

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

by J. K. Rowling

Just as Harry Potter is packing his bag to return to Hogwarts, a strange, impish creature named Dobby appears and warns him that if he returns, disaster will follow him, endangering all his friends—a prediction that turns out to be all too true.

THEMES

secrets, problem-solving, family, friendship, responsibility, fantasy, magic

Young Listener Unabridged Audio

I. PRE-TEACHING

A. Have the class define and discuss these terms:

cunning, livid, reverently, chink, fiasco, jaunty, cowered, haphazardly, hoax, gingerly, conjured, sumptuous, cavernous, silhouetted, innumerable, sallow, ominously, immaculate, exotic, nonplused, transfigured, pandemonium, burly, poltergeist, havoc, translucent, gaunt, lank, grisly, drone, arrant, gullible, torpor, inept, ebb, mayhem, resplendent, malevolent, askew, chaos, labyrinthine, nondescript, minuscule, wizened, raucous, buoyant, serpentine, placidly, rapt, impaled

B. Before beginning the story, discuss the following terms with the class:

1. Would you like to go to magic school like Harry does? What classes would you take? What would you do with your magic powers?
2. Have you ever been afraid? What does it feel like? How can you conquer your fear?
3. What are some magical and frightening creatures you've read about or seen on TV? Which would you like to meet them in real life? Which would you hate to meet? Why?

II. PRESENTATION

A. Understanding the Story:

1. Begin with Chapters 1 - 6: Why does Harry send Hedwig with a message to his friends? What startles Harry when he enters his room that night? What has Dobby come to tell him? How is Harry rescued? Compare life at The Burrow to life with the Dursleys. How does Gilderoy Lockhart react when he first sees Harry? What happens just before they get to Hogwarts? What happens at the Sorting? Describe Gilderoy Lockhart. Describe their first day at school.
2. Advance to Chapters 7 - 12: Why is being called a "Mudblood" an insult? What does Harry discover about Filch? Describe the ghosts' party. What has happened to Mrs. Norris? What does the Writing on the Wall say? Why was the Chamber of Secrets built? What happens at the Quidditch game? What has happened to Colin? Why is it bad that Harry can talk to snakes? What

evidence do the Hufflepuffs cite to prove Harry is a Dark Lord? What does Harry see at Dumbledore's house? What does the Sorting Hat tell him? What happens to Hermione?

3. Complete the story with Chapters 13 - 18: What has happened to Moaning Myrtle? What does Harry notice about the diary when he gets it back from Malfoy? What does Harry observe in the past at Hogwarts? What's unusual about the way Hagrid is acting? What happens when Cornelius Fudge and, later, Lucius Malfoy come to Hagrid's cottage? What does Harry learn in the forest? How does Gilderoy Lockhart react to the challenge the other teachers give him? How does the Sorting Hat help Harry? How is Harry's wound healed? Why can Harry speak Parseltongue? What is the final proof that Harry belongs in Gryffindor?

B. For Discussion:

1. Why are Draco Malfoy and his father enemies of Harry?
2. What are some of the rules of the wizard world? Why do they have these rules? Should any be changed? If so, which ones? Why?
3. Why do Malfoy and others feel being "Part Bloods" is no good? How is this finally resolved?
4. Dumbledore tells Harry, "It's our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." Discuss the choices Riddle and Harry make throughout the story and how these choices show them for what they are.

III. EXTENDING THE LESSON

Give students the opportunity to work with partners, groups, the whole class, or alone.

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS:

A. Language Arts:

1. Have students write the opening chapter of a book Gilderoy Lockhart might have written, such as *Voyages with Vampires*, *Travels with Trolls*, or *Wandering with Werewolves*. They could make up additional titles as well.

2. Have students write a journal entry from the point-of-view of someone they know, such as a classmate and then discuss the experience. Does putting themselves in someone else's shoes help them gain more empathy for the person? Why or why not?
3. As students listen, have them jot down the names of the characters, then discuss how the characters' names reflect their personalities. Why is Gilderoy Lockhart's name appropriate? Flitwich's? Sinistra's?
4. The monster in this story can petrify people with a glance. Have students read the myth of Perseus and the Medusa to compare with this scene. Did this myth influence J. K. Rowling? What other stories and myths might have influenced her?

B. Art and Music:

1. Have students select background music that is appropriate to some of the scenes. Impressionistic music by Ravel or Debussy might be fitting, or they might find the soundtrack from the *Harry Potter* movies.
2. Have students make a bulletin board about the story. They could put up a background of a wall with a small entrance, and draw the various creatures Harry encounters. If they can find toys, stuffed animals, or other *Harry Potter* items, they could include them.
3. Have students put together a book of magic, illustrated with magical creatures with instructions for magic potions, magic tricks, and magic lore.
4. Have students make gargoyles out of papier maché to display in the classroom or school library.
5. Have students find sound effects to illustrate a dramatic reading of the story. What would be heard at the ghosts' party? In the Chamber of Secrets? In Moaning Myrtle's bathroom stall?

C. Social Studies:

1. Many fantastic creatures appear or are mentioned in the story, such as ghouls, gnomes, pixies, werewolves, unicorns, centaurs, and elves. Have students select one and find out more about these creatures. In what historic period were these believed in and what are some of the tales written about them? For example, where and when were unicorns prominent? Centaurs?

imagine what would happen if an adopted child were treated this way today. Why do we have laws protecting children? When were they enacted? Are there any recent cases of children being mistreated? What happened?

3. Malfoy and his friends say cruel things about "Part Bloods." Have students find out about prejudice in our own history toward people of mixed racial or ethnic blood. For example, how were people treated who were part white and part Native American during the settling of the West? How were the children of slaves and white landowners treated? Is this still true?

D. Science and Math:

1. Have students find out about ghosts. What evidence have people put forth to prove ghosts exist? How has this evidence been disproved by others?
2. Have students find out about the snowy owl. Would an owl be able to carry messages the way Hedwig does? Why or why not? What birds do carry messages? What kind of training do they need? Why are they able to do this?
3. Harry is able to speak to snakes. Have students find out about snakes. Why are "snake charmers" able to get their snakes to obey them? Are snakes sensitive to certain sounds?

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