilderoy-lockhart)**  [Gilderoy Lockhart](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/gilderoy-lockhart) |

The Headmaster at Hogwarts. Dumbledore serves as a parental figure and a mentor for [**Harry**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter); in the beginning of the book he reproaches Harry and [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) for the foolish action of flying the car to Hogwarts. Harry worries about disappointing Dumbledore, and so after the attacks begin, Harry chooses not to confide in Dumbledore about the mysterious voice that only he can hear because he worries that Dumbledore will not believe him. After the attacks continue over the span of several months, [**Lucius**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/lucius-malfoy) [**Malfoy**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy) and the other governors ask Dumbledore to step aside, despite Cornelius Fudge’s protests. Yet even though Dumbledore is forced to step aside from his position, his final words before leaving imply to Harry that he is not alone. This proves true: when, in the Chamber of Secrets, Harry affirms his belief that Dumbledore is not truly gone from the, he is rewarded for this display of loyalty by the arrival of Dumbledore’s phoenix, [**Fawkes**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/fawkes). Harry is heartened by Fawkes’s arrival and regains his courage as a result. In addition, Fawkes blinds the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk), delivers the Sorting Hat (and the Sword of Gryffindor) and also heals Harry when he is poisoned by a venomous basilisk bite. At the end, when Harry finally confides in Dumbledore his insecurities about being similar to [**Tom Riddle**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort), Dumbledore explains that Harry is very different from Tom Riddle simply because he makes different choices—a lesson that reaffirms Harry’s control over his own identity in this and future books.

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| Gilderoy LockhartCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid)**  [Rubeus Hagrid](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid) |

The new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher at Hogwarts. Lockhart is known for many great deeds, which he writes about at length in his many memoirs. However, over the course of the book he is shown to be more and more inept at magic, until it becomes clear that Lockhart is a fraud. He is extremely self-centered and often assumes [**Harry**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) is after the same fame and fortune that Lockhart himself enjoys, despite the fact that Harry has no real interest in being in the spotlight. At the end of the book, Lockhart confirms the fact that he is a fraud when the teachers try to send him into the Chamber of Secrets to rescue [**Ginny**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ginny-weasley) and instead he tries to run away. Harry and [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) confront him as he packs, and Lockhart reveals that he never did any of the things in his books; he merely found the people who had accomplished these feats, asked them to recount their experiences in detail, and then wiped their memories with Memory Charms. Harry and Ron then disarm him and force him to go to the Chamber with them; when he grabs Ron’s broken wand and tries to wipe his memory, Ron’s wand backfires and Lockhart’s memory is wiped instead. At the end of the book, [**Dumbledore**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-dumbledore) announces that Lockhart will not be teaching again next year.

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| Rubeus HagridCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy)**  [Draco Malfoy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy) |

The groundskeeper at Hogwarts, who also serves as a mentor and friend to [**Harry**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter). Hagrid has a weakness for taking care of large and sometimes dangerous creatures. It is revealed later in the book that Hagrid was expelled from Hogwarts fifty years earlier for opening the Chamber of Secrets, because Riddle found him taking care of a giant monster (which turns out to be the spider **[Aragog](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/aragog)**, and not the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk)). Harry, [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley), and Hermione’s loyalty to Hagrid prevents them from confronting him after this discovery, but when Hermione herself is attacked, Harry and Ron try to talk to Hagrid about these events. They are interrupted, however, when [**Cornelius Fudge**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/cornelius-fudge) arrives to take Hagrid to Azkaban prison because the Chamber has been opened again. Hagrid then tells Harry and Ron to “follow the spiders,” which allows them to discover that Hagrid was actually innocent and that Aragog was not the monster who attacked and killed a student. In the end, when it is discovered that [**Riddle**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort) actually framed Hagrid for this crime, he is exonerated and brought back to the school. Hagrid is incredibly kind and loyal both to Harry and to [**Dumbledore**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-dumbledore).

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| Draco MalfoyCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/lucius-malfoy)**  [Lucius Malfoy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/lucius-malfoy) |

A second-year student in Slytherin and Harry’s rival at Hogwarts. Draco can usually be seen flanked by his two friends [**Crabbe**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters) and **[Goyle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters)**. Draco and his father [**Lucius**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/lucius-malfoy) become in many ways the antithesis of the Weasley family and Harry. Draco constantly uses hateful words to discriminate against others who are not like him. He makes fun of [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) for being poor and calls [**Hermione**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/hermione-granger) a “Mudblood,” a slur implying that she’s inferior because she has two Muggle parents. He also despises Harry and often taunts him when other people treat him like a celebrity. This prejudice leads Harry, Ron, and Hermione to believe that Draco is the Heir of Slytherin and that he is the one causing the attacks, and so they conjure up a potion to turn Harry and Ron into Crabbe and Goyle in order to ask Draco about the Chamber of Secrets. Draco reveals to them that he is not the Heir of Slytherin, but that he wishes he knew who it was so that he could help them attack Muggle-borns, again showing his deep hatred and prejudice.

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| Lucius MalfoyCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/dobby)**  [Dobby](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/dobby) |

The father of [**Draco Malfoy**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy). It is revealed that Lucius was a big supporter of [**Voldemort**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort), but after Voldemort’s fall, he claimed that he was bewitched while Voldemort was in power. Lucius is incredibly prejudiced against Muggles, Muggle-borns, and anyone sympathetic to Muggles, and he instills this prejudice in Draco as well. Lucius particularly dislikes [**Mr. Weasley**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/mr-weasley) because part of his work at the Ministry involves protecting Muggles. Lucius plants Tom Riddle’s diary in Ginny’s books at Flourish and Blotts, knowing that if Ginny is caught opening the Chamber of Secrets and sending the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk) to attack Muggle-borns, it could endanger Mr. Weasley’s Muggle Protection Act. Throughout the book Lucius uses his position of power as a school governor to manipulate the rules, first putting pressure on [**Fudge**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/cornelius-fudge) to take Hagrid to Azkaban, and then threatening the other governors to support him in removing [**Dumbledore**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-dumbledore) from his post. At the end of the book, Harry tricks Lucius into freeing his house-elf [**Dobby**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/dobby), which infuriates Lucius.

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| DobbyCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ginny-weasley)**  [Ginny Weasley](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ginny-weasley) |

A house-elf who works for the Malfoys. Dobby is abused by [**Lucius**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/lucius-malfoy) and [**Draco**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy) and has heard of Harry’s greatness, and so when he realizes that Lucius is plotting against Harry, Dobby goes to warn Harry that he should not return to Hogwarts this year. He also tries several schemes to prevent Harry from staying at the school: during the summer he stops Harry’s letters to make Harry think that he has no friends; he destroys Aunt Petunia’s pudding with a Hover Charm to try and get Harry expelled for using magic outside of school; he closes the barrier at platform nine and three quarters to prevent Harry and [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) from passing through it; and finally he enchants a Bludger to try and injure Harry enough to send him home. Even though these events cause Harry a great deal of trouble, Harry understands that Dobby is causing them to try to protect Harry. At the end of the book, Harry repays Dobby’s kindness by tricking Lucius into freeing Dobby.

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| Ginny WeasleyCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/cornelius-fudge)**  [Cornelius Fudge](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/cornelius-fudge) |

Ron’s younger sister, who is in her first year at Hogwarts. Ginny idolizes [**Harry**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) and gets nervous around him at the start of the book. When the Weasleys are buying books in Flourish and Blotts, [**Lucius**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/lucius-malfoy) covertly hides Tom Riddle’s diary within one of Ginny’s books. Ginny then pours her heart and soul into the diary’s pages, which allows Riddle to possess her. Ginny then (unknowingly to her) opens the Chamber of Secrets and controls the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk), using it to attack Muggle-born students. She starts to suspect that she may be involved in the attacks, and throws the book away. But when she sees that Harry has found the diary, she steals it back to prevent Riddle from possessing Harry. At the end of the book, Riddle forces Ginny to enter the Chamber of Secrets in order to lure Harry and Ron there, but Harry is able to rescue her and destroy Riddle.

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| Cornelius FudgeCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/aragog)**  [Aragog](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/aragog) |

The Minister of Magic, and Mr. Weasley’s boss. After the attacks on Muggle-borns continues at Hogwarts, Fudge is pressured by the school governors (primarily [**Lucius Malfoy**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/lucius-malfoy)) to “do something,” as he puts it. But instead of trying to figure out who actually opened the Chamber, he simply takes Hagrid away to Azkaban because [**Hagrid**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid) had been expelled for the same crime fifty years earlier, despite the fact that there is no evidence to indicate that Hagrid is the perpetrator this time. Thus, Fudge demonstrates the way in which leaders are more concerned with appearing to do the right thing rather than actually doing it. This is a sharp contrast to [**Harry**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter), who is more concerned with doing the right thing than with trying to follow the rules and simply appearing to do the right thing.

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| AragogCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-binns)**  [Professor Binns](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-binns) |

An elephant-sized spider who lives in the Forbidden Forest. Fifty years prior to Harry’s time at Hogwarts, [**Hagrid**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/rubeus-hagrid) took raised Aragog, and Tom Riddle framed Hagrid for opening the Chamber of Secrets by making the teachers believe that Aragog was the [**monster**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk) that attacked several students and killed [**Myrtle**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/moaning-myrtle). When Hagrid is taken off to Azkaban for the same crime in the present, he gives Harry and Ron a clue to find Aragog. Aragog then tells them that he is not the monster from the Chamber, and provides the crucial hint that the student who died fifty years earlier died in a bathroom.

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| Professor BinnsCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-mcgonagall)**  [Professor McGonagall](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-mcgonagall) |

The History of Magic teacher at Hogwarts. Professor Binns is a ghost, and usually his classes are very dry and boring lectures. However, after the attack on Mrs. Norris, [**Hermione**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/hermione-granger) asks Professor Binns for information on the Chamber of Secrets, and Binns tells the students about the origin of the Chamber of Secrets and the prejudice against Muggle-borns. He also informs the students that there is said to be a [**monster**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk) within the Chamber, and that only the Heir of Slytherin would be able to open the Chamber and control the monster. However, Professor Binns also maintains that the Chamber is only a myth.

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| Professor McGonagallCharacter Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-snape)**  [Professor Snape](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-snape) |

The Transfiguration teacher at Hogwarts and the Head of Gryffindor House. Professor McGonagall is a strict rule-enforcer and doles out detention to [**Harry**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) and [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley) when they arrive via flying car. However, she also cares deeply for the students and is extremely anxious about the attacks going on at the school. When [**Dumbledore**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-dumbledore) is suspended from the school at the end of the book, she takes over as the temporary Headmistress.

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| The Monster/BasiliskSymbol Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/fawkes)**  [Fawkes](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/fawkes) |

The basilisk (which for most of the novel is referred to simply as “the monster” because people do not know what it is) embodies two ideas: first, the harmful nature of prejudice, and second, the fear of the unknown. The basilisk, as [**Professor Binns**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/professor-binns) explains to [**Hermione**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/hermione-granger) and the rest of the Gryffindors, is a monster imprisoned in the Chamber of Secrets by Salazar Slytherin that is meant to “purge the school of all who were unworthy to study magic.” By its very nature, it is a tool of hatred, and it carries out that goal in its attacks: Mrs. Norris is the cat of a Squib ([**Filch**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/argus-filch)), and [**Colin**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters), [**Justin**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/justin-finch-fletchley), Hermione, and [**Myrtle**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/moaning-myrtle) are all Muggle-born students. Rowling uses the basilisk to demonstrate how easily prejudice can escalate into true hatred and even a desire to murder. For example, [**Draco**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/draco-malfoy) (who begins the novel simply disliking Muggle-born students) confesses that he wishes he knew who the Heir of Slytherin is so that he could help that person kill Muggle-borns.

Additionally, because so little information is known about what the basilisk is, it also serves as a mechanism that spreads fear. Because it petrifies students it attacks, the victims can’t reveal any information about it and the students create rumors to fill in the gaps in their knowledge. Like the basilisk itself, misinformation and fear circulate under cover around the castle, to the point at which students are afraid not of the basilisk itself, but of what they do not know (i.e., a nameless monster).

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| FawkesSymbol Analysis | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-sword-of-gryffindor)**  [The Sword of Gryffindor](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-sword-of-gryffindor) |

Fawkes, Dumbledore’s phoenix, becomes a symbol of [**Harry**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/harry-potter) and Dumbledore’s shared loyalty, and of how Dumbledore’s support of Harry inspires Harry’s bravery. After several mysterious attacks on students, Dumbledore is forced to leave his post by the school governors. Then, in the Chamber of Secrets when Harry confronts [**Tom Riddle**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort), he tells Riddle that Dumbledore isn’t as absent from Hogwarts as Riddle thinks. These words of loyalty to Dumbledore call Fawkes to Harry. In turn, Fawkes does several key things: first, he blinds the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk), which is what enables Harry to fight the monster without being killed by looking into its eyes. Second, Fawkes brings the Sorting Hat, which delivers to Harry the Sword of Gryffindor. Both of these acts make Harry feel as though he is not alone in fighting the basilisk, and they enable him to have the courage (and the practical tools) necessary to defeat both Riddle and the basilisk. Fawkes also helps heal Harry when he is stabbed by a basilisk fang, and he allows Harry, [**Ron**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ron-weasley), [**Ginny**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/ginny-weasley), and [**Lockhart**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/gilderoy-lockhart) to escape the Chamber once the basilisk is dead. All of these moments serve to emphasize how Harry could not defeat the snake or Tom Riddle alone; it is only with Dumbledore’s support that he is able to find the strength within himself to do so.

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| The Sword of GryffindorSymbol Analysis: | **[Next](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/chart-board-visualization)**  [Theme Wheel](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/chart-board-visualization) |

The Sword of Gryffindor represents Harry’s ability to choose his own identity. Throughout much of the book, Harry worries that he does not actually belong in Gryffindor because the Sorting Hat tried to put him in Slytherin. However, at the end of the book, the Sword of Gryffindor appears out of the Sorting Hat, which in turn allows Harry to conquer the [**basilisk**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/symbols/the-monster-basilisk). This demonstrates that even though Harry has many qualities that make him similar to Slytherin’s heir [**Tom Riddle**](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/harry-potter-and-the-chamber-of-secrets/characters/tom-riddle-voldemort), Harry chooses to oppose the values that Riddle and other dark wizards uphold. In using the Sword of Gryffindor to slay the basilisk, Harry chooses courage over cowardice, respect over prejudice, and loyalty and friendship over hatred and isolation—all choices that allow him to forge his own identity.