

CSCI-UA.0480-051: J.K. Rowling and the Harry Potter Series

Practice Exam

Generated on October 26, 2023

Difficulty: Medium

Important Notes:

- Answer all questions to the best of your ability
- Show all work for partial credit
- Use additional paper if needed
- Time limit: 90 minutes

Problem 1 (5 points)

Considering the multifaceted nature of J.K. Rowling's career, discuss the impact of her later controversial statements on the reception and legacy of the Harry Potter series, considering both its enduring popularity and the criticisms leveled against her.

Problem 2 (12 points)

Analyze the use of magical realism in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, specifically examining how it functions to explore themes of prejudice, belonging, and the struggle against oppression. How does the magical world reflect and critique the real world?

Problem 3 (12 points)

Compare and contrast the character development of Harry Potter across the seven books, focusing on his evolution from a vulnerable orphan to a powerful and responsible wizard. What key experiences shape his growth, and how does he overcome internal and external conflicts?

Problem 4 (10 points)

Explore the symbolism of specific locations within the Harry Potter universe, such as Hogwarts, the Forbidden Forest, and the Ministry of Magic. How do these places contribute to the overall narrative and thematic elements of the books?

Problem 5 (10 points)

Discuss the complex relationships between Harry, Ron, and Hermione, analyzing how their friendship develops, faces challenges, and ultimately shapes their individual journeys. Consider instances of conflict and reconciliation within their dynamic.

Problem 6 (15 points)

Examine the role of prophecy and fate in the Harry Potter series. How do these elements influence the plot and the characters' destinies, and to what extent do the characters have agency in shaping their own lives?

Problem 7 (5 points)

Analyze the portrayal of different forms of magic in the Harry Potter series, comparing and contrasting their power, limitations, and ethical implications. Consider the use of spells, potions, and other magical practices.

Problem 8 (8 points)

Evaluate the effectiveness of J.K. Rowling's world-building in the Harry Potter series. Discuss the consistency and depth of the created world, including its history, social structures, and magical systems.

Problem 9 (10 points)

Consider the various villains in the Harry Potter series, exploring their motivations, their methods, and the impact they have on the story and the characters. How do these villains reflect societal issues and anxieties?

Problem 10 (13 points)

Discuss the critical reception of the Harry Potter books and films, examining the praise and criticism they received, and how these responses have evolved over time. Consider factors such as target audience, changing social contexts, and the author's subsequent controversies.