You may look things up in Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban and on our course Canvas site. You may not use any other website, person, or other source. You can retake the quiz once if necessary. Good luck! We're reading Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, the third book in the series, because it's (I think) the best written and most interesting one. To give you some background (if you haven't read the books or seen the movies), Harry's parents fought against an evil wizard and were killed protecting their baby Harry. The evil wizard Voldemort was mortally wounded by Harry's mother's protective love, but the good wizard Dumbledore knew he would try to return and so hid Harry with his non-magical relatives to protect him until he's old enough to become a wizard himself. Prisoner of Azkaban comes when Harry has made friends at school and feels more confident, but is confronted by adult problems and politics with their roots in the past. In terms of structure: the series as a whole is a coming-of-age narrative, with one book per year from ages 11-17 (7 books total). It begins with Harry the child first learning about his true heritage and identity, and ends with Harry the young man taking on the adult responsibility of facing Voldemort in a final battle and saving his world. This narrative arc is similar to the hero's journey described by Joseph Campbell and seen in ancient myths around the world and modern films (Star Wars is a particularly good example). Each book also presents a shorter version of the same narrative arc. In the first novel, the letters arriving from Hogwarts are the "call to adventure" and Hagrid's arrival is "meeting the mentor," the train trip to Hogwarts is "crossing the first threshold," and finding the philosopher's stone in his pocket is "the ultimate boon." Harry returns to the Dursley household and the Muggle world at the end of the book, where he was so miserable in the past, but he has been transformed by finding out who he really is, finding friends and family, and having proved himself in the serious battle with Voldemort and the (important but less earth-shaking) battle for the House Cup. As you see in The Prisoner of Azkaban (Book 3), this pattern repeats itself. Harry is miserable in the Dursley household, finds refuge in the wizarding world, is confronted by an adventure, and then returns to the Dursleys with hope that the next summer will be better. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero%27s\_journey Several themes develop through the series, but we can see a lot of them in the first three books. In particular, we see Harry finding his place in the world and finding a family. The depth of Harry's trauma is only really clear starting in Book 5, but we already know about it here. Harry gains so much in the first book, starting with Hagrid appearing with the only birthday cake he's ever known, meeting Ron, becoming friends with him and then Hermione and Neville, becoming part of the Hogwarts family, and leaving with wizard photos of his parents. Hagrid's last gift to Harry - the photo album with old photos of his parents - is more significant than it might seem, tucked in after the climactic battle. We know that Harry's deepest lack and deepest desire is for his parents, for his family. We see this issue again throughout Prisoner of Azkaban, from his anger when Aunt Marge insults his parents through his discovering new connections to his father (especially the Marauder's Map and the Patronus). The film adaptation of Prisoner of Azkaban is also one of the best of the series, and the scene where Professor Lupin teaches the students how to deal with a boggart is one of my favorites: "Riddikulus" It shows how important the theme of learning to face (literally) one's fears and conquer them. https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=3PWKFyhJ2h4 In terms of genre, the Harry Potter books are clearly fantasy novels - specifically quest fantasy - and share some of the humor and absurdity of Roald Dahl's books. (Dahl wrote Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and Matilda, among others.) Here's an interesting article about the tradition of British children's fantasy. It's also a coming-of-age narrative (each novel shows a significant step in Harry's maturation over a school year, and the series as a whole covers his growing up from childhood to young adulthood). And it's a school story: the story mostly takes place among children at a boarding school, and their rivalries, friendships, and conflicts with each other and with the school authorities drive the action. The coming-of-age and school story narrative forms intersect in an interesting way: each of the first six books begins with Harry leaving his Muggle home, going to school, and then leaving school to reenter the Muggle world. This roughly follows the pattern of a traditional rite of passage, marking a stage of growth, as described by Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner: separation, transition (liminality), and reincorporation. https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/01/why-the-british-tell-better-childrens-stories/422859/ The first Harry Potter novel became a sensation shortly after it was published in 1997 (in the U.K. as Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone; 1998 in the U.S. as Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone - because of marketing). When Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, the fourth book in the series, was published in July 2000, there was so much excitement that bookstores had to hide their copies before the official release date and many stores had midnight release parties. Here's one of the early reviews: http://www.nytimes.com/books/99/02/14/reviews/990214.14childrt.html Some literary critics have compared J.K. Rowling's writing unfavorably to that of Ursula K. LeGuin, Philip Pullman, and C.S. Lewis. But I think the novel succeeds in several ways: it blends several genres, it blends moments of humor with moments of deep emotion, and it can be enjoyed by readers at multiple levels. More experienced, older readers catch more of the humor, social commentary (fairly light in the first novel, but increasing in later novels), and may feel more connection to the sense of loss and finding meaningful relationships. Younger readers sympathize with Harry's struggles and his making friends, and enjoy the adventure and magic. Furthermore, the books increase in complexity, emotional weight, and length as the series continues. (Recently, the author herself has become involved in controversy. We'll talk more about that on Friday.)