Reflective Paper

In the beginning, I was set on doing a classroom project as a master thesis. Every thesis I had read before has had some version of participants or informants. I guess this made me believe I had to do this as well. However, looking back at 2020, I am glad I decided upon a theoretical paper. Because of Covid-19, the school closed for two months during the spring term. This would have made my classroom research more challenging. When deciding upon my project, my fondness of English literature and more specific, *Harry Potter,* made the decision easier. With guidance from my study group and my supervisors, the choice fell on the social classes of *Harry Potter* and how to make use of it in the classroom.

The literature search was engaging and insightful. As a self-proclaimed *Harry Potter*-lover, it was exciting to connect the books to the theory on social class and stratification. However, I did also experience some difficulties in researching which method I should use and find the appropriate literature to support my method. As mentioned, most of the previous thesis's I had read involved some version of participants or informants. Therefore, many of the research methods used involved statistics, surveys, textbook analysis, interviews and student projects. Luckily, my supervisors guided me on the right path.

After having written my thesis, I see that I have so much more I wanted to say. There were many examples that had to be deleted to stay within the word limit. Moreover, on several occasions during my writing, my engagement took me along and I forgot that not everyone is as familiar with the *Harry Potter* world as the undersigned. Because I chose to work with all seven of the books, I feel that I barely touch upon each of them. Therefore, it might have been an idea to work with one of the books and go more in the depth. This way the students would have been able to read and work with that book, instead of just using excerpts from several books.

Moreover, I would love to test the teaching activities in my classroom. However, whilst I was writing my thesis, I was teaching 6th and 7th grade. Therefore, I decided that the theme and reading material were too complicated for their level. Though, I believe that a research where the activities had been tested in the classroom, would have contributed to strengthen the thesis and make the final chapter more interesting, engaging and accurate.

As a final note; I grew up with the *Harry Potter* books, and I never read them this way before. In the end, I am surprised of all the evidence of social hierarchy, classism and discrimination detected in *Harry Potter*. It has made me see the books in a different light, and, moreover, made me reflect over the empowerment of literature and the possibilities fictional stories give in the English as a second language classroom.

Henrikke Kormeseth-Rødal, 2020

MASTER'S THESIS

Pure-bloods, mudbloods, house-elves and giants; A dive into the social classes of *Harry Potter* and how to make use of them in the English classroom.

Henrikke Kormeseth-Rødal

10.11.2020

Acknowledgments

Abstract

The Norwegian curriculum says that two of the six core values for students to learn are "identity and cultural diversity" and "human dignity" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019a). Furthermore, in the English curriculum, three core elements are specified, communication, language learning and literary texts (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019d). Therefore, according to the curriculum, literature may be said to be an essential tool in language education. The English book series, *Harry Potter*, can be used to address many important topics that can be tied to "identity and cultural diversity" and "human dignity". With these topics there are immediate links to our present world, and in the English classroom one may use *Harry Potter* to teach about them. Theories on social class and stratification date far back and are based on how groups are separated in society. The separation of these groups has cultivated differences and inequalities among people.

This thesis seeks to examine to what extent *Harry Potter* can be used to make students reflect on social class. The seven *Harry Potter* books are used as a primary source material. The findings are discussed in light of research on *Harry Potter*, stratification, social class, classism, prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes. Examples of classroom activities are then developed based on how literature can be beneficial in the English as a second language classroom.

There is evidence of social class, discrimination, prejudice and inequality in the *Harry Potter* books. In combination with the classroom activities developed, the students will be able to reflect on social class in the book series and relate what they learn from *Harry Potter's* fictional world, to British society.

Keywords: social class, prejudice, discrimination, classism, *Harry Potter*.

List of Abbreviations

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	Stone
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	Chamber
Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	Prisoner
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	Goblet
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	Order
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince	Prince
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows	Hallows
English as a Second Language	ESL

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Any learning situation can be used for the development of knowledge, skill and attitude. It can be an everyday situation such as an argument in the playground, or the application of measurements from mathematics in food preparation. A teacher's job is to prepare children for adult life and to become good people, hopefully with some knowledge in the trunk. The Norwegian curriculum requires ESL teachers to teach much more than just the English language. The curriculum specifies six core values as important. Two of them are "identity and cultural diversity" and "human dignity" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019a). Identity and cultural diversity are meant to provide the students with a historical and cultural insight that will give them a good foundation later in life (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019b). Human dignity focuses on equality and equal rights (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019c). However, equality is not always the case. The inequality between people in society can be represented in social classes or social stratification (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282). Giddens and Birdsall (2001) state that "societies can be seen as consisting of 'strata' in a hierarchy, with the more favoured at the top and the less privileged nearer the bottom" (p. 282). Even though equality has come a long way since Rosa Parks, an American civil rights activist, refused to give her bus seat to a white man, there is still a long way to go to achieve equality for everyone. The movement "Black Lives Matter" is a very current example of this. Discrimination and prejudice are examples of inequality. Prejudice is the opinions and attitudes one group hold against another, whilst discrimination is the actual behaviour conducted towards one group of people or individuals (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 251). Discrimination is still a very common problem in many places in the world. By teaching children that every human is worth the same, regardless of their economic situation, education, skin colour, ethnicity, ancestors and status, the world can be a better place. This understanding can be taught through many approaches, one of which is through the use of literature. According to Carter and Long (1991), reading can lead to greater understanding, knowledge and personal growth (p. 2).

One example of children's literature is *Harry Potter*. In 1997, Joanna Kathrine Rowling, the author of the *Harry Potter* book series, swept people off their feet. The books offered children an escape to a magical world filled with witches, wizards, muggles and

other magical creatures. Her story and her main character, Harry Potter, made a literary sensation in many countries. Not only have the books been read and the movies seen by millions of children and adults, but in addition, the enormous success of *Harry Potter* has initiated much research on the phenomenon of *Harry Potter*, and the strong female character of Hermione Granger and the heroic orphan of Harry Potter. However, besides research on friendship, bravery, school and family much has been published on class in the *Harry Potter* series. Kerewsky and Geiken (2007) state, "The magical world has its own share of racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of discrimination that would be very familiar to any Muggle" (p. 56). The concept of classism is defined by Lott (2012) as "negative attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours toward those with less power, who are socially devalued" (p. 654). When discussing negative attitudes towards those who are socially devalued in *Harry Potter*, the question of who has pure-blood or not is essential. Something that, of course, echoes of notions such as "princes and princesses of the blood royal" with clear connotations of a class society with a very distinct hierarchy of social classes. As stated by Park (2003) concerning the social order in *Harry Potter*, "what matters is how ancient one's family is, how much wizard gold they possess, and of course, where they stood in the Dark Times when Voldemort rose to power" (p. 184). Links have, for example, been drawn between the social order in the wizarding world and British society. Westman (2002) says, "the wizarding world struggles to negotiate a very contemporary problem in Britain, the legacy of a racial and class caste system that, though not entirely stable is still looked upon by a minority of powerful individuals as the means to continue power and control" (p. 306). Westman (2002) also compares the tension between the wizards' social classes to the "real" contemporary British suburbia (p. 307). The link between the social classes in *Harry Potter* and British society is only one of many drawn between the magical world and current problematic issues.

1.2   Research Question

This thesis will examine how literature can be used to make students reflect on social class. The *Harry Potter* book series have been used as a primary source (Rowling, 1997-2007).

The research question for this thesis is: To what extent do the *Harry Potter* books have the potential to make students reflect on social class?

The central themes in this thesis will be social class, discrimination, prejudice and classism.

1.3 Structure

This thesis is divided into six parts. The first part is the introduction which explains the background for the project. Next follows the theoretical framework. This chapter includes theory on social class and stratification, discrimination and classism. It briefly presents some elements of the Norwegian curriculum from 2020. Furthermore, it discusses the reasons for the use of literature in the classroom and different literary approaches for language teaching in an ESL-classroom. Chapter three is a short presentation of the method that has been used, textual analysis. The chapter also consists of a detailed presentation of *Harry Potter*. Chapter four includes research on social class and discrimination in the *Harry Potter* books. Furthermore, it involves detailed events from the *Harry Potter* books that have been described and analysed in relation to previous research and the theoretical framework from chapter two. Chapter five consists of a discussion on the didactic implementation of the books, and three examples of classroom activities. The thesis ends in concluding remarks in chapter six.

2 Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework will consist of theory on social class, discrimination and classism. There will be a brief presentation of important elements from the Norwegian curriculum of 2020. It will also consist of theories on the use of literature in the classroom and literary approaches.

2.1 The History of Social Class

When speaking of social class and differences, sociologists describe the inequalities that exist between individuals and groups in human society (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282). Why, for example, do some children go to private schools and some to public schools? Why are some rich and some poor, and why are some people more likely to become unemployed than others? These questions can be seen in connection with social classes in a community. Theorists such as Marx and Weber have developed their theories on how the social system is built. Marxism was developed in the 19th century in European feudal society. Marx's definition of class is "a group of people who stand in a common relationship to the means of production – the means by which they gain a livelihood" (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, pp. 283-284). According to Fulcher and Scott (2003), Marx argued "that the existence of private property divides people into social classes" (p. 28). This division produced a basic difference between property owners and propertyless workers (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p.

28). Because of this difference, the property-owning class would always have moe privileges than the property less class and thereby create conflict (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 28). Marx defines three classes, the capitalists, the workers and the petty bourgeois (Levine, 2006, p. 3). The capitalists are the property owner class, as mentioned above, and the workers are the property less class. The petty bourgeois are those outside the capitalist's production, the self-employed and the professionals (Levine, 2006, p. 3). The capitalists could not exist without the workers because it was the workers who produced value (Levine, 2006, p. 3). This means that the workers produced commodities, which entails a value for the capitalists. However, the workers had no own capital or property, only their work capacity, which they could sell for wages (Levine, 2006, p. 4). Even though the capitalists and the workers were dependent upon one another, the system created significant inequalities, thus creating a greater split between the working class and the capitalist class (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, pp. 284-285; Levine, 2006, p. 4).

According to Giddens and Birdsall (2001), Weber's theories on stratification is built on the analysis developed by Marx (p. 285). However, Weber developed a more complex view of society, where it was no longer merely the matter of class but also the two aspects of status and party (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 285). According to Fulcher and Scott (2003), each of the three aspects has "a separate effect on the production of advantaged and disadvantaged life chances" (p. 694). In Weber's theory, class can be connected to economic power (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 694). Class is said to involve the given person's economic status and thereby their properties, capital, product and other assets (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 695). Status is referred to as communal power (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 694). Giddens and Birdsall (2001) define status as the "differences between social groups in the social honour or prestige they are accorded by others" (p. 282). Hence, the term status involves a person's style of life and is considered to be based on one's manner of speech, housing, dress and occupation (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 285). The aspect of party is defined by Giddens and Birdsall (2001) as "a group of individuals who work together because they have common backgrounds, aims or interest" (p. 286). A group can, for example, be an organisation who work towards a specific goal. The aspect of party is also referred to as authoritarian power (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 694). The main difference, in the theories by Marx and Weber, is that Marx believed that the differences in society was built on economics and managed to build his theory on social stratification to class division alone (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 286). However, Weber's theories draw attention to the

interactions of several aspects concerning stratification and thereby produces a more complex theory (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 285).

2.2 Social Classes and Strata

Giddens and Birdsall (2001) state, "societies can be seen as consisting of 'strata' in a hierarchy, with the more favoured at the top and the less privileged nearer the bottom" (p. 282). Stratification and social class can be marked by where you work, what clothes you wear, what kind of house you live in, what type of car you drive or the school you attend. Fulcher and Scott (2003) say that social stratification "exists only when the social inequalities involve the arrangement of individuals into strata or classes that lie one above the other in a hierarchy of advantaged and disadvantaged life chances" (p. 692). Fulcher and Scott (2003) also specify that social stratification and social inequalities are not the same things (p. 692). Social stratification involves the system in which the people are sorted, based on a hierarchy of advantages and disadvantages in life chances (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 692). Thus, will the sorting system produce inequality for the people in it. When discussing inequality, it is normal to separate between an open and a closed structure of inequality (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 661). An open structure will allow people to change their position in the given system (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 661). On the contrary, in a closed structure "people's chances in life are fixed at birth and they cannot rise, or fall, through their own efforts or achievements" (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 661). An example of an open structure is Fulcher and Scott's (2003) classification of three frequently recognised strata. These are upper class, middle class and lower class. However, it is common to recognise as many as seven social strata (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 692).

Giddens and Birdsall (2001) mention the four basic systems of stratification that have existed in human societies: slavery, caste, estates and class (p. 282). Giddens and Birdsall (2001) describe slavery as being an "extreme form of inequality in which some individuals are literally owned by others as property" (p. 282). This description tallies with Fulcher and Scott's (2003) statement about how "slaves lack freedom because they are owned by others" (p. 212). According to Giddens and Birdsall (2001), in some stratification systems, "inequalities are expressed primarily in personal relationships of duty or obligation", and they specify the relationship between "slave and master" (p. 282). Fulcher and Scott (2003) also use the word objects in relation to slaves (p. 212). Slavery is an example of a closed structure, as the children of slaves are born into slavery, thus, they are slaves (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 212). The caste system is also an example of a closed structure (Fulcher &

Scott, 2003, p. 206). The caste system is often associated with Indian cultures and has a close relation to incarnation in Hindu religion (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282, Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 701). Estate is also an example of a closed structure. This stratification system is often linked to traditional civilisation, including European feudalism (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282). In Europe for example, the estate was based on a hierarchy where the aristocracy and gentry were on top, followed by the clergy and finally the commoners (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282). The commoners were often referred to as the third estate, as they included the serfs, merchants and artisans (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282). The fourth system of stratification, class, is the only example of an open structure (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282). Giddens and Birdsall (2001) define class systems as "a large scale grouping of people who share common economic resources, which strongly influence the type of lifestyle they are able to lead" (p. 282). In a class system, your position is achieved, not given or inherited by birth (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282). Nor is your position in the strata set by law or religious beliefs (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 282). One of the significant dividers in class is found in inequality of pay and working conditions (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 283). In relation to this, Giddens and Birdsall (2001) state, "these affect all the people in specific occupational categories, as a result of economic circumstances prevailing in the economy as a whole" (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 283). As mentioned, when discussing social class, it is common to refer to three groups, upper class, middle class and lower class. In term of what Fulcher and Scott (2003) state, the lower class would be at a disadvantaged in life chances in relation to the middle class (p. 694). However, the middle class would also be at a disadvantage in relation to the upper class (Fulcher & Scott, 2003, p. 694).

2.3   Discrimination and Classism

When discussing stratification and inequality, the terms discrimination and prejudice will also need to be noted. Prejudice is known as "opinions and attitudes held by members of one group towards another" (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 250). This definition is equivalent to Jandt's (2004) definition of prejudice as an "irrational suspicion or hatred of a particular group, race, religion or sexual orientation" (p. 93). The concept of prejudice can often have its ground in stereotyping. The term stereotype is defined as "a complex form of categorisation that mentally organises your experiences with and guides your behaviour toward a particular group of people" (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, & Roy, 2016, p. 389). Brislin (2000) says that stereotyping is a way of "storing information in people's minds" (p.

195). According to Giddens and Birdsall (2001), stereotypes are often applied to ethnic minority groups (p. 250). While prejudice describes the attitudes and opinions towards individual or groups, discrimination refers to the actual behaviour towards that individual or group (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 251). Both prejudice and discrimination can operate alone. Many people have prejudiced attitudes, however, not everyone act on them (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 251). One can also discriminate against others based on their class. This concept is also known as classism. As mentioned earlier, Lott (2012) defines classism as "negative attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours toward those with less power, who are socially devalued" (p. 654). Lott specifies interpersonal classism as identified by prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination (Lott, 2012, p. 654).

2.4 Norwegian Curriculum

By fall 2020, the new Norwegian curriculum has entered the schools. There is a new curriculum for every subject, as well as a core curriculum featuring six core values of education and training. These values are for the school to base their practice around. The six core values are, "human dignity", "identity and cultural diversity", "critical thinking and ethical awareness", "the joy of creating, engagement and the urge to explore", "respect for nature and environmental awareness" and "democracy and participation" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019a). The value of human dignity especially has a focus on equality and equal rights (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019b). Therefor the Norwegian school is required to "present knowledge and promote attitudes which safeguard these values" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019c). In the English curriculum, The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2019d) defines three core elements; communication, language learning and literary texts. It says that while working with literary texts, the students will be able to achieve knowledge and experience about linguistic and cultural diversity, by reflection, interpretation and critical assessment of different types of texts. The curriculum says that language learning occurs in meeting with English written texts. The English curriculum is divided into competence aims on completion of year 2, year 4, year 7, year 10 and VG1. However, for this thesis, the aims on completion of year 10 and VG1 will be in focus. After year 10, the students should have developed knowledge of how to "read, discuss and redistribute the content from different types of texts" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019e). They are also expected to be able to "read, interpret and reflect on English youth fiction" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training,

2019d). After VG1, the students are expected to be able to "discuss and reflect on the content of different types of text", as well as "analyse and interpret English fiction" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019f).

2.5   Why Use Literature in the Classroom?

As seen above, literary texts are one of the three main components of the English curriculum, and it can therefore be said to play an essential role in the language learning for youngsters today. The benefits of literature have been discussed by many. According to Lazar (1993), one of the reasons to use literature is motivation. By exposing the students to literature, they can experience complex themes, as well as a high sense of achievement while tackling literary material (Lazar, 1993, p. 15). Another reason mentioned by Lazar (1993) is expanding the students' interpretative abilities (p. 19). The students' abilities will be developed when the students are challenged to form hypotheses and draw interferences (Lazar, 1993, p. 19). To develop the students' interpretative abilities can also be seen in comparison to Koutsompou's (2015) statement of how literature "can enhance the critical thinking abilities of the learners and at the same time maintain a learner centre [sic] environment" (p. 75). Lazar (1993) also lists other reasons, such as giving a cultural background, encouraging language acquisition and education of the whole person (pp. 16-19). Koutsompou (2015) states that by using literature in the classroom, the teacher can create an interactive class where the students can also improve their communicative competence (p. 75). Carter and Long's (1991) three reasons for teaching literature have been mentioned by Koutsompou (2015, p. 75). The reasons, which each embraces a set of learning objectives for the students, are divided into the cultural model, the language model and the personal growth model (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 2). Firstly, the cultural model will be presented. With this model in use, the text is seen as a product and the students are set to learn about the background of the given culture (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 2). To learn about society, politics and history of the given culture, can help the students in becoming more open and understanding the ideologies, traditions, feelings and heritage that culture endows. Secondly, the language model is also referred to as one of the most common approaches. This model gives the students the possibility to develop knowledge about how the language is used in literary texts (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 2). The students will develop their knowledge by working with grammar, lexical and discourse categories. The final one, the personal growth model, helps the students experience engagement while reading (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 3). For the teacher to be able to secure personal growth, the key is to choose

literature that the students can respond to, as it will help them to use their ideas and imagination.

2.6   Literary Approaches

A teacher can use different approaches to literature in the classroom. Van (2009) introduces some frequently used approaches for literary analysis (p. 2). One of these is the reader-response approach. This approach connects the reader to the literary text (Van, 2009, p. 5). The reader must use his or her own personal opinions and feelings to interpret the literature (Van, 2009, p. 5). According to Van (2009), such an approach to teaching can activate "students' background knowledge so they can better predict and decode the language and themes of literary texts" (p. 6). Another approach mentioned by Van (2005), is the critical literacy approach (p. 7). This approach allows the students to examine both the language in use and social power (Van, 2005, p. 7). The critical literacy approach can be used with texts related to issues of identity, culture, political power, gender, ethnicity, class, and religion (Van, 2005, p. 8). According to Fairclough (2014), language is shaped by society and society shapes language (p. 8). Because of this, students can explore how social and political factors shape and affect language (Van, 2005, p. 8).

According to Langer (2011), a discussion-based approach to literature can also be useful. Langer (2011) displays examples of what a literary discussion could look like (p. 50). By using a literary discussion, the students' original idea can grow and be used to develop new ideas in collaborative work (Langer, 2011, p. 52). This is what Langer calls "to build environments". These types of discussions can teach students to stimulate new awareness and possibilities (Langer, 2011, p. 54). According to Langer (2011), collaborative interactions will provide two types of support for the students (p. 92). The first is "support that helps people participate in the discussion" and the second, "support that helps people think things through" (p. 92). Langer (2011) also talks about the word "envisionment", and how this refers to "the world of understanding a particular person has at a given point of time" (p. 10). In relation to teaching, envisionment is the understanding about a text, whether it is being read, written, discussed or tested (Langer 2011, p. 11). As Langer says, "literature plays a critical role in our lives, often without our notice" (Langer, 2011, p. 5). A literary discussion can also be combined with other approaches for teaching. Carter and Long (1991) focus on the different questions that can be asked in relation to a text. One example is low-order and high-order questions. Low-order questions are, on the one hand, used to make the students retrieve information from the text (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 36).

High-order questions, on the other hand, are aiming to retrieve the students' personal response, interference and knowledge of the world in combination with the task (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 37). All these methods can be used to interpret literature and design effective classroom activities and tasks.

3   Method and Material

This thesis is a qualitative research paper that is based on a textual analysis of the *Harry Potter* books seen from a social class perspective. Different quotes and excerpts from the books will be used to illustrate the concept of social class in the *Harry Potter* books.

3.1   Methodical Procedure

According to Hawkins (2017), a textual analysis is "a methodology that involves understanding language, symbols, and/or pictures present in texts to gain information regarding how people make sense of and communicate life and life experiences" (p. 2). Furthermore, McKee (2003) defines text as "something that we make meaning from" (p. 4). Based on this statement, McKee (2003) says the definition of a text applies whenever there is produced an interpretation of something's meaning (p. 4). Thus, can any visual, written or recorded material be treated as text (McKee, 2003, p. 4; Hawkins, 2017, p. 2). That includes books, movies, television programs, magazines or t-shirts. These written, spoken, or visual messages can reflect and challenge aspects, such as historical, political, cultural or ethical (Hawkins, 2017, p. 2). This textual analysis will use the *Harry Potter* books series as a primary text. Furthermore, the analysis will be supported by secondary texts, which include journal articles and books, as suggested by Hawkins (2017, p. 2). The secondary material will serve the purpose of testing the information uncovered in the excerpts of the primary text, in this case, *Harry Potter* (Hawkins, 2017, p. 2). The analysis will examine the existence of social classes and discrimination in *Harry Potter*. It will use excerpts from all seven books. Some of the excerpts will also be used as parts of a teaching project which can be conducted in the classroom. The tasks in the teaching project will help the students reflect over social class in *Harry Potter*.

3.2   Presentation of *Harry Potter*

Rowling's fantasy series involves seven books, each representing one of Harry Potter's years at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The first book *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Rowling, 1997) starts with a ten-year-old boy called Harry. Harry is born by one true-blood parent and one muggle parent and is therefore half-blood. His

parents have passed on magical abilities to him, which makes Harry a wizard. Harry is living with his uncle, aunt and cousin, the Dursleys. Harry's relatives are muggles, which is to mean non-magic people. His living with them is a consequence of his parents having been murdered by one Lord Voldemort when Harry was only a baby. Lord Voldemort's real name is Tom Marvolo Riddle. However, he is more often referred to as "The Dark Lord", "You-Know-Who" or "He Who Must Not Be Named". When Voldemort killed Harry's parents, he also tried to kill Harry. Voldemort mysteriously failed to do so, and as a result, Harry is well known in the magical world as "the boy who lived". Through the years, Harry's aunt and uncle have prevented Harry from learning about his magic abilities, and he has, therefore, no recollection or knowledge of the magical world. On his eleventh birthday, half-giant Rubeus Hagrid is sent from Hogwarts to deliver Harry's Hogwarts letter. The Hogwarts-letter is given to every British witch or wizard on their eleventh birthday, proving their acceptance to the wizarding school. As Harry is oblivious to the magical world, Hagrid must announce to Harry that he is a wizard through his half-blood ancestry. Thus, Harry's new life begins.

On the Hogwarts Express train, on the way to Hogwarts for the first time, Harry meets his classmates Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger. They become his loyal friends throughout the book series. Hermione is an example of a muggle-born witch, this is to mean that she is born by non-magic parents. Ron, on the other hand, is a pure-blood. Being pure-blood means that both his parents have magic blood. Another one of Harry's classmates is Draco Malfoy. He becomes Harry's enemy from day one. Draco is also an example of a pure-blood wizard. The headmaster of Hogwarts, Albus Dumbledore, Professor Remus Lupin and Professor McGonigal, are some of Harry's teachers. They all have a special place in Harry's life. However, Harry has a strained relationship with other teachers, such as Severus Snape and Dolores Umbridge. In the years to come, Harry and his friends, often come across trouble and challenges they must conquer together, one of which is Voldemort and his followers, also known as Death Eaters. Voldemort continually tries to kill Harry because of a prophecy made by Sybill Trelawney, a seer, and later one of Harry's professors at Hogwarts. She recites a prophecy of a boy who would be born at the end of July in 1980 and who would have the powers to defeat Voldemort. Voldemort took this to be Harry and, therefore, killed his parents in the attempt of trying to kill Harry. Throughout Harry's seven years story, he and his friends meet many wizards and creatures who can be used to demonstrate the social classes within the magical world (Hahn, 2015, pp. 264-266).

4   The Social Classes in *Harry Potter*

The material used for this thesis consists of excerpts from the seven books written by Rowling. The excerpts from the *Harry Potter* books will illustrate social classes based on ancestors and bloodline, career and economy and values and houses. In the books, the wizards are referred to by blood purity in the order of pure-blood, half-blood and mudblood. One will also come across the word squib, which is a term for a non-magical wizard of magic parents and the word muggle, a non-magic person. There are also many other creatures in the *Harry Potter* books, such as elves, goblins, giants, centaurs and trolls. Many of these creatures play an important part in Harry's life.

4.1   Background of Social Class in *Harry Potter*

Much has been written about the *Harry Potter* book series, and links have been drawn to past, and current problematic issues related to social class. In an interview with Rowling, it is suggested that the connection between *Harry Potter* and the British community could have been her intention all along. Rowling was questioned about the similarities between Death Eaters and Nazis and said, "I wanted Harry to leave our world and find exactly the same problems in the wizarding world" (Anelli, 2007). She also commented on how some people think they are superior to others, and if they cannot pride themselves in anything, at least they will be perceived as pure (Anelli, 2007). The links to current attitudes have been commented upon by Westman. Westman (2002) says, "Rowling leaves little doubt in her readers' minds that prejudice based on differences in class, race and nation occurs in the wizarding world, just as it does in the world of the readers" (p. 315). In addition to a link to the British community, Lyubansky (2007) has compared aspects of *Harry Potter* to racial aspects in the U. S. (p. 237). Lyubansky (2007) claims that "…treating half-bloods and Muggles as second-class citizens is an obvious parallel to our own society's history of oppression of Blacks and obsession about interracial sex and marriage" (p. 237). Lyubansky (2007) also comments on how interracial marriages in the U.S. can be compared to the marriage between a pure-blood and half-blood or mudblood in *Harry Potter* (p. 238). Thus, it may be argued that there is an underlying conflict regarding the social order in the *Harry Potter* universe. Clifton (2013) has studied the differences regarding class. Clifton (2013) has made groupings on social classes in relation to Zweig's theory on how power must be seen in relation to class (p. 69). Clifton has broken it down into power regarding bloodline, career and school houses. (p. 68). The first category, "class distinctions by bloodline", can be seen in the table below.

Lower Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Upper Class
Muggles and squibs	No wizard blood or mudbloods	Half-blooded wizards	Full-blooded wizards
Mr Filch and the Dursleys	Hermione Granger	Tom Riddle/Lord Voldemort	Harry Potter, the Malfoys and the Weasleys

Table 1. *Class Distinctions by Bloodline.* (Clifton, 2013, p. 69).

In this table, Clifton (2013) has connected the social classes to the amount of wizard blood (p. 69). The lower class is placed at the bottom of the hierarchy as they have no magical blood. An example of this is Harry's uncle and aunt and Mr Filch, who works as a caretaker at Hogwarts. As the table illustrates, the term working class is associated with having no wizard blood or begin a mudblood. To place the term mudblood in today's perspective, Ostry (2003) compares it to the N-word of the wizarding world (p. 92). It is also linked to insults made to African Americans referring to them as mud people (Ostry, 2003, p. 92). In table 1, Harry is placed in the upper class with the full-blooded wizards. It is perhaps not correct to place Harry among the pure-blood wizards, as he is a half-blood wizard. However, Harry might be placed there because of his high status as "the boy who lived". The Blacks are another pure-blood family who are related to the Malfoys. The Blacks have their house draped in a tapestry which says: "The Noble and Most Ancient House of Black 'Toujours Pur'" (Rowling, 2003, p. 103). According to Schroder (2018), the use of adjectives as most ancient and noble "implies their state as royalty among wizards" (p. 95). The connection between the upper class and pure-bloods is what Park (2003) states with "Draco Malfoy and his father represent the stereotypical upper classes of British society" (p. 184). This reference is related to what Schroeder (2018) states about how low status is reasons for prejudice, insults and violence in the books (p. 92).

Furthermore, Clifton has defined class distinctions by career in the table below:

Lower Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Upper Class
Slaves	Servants, waiters/waitresses, and gamekeepers	The Weasleys	Professors, ministers of magic and aurors
Elves	Trolls and centaurs	Common place wizards with lesser achievements	Full-blooded wizards, persons of talent and achievements

Table 2. *Class Distinctions by Career.* (Clifton, 2013, p. 70).

In contrast to the first table, all mentioned in the second table have magical abilities. However, there is a distinct differentiation between creatures or non-humans in the lower and working class, in contrast to human beings in the middle and upper class. Elves are found at the bottom of the table, and are, according to Clifton (2013), categorised as lower class and slaves (p. 70). Howard (2009) compares the life of the house-elves to the life of black slaves in the U. S. and Britain (p. 37). Furthermore, Howard (2009) argues that the narrative of slavery is also referred to when one of the house-elves, Winky, addresses her owner as "Master Barty, Master Barty" (p. 40). Next in the table are trolls and centaurs defined as servants, waiters/waitresses, and gamekeepers in the working class. One example is Hagrid, who is half-giant and gamekeeper. He showcases a working-class member, attributed as he is with his language and manner (Clifton, 2013, p. 71). Also, Park (2003) comments on more aspects to define Hagrid's class, such as his lack of education, muttered expletives, loud voice, uncouth manners, his speech and his fractured grammar (p. 185). In this second table, the Weasleys have changed class and is now representing the middle class as "common place wizards with lesser achievements". This is in contrast to table 1, where they were placed in upper class (Clifton, 2013, p. 69). However, the middle class is well documented with the pure-blood family, the Weasleys. Park (2003) comments on how they belong to the middle class, "with a taint of too little money and too many children" (p. 186). Ron has hand-me-downs and too many siblings. Mrs Weasley, Ron's mother, "has so many children that she cannot remember that Ron hates corned beef" (Park, 2003, p. 186). They are also associated with muggles and muggle-borns, which is not always appreciated within pure-blood families (Schroder, 2018, p. 95). According to Schroder (2018), the Weasleys' social class are in great contrast to the Malfoy family. Draco does not miss an opportunity to make fun of Ron and his family, because of their income, house or jobs (Schroder, 2018, p. 95). This bullying is also visible between Lucius Malfoy, Draco's father, and Arthur Weasley, Ron's father (Schroder, 2018, p. 95). As Schroder (2019) states, "Lucius looks down on Arthur for associating with Muggles and also his low income" (p. 95). The class distinction by careers can also be illustrated using the Fountain of Magical Brethren. Within the Ministry of Magic, being the magical government of the *Harry Potter* world, there is a fountain displayed in the middle of the hall. The fountain shows a wizard, witch, goblin, house-elf and a centaur in a monument. The centaur, goblin and house-elf look up on to the witch and wizard. Howard (2009) discusses this scenery as a symbol of inequality among creatures and human beings (p. 37).

The final table is "class distinction by houses".

Lower Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Upper Class
Hufflepuff	Ravenclaw	Gryffindor or Slytherin	Gryffindor or Slytherin

Table 3. *Class Distinctions by Houses.* (Clifton, 2013, p. 70).

When a wizard or witch first arrives at Hogwarts at age 11, they are placed in a house which represents one of the founders of Hogwarts school. The houses are called Gryffindor, Slytherin, Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw. The sorting hat is placed on the witch or wizards head, and their ability level is decided by the sorting hat. The sorting hat thereby places them in a house. Thus, this is how it is decided where they will live and who will be their classmates during their school years. The distinctions between the houses are based on triumphs (Clifton, 2003, p. 70). As Clifton (2003) states, "triumphs put members of Gryffindor and Slytherin in the lead; and therefore, their members hold more power than other wizards" (p. 70). As mentioned earlier, Park states that the social order is also based on a witch or wizard position when Voldemort rose to power. This position is often related to which of the four founders' houses the witch or wizard belongs within. Paré (2009) states, that "by emphasising Hogwarts and its houses as family, as a community, it is creating limited circles in which particular relationships will form" (p. 183). Schroder (2018) states that "the majority of characters from Slytherin do display favouritism towards pure-bloods and a resentment towards muggle-borns, and are, therefore, generally portrayed as evil" (p. 94). Though, some of the members of Slytherin house are half-blood, none of them is considered muggle-borns, as "it would be against Salazar Slytherin's intentions" (Schroder, 2018, p. 94).

4.2   Class Distinction by Bloodline

The witches and wizards in the *Harry Potter* universe are referred to by the purity of their blood. They are categorised as pure-blood, half-blood and mudblood.

4.2.1   The Class of Pure-blood

The first category is pure-blood. This is a small group of witches and wizards who have pure-blood. Being pure-blood is defined as "a family or individual without Muggle (non-magic) blood" (Pottermore, 2015, Pure-blood). This means that both one's mother and father have magical abilities, and therefore, one's blood is pure. For some witches and wizards, being pure-blood would indicate that they have more rights among wizards and that they are above others in society. Harry's pure-blood classmate Draco Malfoy is an example

of such a wizard. The following example indicates how some pure-blood wizards believe themselves to be part of a select elite group. Harry and Draco's first meeting are in Diagon Ally, which is a wizarding ally and shopping area in London. Draco and Harry meet in "Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occasions" where all young wizards go to buy their school robes. As they are getting to know one another, Draco asks about Harry's parents. When Harry tells him they are dead, he responds with, "'But they were *our* kind, weren't they?'" (Stone, pp. 60-61). By emphasising the word "our" and singling out his own group, the illustration displays how Draco sees himself as the elite or as the upper class of the wizarding society. This example can be seen in relation to Schroder's (2018) statement about how the pure-blood consider themselves as close to royals and Park's (2003) comparison between pure-bloods and the upper class of British society. In the following example, Draco indicates that witches and wizards without pure-blood do not have the same rights as the pure-bloods, as he does not think such wizards should be allowed to go to the same school as himself. Harry confirms that his parents were a witch and wizard before Draco says, "'I really don't think they should let the other sort in, do you? They're just not the same, they've never been brought up to know our ways. Some of them have never even heard of Hogwarts until they get the letter, imagine. I think they should keep it in the old wizarding families'" (Stone, pp. 60-61). This example can be seen in connection with Fulcher and Scott's (2003) statement about how some classes are disadvantaged, with fewer opportunities in life and how inequality exists between different classes. Furthermore, to have negative attitudes and opinions about other groups in society is, as mentioned, defined as prejudice (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 250). Thus, is this an example of Draco's prejudice towards those who are not within the old wizarding families. Harry's second encounter with Draco is another example of prejudice, more specifically, Draco's prejudices towards Ron Weasley. Draco confronts Harry because he is standing together with Ron, he says, "'You'll soon find out some wizarding families are much better than others, Potter. You don't want to go making friends with the wrong sort. I can help you there'" (Stone, p. 81). This statement from Draco indicates that he would be a better choice of a friend than Ron, only based on his family position and power, as he also comments that some families are better than others. In this example, Draco talks down to others, just because they are not of the same blood status. This is an example of discrimination because of class and can be characterised as classism (Lott, 2012).

Even though the concept of pure-blood is not mentioned with words in the first book, it is still present. However, in the second book, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (Rowling, 1998)*,* Harry learns of the term "pure-blood" for the first time. The following example demonstrates how some of the members in the upper class think themselves superior to others. Hagrid is trying to help Ron, who has been cursed with his own spell, which was initially aimed at Draco, whilst explaining the insulting words for Harry: "'There are some wizards – like Malfoy's family – who think they're better than everyone else because they're what people call pure-blood'" (Chamber, p. 89). Draco's insults towards Hermione and Ron are yet an example of discrimination because of class, as defined by Lott (2012). The statement made by Hagrid indicates that not everyone thinks pure-blood wizards are better people. Nevertheless, the following example shows that the superior attitude has been present for a long time among pure-blood wizards. In Professor Binns's class, Hermione asks what the Chamber of Secrets is. Professor Binns tells the students about how Hogwarts was founded over a thousand years ago by Godric Gryffindor, Helga Hufflepuff, Rowena Ravenclaw and Salazar Slytherin: "'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'" (Chamber, p. 114). This example says that pure-blood wizards, like Slytherin, have trouble trusting wizards and witches from muggle families and it can therefore be used to characterise stereotyping, as defined by Samovar et al. (2016). Moreover, the example proves that the Slytherins, as a separate group, have a negative attitude towards those with less power and of lower class, and have irrational suspicions towards that specific group (Schroder, 2018). Rowling has also confirmed, in one of her interviews, that the importance of being pure-blood is strongly associated with the Slytherin founder (Pottermore, 2015, Pure-blood).

4.2.2   The Class of Half-blood

Being half-blood is to have known muggle or muggle-born parents or grandparents. This means that someone in your closest family lacks all magical abilities. Harry is an example of a half-blood wizard, because his pure-blood father, James, married his muggle-born mother, Lily. The next example will display that being pure-blood is not that common anymore, and a mixed "race" is becoming more accepted in the wizarding universe. When Harry and his friends discuss the different terms in their second year, Ron says, "'Most wizards these days are half-blood anyway. If we hadn't married Muggles we'd've died out'" (Chamber, p. 89).

Hermione confirms this statement in their sixth year. She says that most of the Death Eaters are probably half-blood because there would not be enough pure-bloods left (Prince, p. 227). Even though being half-blood is a common thing, they are still below the pure-bloods in the wizard hierarchy as displayed by Clifton (2013). The following example demonstrates how half-blood wizards are below pure-blood wizards in the social order in the *Harry Potter* world. When Harry is attacked by Voldemort's right hand, Bellatrix Lestrange, Lestrange reacts to Harry who addresses Voldemort by his name, "Voldemort". It is common knowledge in the wizarding world that Voldemort's name should not be said out loud. She screams and says "'You dare speak his name with your unworthy lips, you dare besmirch it with your half-blood's tongue, you dare'" (Order, p. 691). The duelling continues, and Harry asks Lestrange if she knew that Voldemort was half-blood as well. Lestrange's reaction is to curse Harry, while she screams, "'He dared – he dares –' shrieked Bellatrix incoherently, 'he stands there – filthy half-blood'" (Order, p. 692). Lestrange, who is a pure-blood wizard herself, uses the word filthy in relation to the half-blood wizard Harry. Thus, exemplifying how half-bloods, as a middle class, are at a disadvantage to the pure-bloods, the upper class, in accordance with Giddens and Birdsall (2001). Moreover, such behaviour is also an example of negative attitudes towards a specific group and can therefore be defined as classism between social groups and prejudice (Lott, 2012; Jandt, 2004; Giddens & Birdsall, 2001).

4.2.3   The Class of Mudblood

A witch or wizard who is born by non-magic parents, in other words, muggle parents, are referred to as muggle-born. The term mudblood is a highly derogatory word for a muggle-born. Even though there are no differences in the abilities of a muggle-born and a pure-blood witch or wizard, the term is often used by those who are prejudiced against mudbloods. The following example shows Draco's prejudice towards Hermione. As mentioned before, Draco is a pure-blood wizard, and Hermione is a muggle-born witch. Whilst in an argument with Hermione and her friends, Draco says, "'No one asked your opinion, you filthy little Mudblood'" (Chamber, p. 86). Harry, with his lack of knowledge of the magical world, does not seem to know the meaning of the word: "Harry knew at once that Malfoy had said something really bad because there was an instant uproar at his words" (Chamber, p. 87). As a result of the name-calling, Ron tries to curse Draco with his broken wand. Ron's curse backfires, and Harry and Hermione take Ron to Hagrid for help. When explaining the situation to Hagrid, Harry says: "'Malfoy called Hermione something. It

must've been really bad, because everyone went mad'" (Chamber, p. 89). Ron then says: "'Malfoy called her "Mudblood", Hagrid-'" Hagrid reacts with outrage: "'He didn'!' he growled at Hermione" (Chamber, p. 89). Ron explains the word to Harry: "'Mudblood's a really foul name for someone who was Muggle-born – you know, non-magic parents'" (Chamber, p. 89). Ron explains that the word mud is to mean dirty blood: "'Dirty blood, see. Common blood. It's mad...'" (Chamber, p. 89). This situation can be seen in connection with Lestrange calling Harry a filthy half-blood. Both Lestrange and Draco are pure-bloods, and by using demeaning names, they discriminate against the half-bloods and mudbloods as a group, as well as against Harry and Hermione as individuals. It shows the hierarchy in the wizard's society, as well as prejudice towards those with less power (Lott, 2012; Giddens & Birdsall, 2001). It also emphasises what Schroder (2018) says about how being a part of Slytherin involves having resentment towards muggle-borns, as both Lestrange and Draco are of Slytherin house.

More than once, Draco mentions the words mudblood and filth together. The following example displays how Draco on several occasions show resentment towards someone in another group, and in particular, the mudbloods: "'Father says to keep my head down and let the heir of Slytherin get on with it. He says the school needs ridding of all the Mudblood filth, but not to get mixed up in it'" (Chamber, p. 167). This shows a class distinction based on bloodline, as suggested by Clifton (2013). It also indicates a hierarchy between muggle-borns and Draco, as the muggle-borns has a clear disadvantage in life. This is based on Draco's suggestion that the school should get rid of them. This inequality is an example of social stratification as defined by Fulcher and Scott (2003). The following is yet an example of Malfoy's condescending behaviour to those he considers further down the hierarchy ladder. In the second year at Hogwarts, the witches' and wizards' blood status is essential to the story. The Chamber of Secrets has been opened once again, and the story says there lies a monster with a history of only killing muggle-born witches and wizards. This makes Draco say, "'Enemies of the heir, beware! You'll be next, Mudbloods!'" (Chamber, p. 106). The monster within the chamber is said to be a basilisk that was placed there by Salazar Slytherin, and it could only be controlled by Slytherin's heir, Tom Riddle, or in other words, Voldemort. The school suspects Harry to be the Slytherin's heir because he is a Parseltongue, which means he can speak snake language (Chamber, p. 146). Draco reacts to this as he says, "'Saint Potter, the Mudbloods' friend'. He's another one with no proper wizard feeling, or he wouldn't go around with that jumped-up Granger Mudblood.

And people think he's Slytherin's heir!'" (Chamber, p. 166). This statement shows that according to Draco, Harry could not be the heir of Slytherin, just because he is friends with a "mudblood". This is an example of Draco's irrational dislike or even hatred towards the muggle-born as a group.

The final book, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, begins with Professor Burbage hanging upside down with invisible bonds, over a table surrounded by Death Eaters and Voldemort (Rowling, 2007). The following example is an illustration of prejudice. Voldemort starts by introducing Professor Burbage by saying, "'Professor Burbage taught the children of witches and wizards all about Muggles ... how they are not so different from us ...'" (Hallows, p. 17). Voldemort then recites Professor Burbage's written defence to "the mudbloods" in the wizard newspaper, *The Daily Prophet*: "'Wizards, she says, must accept these thieves of their knowledge and magic. The dwindling of the pure-bloods is, says Professor Burbage, a most desirable circumstance ... she would have us all mate with Muggles…'" (Hallows, p. 18). Voldemort then murders Professor Burbage in front of the Death Eaters. This example clearly shows Voldemort lack of respect for another person's life, as he kills her just based on her opinions stated in the newspaper. It also shows that the Death Eaters and Voldemort have no desire of even being associated with muggle-borns because of their irrational dislike towards them as a particular group, as defined by Jandt (2004). Moreover, the example can be seen in connection with Lyubansky's (2007) statement on the history of interracial marriages in the U. S. The incident with Professor Burbage is also the start of why Harry, Ron and Hermione never return to Hogwarts for their final year. The battle has erupted, and Voldemort has risen to power once again. The following is another example of Voldemort and the Death Eaters' prejudice against the muggle-borns. Voldemort and his followers have taken over the Ministry of Magic and are trying to take over the magical society. Harry and his friends break into the Ministry of Magic in search of a horcrux, a powerful object in which Voldemort has hidden a part of his soul. To destroy Voldemort, they need to find all the horcruxes. Inside the Ministry of Magic, Harry comes across a stack of pamphlets. On this pamphlet, it is written: "MUDBLOODS and the Dangers They Pose to a Peaceful Pure-Blood Society" (Hallows, p. 205). Several people within the ministry now share this view. Yaxley, one of Voldemort's Death Eaters, says his wife was accused of being a mudblood. He goes on by saying, "'– not that any woman I married would ever be mistaken for such filth'" (Hallows, p. 200). Both this example and the previous, corroborate Lyubansky's (2007) statement about the parallel

to the history of oppression towards black people. The Death Eaters' idea that society would not be peaceful because of mudblood speak to the mistrust the pure-bloods have in the mudbloods. The mudblood status, as discussed previously, is also an issue when Hermione calls herself a mudblood and compares her status to a goblin or elf. "'I'm hunted quite as much as any goblin or elf, Griphook! I'm a Mudblood. I've got no higher position under this new order than you have, Griphook!'" (Hallows, p. 395). Hermione's statement is evidence of how the strata or hierarchy in the wizarding world are built. She compares herself to someone who is on the bottom of the ladder, thus confirming Giddens and Birdsall (2001) statement of how someone is less privileged nearer the bottom (p. 282).

In their search for the horcruxes, Harry, Hermione and Ron are captured by some snatchers who are around searching for muggle-borns and blood traitors to earn gold. They are caught and taken to the Malfoy-mansion for questioning. This is an example of how the pure-blood wizards are prejudiced against muggle-born wizards and even use torture to discriminate against them. When Bellatrix Lestrange sees that they have the sword of Gryffindor in their belongings, she suspects them of stealing it, as is should have been in her vault in Gringotts bank. Lestrange chooses to only torture Hermione and says, "'If she dies under questioning, I'll take you next'" (Hallows, p. 375). This indicates that her life is not worth as much as Harry's and Ron's, as she is willing to kill her for the truth. This situation can be compared to when Voldemort killed Professor Burbage, as previously mentioned. Furthermore, when Hermione denies any knowledge of the sword in Gringotts, Lestrange says, "'You are lying, filthy Mudblood, and I know it! You have been inside my vault at Gringotts!'" (Hallows, p. 377). This statement can be connected to the statement about how Slytherin find muggle-borns untrustworthy, since Lestrange's first thought is that Hermione stole the sword. This can therefore also be an example of stereotyping, as defined by Samovar et al. (2016).

4.2.4   The Class of Squibs

Even though muggle-borns or mudbloods are at the bottom of the hierarchy among wizards, there are still those who are even further down. Throughout the books, some people are referred to as squibs. Squibs are people without magic power within a wizard family. One of these is Mr Filch, the caretaker working at Hogwarts. This example demonstrates classism and more specifically, stereotyping. Ron stereotypes Filch by saying he is bitter because he is a squib, indicating that all squibs are bitter. Harry's lack of magical knowledge puts him at a disadvantage when he is accused of hurting Mrs Norris, Filch's cat. Filch claims Harry

hurt his cat because he is a squib. After getting out of trouble, Harry asks Ron, "'And what on earth's a Squib?'" (Chamber, p. 110). Ron responds, "'A Squib is someone who was born into a wizarding family but hasn't got any magic powers'" (Chamber, p. 110). Ron then goes on mocking Filch, who is trying to learn magic from a Kwikspell course and says, "'...he must be a Squib. It would explain a lot. As why he hates students so much'. Ron gave a satisfied smile. 'He's bitter'" (Chamber, pp. 110-111). This indicates to Ron that Mr Filch hates all students because he is a squib. This is another example of stereotyping within interpersonal classism, as defined by Lott (2012). Because Ron mocks Mr Filch's lack of magical abilities, Ron is socially devaluing Mr Filch in relation to himself.

4.3   Class of Other Magical Beings

Nevertheless, the witches and wizards are not the only magical beings within the *Harry Potter* universe. Some other magical beings are displayed within The Ministry of Magic. Within the ministry, there is a fountain called the "The Fountain of Magical Brethren". The fountain is an example of how the social classes are portrayed in *Harry Potter.* The fountain is made up of five golden statues, larger than life-size. "Tallest of them all was a noble-looking wizard with his wand pointing straight up in the air. Grouped around him were a beautiful witch, a centaur, a goblin and a house-elf. The last three were all looking adoringly up at the witch and wizard" (Order, p. 117). The name, *Fountain of Brethren,* should symbolise a tied knot between all the magical creatures. However, the way they are displayed would imply that the wizards and witches look down on the goblins, elves and centaurs as if they were superior. By displaying them underneath and look up to the witch and wizard, it is like they idolise them and their behaviour. This is a symbol of the social hierarchy portrayed in the wizarding world (Ostry, 2003; Westman, 2002; Howard, 2009). The following categories display several examples of the differences between wizards and other magical beings in the *Harry Potter* world.

4.3.1   The Class of House-elves

House-elves, or elves, are magical beings who are bound to serve one house and be loyal to that house. They are poorly dressed and can only be freed if their master presents them with clothes. Three house-elves play a significant role in Harry Potter's life. They are Dobby, Winky and Kreacher. Dobby is originally serving the Malfoy-family. However, Harry tricks Lucius Malfoy, Draco's father, to free Dobby. The following is an example that shows how the house-elves are treated differently in the wizarding society and that Harry and Dobby are not equals. When Harry first meets Dobby, he asks him if he wants to sit down on the bed.

Dobby's reaction is to start wailing, and Harry is afraid he has offended Dobby. Dobby says, "'Offend Dobby!' choked the elf. 'Dobby has never been asked to sit down by a wizard – like an equal'" (Chamber, p. 16). Harry makes a comment about what wizards Dobby must have met, and Dooby starts to bang his head into the window and shouts, "Bad Dobby". Dobby explains that he must punish himself when he does something that is considered bad behaviour. The fact that Dobby has never experienced to be treated as an equal by a wizard, clearly shows that there is a difference in the social classes they represent. Moreover, a house-elf need to be presented with clothes to be free says something about their status in society. The illustration is an example of how house-elves are at the bottom of the basic system of stratification, as explained by Giddens and Birdsall (2001). Moreover, Giddens and Birdsall (2001) statement about how slavery are individuals that were literally being owned as property, can be linked to how the house-elves are treated as explained by Howard (2009). Another example of how the house-elves are treated as property is when Harry discusses Dobby's appearance with Ron's brothers, Fred and George. Harry states, "'I don't know whether the Malfoys own a house-elf ...'" (Chamber, p. 27). This indicates that the house-elf is a belonging that is owned by others, just as being a slave is defined by Giddens and Birdsall (2001).

The second house-elf is Winky. The following example is connected to slavery, as it displays how the house-elves have masters and are forced to do things unworthy of others. In Harry's first meeting with Winky, she is placed by her master on the "Top Box" of the stadium during the quidditch World Cup. This is done in spite of Winky's fear of heights. When Harry suggests it is about to time to have some fun, she says, "'House-elves does what they is told. I is not liking heights at all, Harry Potter –' she glanced towards the edge of the box and gulped, '– but my master sends me to the Top Box and I comes, sir'" (Goblet, p. 90). Winky's use of the word master is commented on by Howard (2009). The word master is also used as an example of inequality in a personal relationship, as defined by Giddens and Birdsall (2001). The last house-elf is Kreacher. He is yet an example of how house-elves are used as slaves in the *Harry Potter* universe. When Harry inherits the house-elf Kreacher, he has no wish to pass into Harry ownership. To see if Kreacher has indeed passed onto Harry, Dumbledore tells Harry to, "'give him an order'" (Prince, p. 54). If he has passed into Harry's ownership, Kreacher will have no other option than to obey the order Harry has given him. This can be seen in connection with Giddens and Birdsall's (2001) statement on slavery and how an individual are owned as property.

Furthermore, in their sixth year, Ron is poisoned by Professor Slughorn's bottle of oak-matured mead. The bottle was originally intended as a gift to Professor Dumbledore. The following example displayed how some wizards put themselves above others in society and thereby strengthen the inequalities between them. The next time Slughorn and Harry share a bottle, Slughorn says, "'Had a house-elf taste every bottle after what happened to your poor friend Rupert'" (Prince, p. 454). Since Slughorn used a house-elf to taste the mead and then examined if the house-elf was poisoned or not, Slughorn indicates that the house-elves' lives are not worth as much as his own. This puts the house-elves at a clear disadvantage when it comes to life chances, as their lives are clearly less worth. It also indicates that the house-elves are less privileged in society, an illustration of what Giddens and Birdsall (2001) have defined as the strata in a hierarchy.

4.3.2   The Class of Half-breeds

When looking back at history, half-breed was a general term for someone who was of mixed race. In the *Harry Potter* world, the term is normally given to a creature with at least one non-human parent (Harry Potter Fandom, Half-breeds). This mix gives the creatures magic powers, as the magic gene is dominant. The following is an example of how the word half-breed is used as an insult and, thereby, displaying prejudice. The fifth book is centred around the Order of Phoenix. The Order of Phoenix is a secret society which was founded to oppose Voldemort and the Death-Eaters (Harry Potter Fandom, Order of the Phoenix). The headquarters is established in Harry's godfather Sirius Black's, house. The Black-family is a pure-blood family, whilst the Order of Phoenix consists of many different witches, wizards and other magical beings. Sirius' dead mother, Mrs Black, is displayed in a portrait hanging on the wall in the hallway. She is not happy with the people coming and going in her house. On several occasions, her portrait screams different remarks whenever someone passes her: "'Filth! Scum! By-products of dirt and vileness! Half-breeds, mutants, freaks, begone from this place!'" (Order, p. 74). She also screams if she hears loud noises in the house: "'Stains of dishonour, filthy half-breeds, blood traitors, children of filth ...'" (Order, p. 96). By calling them by-products and filth, Mrs Black uses their mixed race against them. Mrs Black's insults to half-breeds can be compared to how pure-bloods are prejudiced towards mudbloods and express an irrational hatred of that group (Jandt, 2004). One recurring half-breed is half-giant Rubeus Hagrid; whose mother was a giant and whose father was a wizard. One of the other giants mentioned in the books is Madame Maxime, who is the headmistress of a different wizarding school, the Beauxbatons Academy of Magic. The

example following displays stereotyping and prejudice between the wizards and the half-breeds. During the Triwizard Tournament in their fourth year, Hagrid talks to Maxime and tells her about his mother who is a giantess. Furthermore, Hagrid expresses how happy he is to have met another half-giant. Maxime is gravely insulted by his comments and says, "'I 'ave nevair been more insulted in my life! 'Alf-giant? Moi? I 'ave – I 'ave big bones!'" (Goblet, p. 373). However, when overhearing their conversation, Ron is shocked over this new information. Harry does not understand Ron's problem with Hagrid's mother being a giantess. Ron says, "'Well ... no one who knows him will care, 'cos they'll know he's not dangerous,' said Ron, slowly. 'But ... Harry, they're just vicious, giants. It's like Hagrid said, it's in their natures, they're like trolls ... they just like killing, everyone knows that'" (Goblet, p. 374). Hermione states, "'But honestly, all this hysteria about giants. They can't all be horrible ... it's the same sort of prejudice that people have towards werewolves ... it's just bigotry, isn't it?" (Goblet, p. 377). Firstly, Maxime's reaction when being referred to as a giant, clearly states that this is not something she would like to be associated with, as she is gravely offended. Secondly, Ron's thoughts about how giants are horrible and dangerous killers, clearly show prejudice towards giants and stereotyping them based on assumed previous behaviour. This is, therefore, an example of interpersonal classism (Lott, 2012).

Another example of half-breeds is the centaurs living in the Forbidden Forrest. They are magical creatures with the upper body of a man and the lower body of a horse. They are referred to as half-breeds on many occasions throughout the book series. The following is another example of the prejudice some wizards hold when it comes to half-breeds. In Harry's fifth year at Hogwarts, his new teacher, Dolores Umbridge, insults the centaurs by comparing them to animals when she says, "'Filthy half-breeds!' she screamed, her hands still tight over her head. 'Beasts! Uncontrolled animals!'" (Order, p. 665). By saying this Umbridge is displaying her negative attitude towards the centaurs. According to Clifton (2013), all wizards are above centaurs and trolls in the hierarchy. Therefore, the insults made by Umbridge clearly symbolises a lack of respect and inequality between the two social groups. The attitude Umbridge holds towards the centaurs, is also an example of how prejudice is held towards a specific race, as defined by Jandt (2004). The insult spoken by Umbridge is an example of discriminating behaviour and classism (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001; Lott, 2012).

4.3.3 The Class of Goblins

Goblins, the last of the magical beings to be discussed, are highly intelligent beings living alongside the witches and wizards. They run the wizarding bank, Gringotts. At 11 years old, Harry has his first encounter with the goblins. He describes them as about a head shorter than him, swarthy, clever face and very long fingers and feet (Stone, p. 56). The following example demonstrates the inequality between goblins and wizards in the *Harry Potter* books and thereby the disadvantages the goblins obtain by being goblins. The goblins are known for goblin rebellions throughout history. One occurred in 1612 (Prisoner, p. 61) and several in the eighteenth century (Goblet, p. 206). Because of this, the Goblins have a wand ban, and they call the witches and wizards wand-carriers (Hallows, p. 394). The wand ban, also known as clause three of the "Code of Wand Use", is cited by Amos Diggory during the Quidditch World Cup; "'No non-human creature is permitted to carry or use a wand'" (Goblet, p. 119). This wand law sets a clear line between wizards and non-human creatures. By doing so, the law increases the inequity between the groups and places the non-human creatures with a disadvantaged life chance, as, according to Fulcher and Scott (2003), makes one class lie above the other in a hierarchy. Griphook also says to Harry that goblins and house-elves are not used to the protection and respect Harry has been giving them (Hallows, p. 394). This statement indicates that goblins are not as privileged in the community as wizards. This can be connected to Giddens and Birdsall's (2001) statement that one is more favoured at the top and less privileged nearer the bottom.

4.4 Class Distinction by Career and Economy

There are also other reasons for hierarchy among the wizards, besides blood purity. The most emanant taunt throughout the books is between Draco and Ron. Draco takes any opportunity to look down at Ron's family, their house, clothes and income. The following is an example of the divisions by class in the wizard community and the discriminating behaviour conducted against those further down in the hierarchy. In Draco's first meeting with Ron, Draco says, "'My father told me all the Weasleys have red hair, freckles, and more children than they can afford…'" (Stone, p. 81). This comment refers to Ron's family's economy and can be seen in connection with the middle class vs upper class taunt between Ron and Draco, as stated by Park (2003). This is also an example of class division as according to Giddens and Birdsall (2001), as they state that the same classes share economic resources, which influences their lifestyle (p. 282). Thereby, making insults towards Ron's lifestyle, Draco indicates that there is a difference between the two and

strengthens the idea that he does not share the same lifestyle as Ron. Throughout the book series, Draco keeps making snarky comments towards Ron and his family's position in the wizard community. When Harry receives his new broomstick, Ron and Draco start bickering about the broom, the "Nimbus 2000". Ron comments on Draco's broom at home, a "Comet Two Sixty" and Draco says: "'What would you know about it, Weasley you couldn't afford half the handle,' Malfoy snapped back. 'I suppose you and your brothers have to save up, twig by twig'" (Stone, p. 122). Again, an example of how Draco insults Ron based on his family's income. The statement made by Draco indicates that he thinks he can insult someone because of blood, power and economy (Schroeder, 2018). When Ron is being polite and asks Hagrid if he needs any help, Draco says, "'Are you trying to earn some extra money, Weasley? Hoping to be gamekeeper yourself when you leave Hogwarts, I suppose – that hut of Hagrid's must seem like a palace compared to what your family's used to'" (Stone, p. 144). In this situation, Draco manages to insult Hagrid's job and Ron's family's house in the same sentence. By first implying that Ron needed to earn more money as if his family has not got enough, and by saying that Hagrid's one-bedroom hut is an upgrade from his own house, thereby insulting Ron's home. Another example is when Draco talks about how Ron's brothers and Harry came to be a part of the Gryffindor quidditch team. Draco says, "'It's people they feel sorry for. See, there's Potter, who's got no parents, then there's the Weasleys, who've got no money – you should be on the team, Longbottom, you've got no brains'" (Stone, p. 163). These are all example of how Draco as a part of a pure-blood wizard family, thinks himself superior to someone who is not in the same blood category as himself and uses insults and prejudice towards them (Park, 2003; Schroeder, 2018).

4.5   Class Distinction by Houses

As mentioned earlier, the four houses are Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Slytherin. Through the books series, it is evident that all the characters have restrictions and thoughts about the other houses. In all, the Slytherin house is often commented on, as the one many wizards want to avoid. The example that follows demonstrates how the houses are represented by stereotypes and the opinions the wizards have about these stereotypes. The houses are separated by their eating arraignments, their common rooms, their dormitories and by not even knowing where the other houses have their common rooms or dormitories.

Every year, the sorting hat sorts the first years into their houses. The hat always starts with a song. In Harry's first year, the hat sings this song:

> You might belong in Gryffindor, Where dwell the brave at heart, Their daring, nerve and chivalry Set Gryffindors apart; You might belong in Hufflepuff Where they are just and loyal, Those patient Hufflepuffs are true And unafraid of toil; Or yet in wise old Ravenclaw, If you've a ready mind, Where those of wit and learning, Will always find their kind; Or perhaps in Slytherin You'll make your real friends, Those cunning folk use any means To achieve their ends (Stone, p. 88).

This song symbolises how each of the houses is accredited certain values and personality traits. These traits are also widely known within the wizard community. The next example displays how the houses are prejudiced towards each other. Right after Harry is told he is a wizard, he visits Diagon Ally with Hagrid to buy his school supplies. As mentioned earlier, he meets Draco in the robe shop. When Draco asks if Harry knows what house he will be in, Harry says no. Draco responds with, "'Well, no one really knows until they get there, do they, but I know I'll be in Slytherin, all our family have been – imagine being in Hufflepuff, I think I'd leave, wouldn't you?'" (Stone, p. 60). When leaving, Harry asks Hagrid what Slytherin and Hufflepuff are. Hagrid says, "'School houses. There's four. Everyone says Hufflepuff are a lot o' duffers, but –'" (Stone, p. 61). Both Draco, who is pure-blood, and Hagrid, who is half-giant, have the same opinion towards being a Hufflepuff. This is even though Hagrid is not even considered a proper wizard as he is half-giant. This remark is prejudiced towards the Hufflepuff as a group and thereby it confirms Clifton's (2013) statement of Hufflepuff as the lower class. Another example of prejudice in the class distinction of houses, is when Harry and Ron are riding the Hogwarts Express for the first time. Harry asks Ron what houses his brothers are in, and he says they are all in Gryffindor, just as his parents had been. When thinking about the idea that he is not put in Gryffindor, he says, "'I don't suppose Ravenclaw would be too bad, but imagine if they put me in Slytherin'" (Stone, p. 80). Even though Slytherin is categorised by Clifton (2013) as an upper class house, Ron's comment endorses the ideas most of the wizards have about Slytherin, that they do not want to be associated with them.

5   Didactic Implementation

The evidence of social class in *Harry Potter*, as presented above, can be of good use in the classroom. Langer (2011) argues that a varied student group will provide the teacher with

members of various social and cultural groups, coming together as a classroom community (p. 50). This type of student group is ideal for collaborative tasks, as each of the students has their own background that will affect their knowledge and ideas about social class. That will serve the purpose of a community that "involves tensions and balances between personal identity and group affiliation, individuality and connectedness" (Langer, 2011, p. 50). This tension and balance can be a part of creating an effective learning and teaching environment.

5.1   Using *Harry Potter* in the Classroom

As the *Harry Potter* phenomenon has already been present for years, researchers have debated whether to use *Harry Potter* in the classroom. As Wallace and Pugh (2007) say, "some teachers resist bringing popular texts into the classroom because they see it as a space especially reserved for classics" (p. 97). However, popular culture texts, in general, can be a way to capture the students' interest (Wallace & Pugh, 2007, p. 97). As many students and children already have a relationship to *Harry Potter*, Wallace and Pugh (2007) state that it can be of great use to move the students from reading as fans over to reading as critics (p. 97). By allowing the students to critically assess the text, they will also be able to think deeply around subjects such as class, gender, identity and sexuality (Wallace & Pugh, 2007, p. 97). Moreover, Wallace and Pugh's idea of moving from fans to critics can be related to the critical literacy approach discussed by Van (2005) and Fairclough (2014). Wallace and Pugh (2007) state that, "we can help students move to a deeper understanding of how wealth and class operate in the Potter books – as well as in society – by engaging them in questions that consider why some characters are rich and some poor" (p. 98).

5.2   Teaching Activities

The teaching activities are suitable from year 10 and to year 11. The activities will be in accordance with the aims for English learning after year 10 and after VG1. In each of the activities, the value of human dignity will be a central theme, as well as critical thinking and the urge to explore (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019a). If the students were to read all of the *Harry Potter* books, it would be too great an endeavour to master. However, by using excerpts and reading parts of the books, the students will be able to work with the task aims.

In any teaching situation, the teacher should first try to examine the students' previous knowledge on the subject. To be able to discuss and conduct tasks in relation to

social class, prejudice and discrimination, the students will need to have an understanding of the terminology and concepts. It could therefore be wise to start this activity with pair- or group-discussions and let the students try to explain the terms to each other. Examples of terms to discuss can be social class, hierarchy, upper class, middle class, lower class, discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping. This discussion will allow the teacher to walk about in the classroom and listen to what the students already know about the terms. To collect the students' knowledge, in the beginning, is a good way to see to what extent they have developed their knowledge after having worked with *Harry Potter*. The same approach can be used to let the students present their background knowledge of *Harry Potter.* All the tasks can be done individually or as pairs. A suggestion could be to follow the IGP-method. The method is explained by the capital letters, I stand for individually, G for groups and finally, P for plenary. Nevertheless, after each task, a follow-up discussion is advised according to the discussion-based approach of teaching by Langer (2011). According to Langer (2011), collaborative tasks will also help the students participate in the discussions. The teaching activities are developed based on the critical literacy approach and reader-response approach. According to Van (2005), a critical literacy approach pushes the students to question issues concerning social class and power. By using their personal experience and feelings when analysing, the students are also using the reader-response approach, as suggested by Van (2005). Each of the activities contains reading material, which can be viewed in the appendices, aims for the given activity, a description on how the activity will be completed and an argument for how it is related to the thesis question.

5.2.1   Activity 1: Discussion tasks

The first activity is an activity where the students discuss excerpts of the books based on questions. In this activity, the aim is to "be able to identify someone that is treated worse than others" and to "be able to identify negative behaviour or attitude towards others".

How:

This task is based on Langer's (2011) approach to a literary discussion and combined with Carter and Long's (1991) low-order and high-order questions. In this first task, the students will be presented with an excerpt from the first book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Rowling, 1997; see appendix 1) and two excerpts from the second book *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (Rowling, 1998, see appendix 1). The first excerpt is about Harry and Draco's first meeting in Diagon Ally. The second excerpts are about when

Hermione is called a mudblood by Draco, and the concept of pure-blood and mudblood is presented and explained. After they have read the excerpts, the students will discuss the following questions in pairs or groups:

1. What do you think pure-blood, half-blood and mudblood means and can you compare any of the terms with terms that would be used about class today?
2. Where do you think Draco places himself in reference to upper class, middle class or lower class and why?
3. What do you think Draco means by the statement: "But they were *our* kind, weren't they?"
4. Can you identify any discriminating behaviour in these excerpts?
5. In your opinion, whom do you think is treated worse than others in these excerpts?
6. In this situation, how would you feel if you were Hermione?

Why:

The specific discussion questions are used because they can help the students reach the aim of the first task, to identify someone that is treated worse than others. All the questions are high-order questions, as defined by Carter and Long (1991). The high-order questions challenge the students to reflect and assess the discussions tasks based on their personal knowledge (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 37). By working with questions, the students may be able to identify someone who is treated worse than others in wizarding society. The students might also be able to identify who has advantages and disadvantages in life, as this is how Fulcher and Scott (2003) separate individuals into classes (p. 692). Thus, it can make the students reflect over the connection between class distinction based on bloodline in *Harry Potter* and the three frequently recognised strata, lower, middle and upper class, as explained by Fulcher and Scott (2003). By doing so, the students have expanded their interpretative abilities, which is one of the reasons to use literature in teaching (Lazar, 1993, p. 19). Questions 3-6 invite the students to deliberate on prejudice and discrimination. As explained by Jandt (2004), prejudice is an irrational suspicion or hatred of a particular group. Question 3 might help the students to get an idea of what opinions and attitudes Draco hold towards others in the magical world, and whom his opinions and attitudes are directed towards. Therefore, the third question might help the students identify the individual or individuals that are treated worse. Furthermore, questions 5-6 challenge the students on a personal level, as they require them to adapt personal opinions and feelings to

interpret the literature, as suggested by Van (2005). It could also be an idea to stop the discussion after question 3 and let the students have a brief presentation in plenary about their thoughts around the questions. This pause can help the students to gather their thoughts and to get new input, before the next part of the task.

The second task is a task where the students answer questions after having read one chapter in one of the books. The task's aim is to "be able to identify discriminating behaviour towards others".

How:

Before the activity, the task the students should read the second chapter of the second book, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (Rowling, 1998, pp. 15-23). This chapter is Harry's first meeting with the house-elf Dobby. In this chapter, the concept of discrimination and slavery can be central themes. As suggested by Wallace and Pugh (2008), magical creatures, such as house-elves, can be good examples of how discrimination occurs in the books (p. 98). At the beginning of this lesson, the students will be put into pairs or groups. The students will discuss the following questions:

1. What is your first impression of Dobby, the house-elf? Discuss clothing, manner and behaviour.
2. What do you think Dobby means when he says: "'A house-elf must be set free, sir'"?
3. Can you identify any discriminating behaviour in these excerpts? Discuss your findings with you partner(s).
4. Can you see a link to Dobby's position in the wizard world and slavery? Discuss your thoughts with your partner(s).

Why?

These four questions are created to make the students discuss how discrimination and slavery can be displayed in *Harry Potter.* Fulcher and Scott (2003) state that the lack of freedom is one thing that symbolises slavery. Moreover, Giddens and Birdsall (2001) state that slavery is literary being owned by others. In this chapter of the second *Harry Potter* book, the students read about Dobby and his life. As stated above, the aim is for the students to identify discriminating behaviour towards others in these chapters. Question 1 challenges the students to share and discuss their first impression of Dobby. Moreover, question 2 can make the students discuss and reflect over how Dobby needs to be "set free". These

questions could therefore lead to a first reflection about issues that can be linked to an understanding of human rights, which is one of the six core values for education and learning (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2019a). As suggested in the first task, it could be wise for each of the groups to have a brief presentation in plenary of their ideas, after the first two questions. Questions 3 and 4 are more challenging questions, as they require the students to reflect, analyse and interpret the literature in relation to previous knowledge.

Based on these discussion tasks, the students may become able to recognise and reflect on the differences between the characters in the *Harry Potter* universe. The tasks can also make the students reflect on prejudice and discrimination against some of the characters, by identifying the negative opinions, attitudes and behaviour some of the characters hold and act towards others. By combining reading and discussion, the students will be able to practice their communication skills and language skills. The discussions will allow the students to reflect, interpret and critically assess the text in relation to the tasks, a goal stated by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2019d). So here we find what Langer (2011) defines as envisionment, which is when the students establish an understanding of a text.

5.2.2   Activity 2: Understanding the Characters

In the second activity, the students will be describing some of the characters based on adjectives. The aims are to "be able to assign adjectives to the characters based on their understanding of the character" and to "be able to see and discuss stereotypes in *Harry Potter"*.

How:

The second activity is an example of a while-reading activity (Lazar, 1993, p. 85). While-reading activities can be done during the reading session or in between reading sessions (Lazar, 1993, p. 85). However, this can also be done as a post-reading activity, as this activity shows. In this second activity, the students will be reading two separate excerpts from the first book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Rowling, 1997; see appendix 2). The first excerpt is from when Draco Malfoy and Ron Weasley meet for the first time. The second excerpt is another meeting between Draco and Ron during a quidditch match. After having read the reading material, all the students will be provided with a list of adjectives (see appendix 3), and then choose from the list of adjectives which ones are the

most appropriate to describe some of the characters in *Harry Potter*. The adjective list consists of appearance adjectives, colour adjectives, condition adjectives, as well as positive and negative personality adjectives. Examples of adjectives from the list are powerful, poor, easy, famous, faithful, gentle, brave, angry, lazy, flabby and skinny. The excerpts consist of material on Ron Weasley and Draco Malfoy, who, according to Park (2003), are described to be part of two separate classes and often taunt each other's background. However, this task can also be used to characterise any character with a different set of reading material. The task is to describe the two characters and to make a comparison between them. The students could first do this activity individually, before coming together in pairs and groups. The pair or group work can act as collaborative support, as suggested by Langer (2011). When coming together in pairs or groups, the students can discuss and compare their findings. After filling out their worksheet (see appendix 4), they should answer these questions together:

- Which adjectives have your group used, and why have you chosen them?
- Have you chosen any similar adjective?
- What can it mean if you have chosen similar adjectives?

The activity should end with a plenary collection of answers.

Why:

By using adjectives from the list (see appendix 3) to describe the characters, the students will apply Brislin's (2000) idea of how stereotyping is storing information in people's minds. This definition will apply to their interpretation of the characters. There will most likely be some similar choices, which will help them start their discussion. However, the varied student group, as suggested by Langer (2011), will also provide various ideas around the description and thereby, the stereotypes. The description of the characters may involve thoughts on their manner of speech, behaviour, personality, housing, dress and occupation. If the students describe Draco Malfoy, they might say that Draco is proud, rich and powerful. In comparison, Ron might be described as poor, clumsy and pitiful. If the students see that they have used the same adjectives or similar adjectives about the same characters, it might lead to an understanding of how some characteristics are assigned certain characters. The students' choices of adjectives should be discussed in plenary after the task. This discussion will help the students reflect and interpret the text, as well as developing their communicative skills, as suggested by Koutsompou (2015). By combining this activity

with activity 1 or 3, the class can together examine which traits they have assigned the character they defined as upper class, middle class and lower class. The students might find that some characters are defined by the same adjectives and thereby hold the same characteristics, even though they are parts of different groups or classes in the wizarding society. This activity might therefore help the learners to develop their understanding of stereotypes and thereby, working on central themes within classism as defined by Lott (2012). Furthermore, the activity can help the students develop an understanding of identity and human dignity, core elements described in the English curriculum by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2019b, 2019c).

5.2.3   Activity 3: Sorting Task

In the third activity, the student will be sorting characters into different categories. The aims are to "be able to sort the characters in *Harry Potter* and justify your choice*"* and to "be able to draw links between the different sorting categories".

How:

One of Wallace and Pugh's (2007) examples of classroom activity is a sorting task. The task can also be used to complement the results the students obtained when they discussed social classes in the very beginning. One disadvantage of this activity is that it requires the students to know a fair bit about the characters in *Harry Potter*. Therefore, a suggestion is to do this activity last, as the student will already have read several excerpts and worked with many of the characters beforehand in activity 1 and 2. There are several ways of sorting the characters. One of which could be to sort the characters according to bloodline as pure-blood, half-blood and muggle-born. Another example, suggested by Wallace and Pugh (2007) is to sort the magical creatures in *Harry Potter* and categorise them by who are treated as enemies, animals, or as beings with nearly human intelligence and equal to humans (pp. 98-99). A third option is to rank the characters from richest to poorest (Wallace & Pugh, 2007, p. 98). The activity involves sorting the characters in three different ways. In this third activity, the students will be presented with reading material from the second book, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (Rowling, 1998). This excerpt is from a meeting between Lucius Malfoy and Arthur Weasley. An example of a worksheet has been developed and can be viewed in appendix 6. The first task is a low-order task, following Carter and Long (1991), as it only requires the students to retrieve information from the text. In the first task, the students can sort the characters by blood purity. However, task 2 and 3

are more high-order task. The second task invites them to consider the characters' economic resources and the third task, the characters' power in the wizard community. In the final task, there is no right, or wrong, answer, however, the task invites them to interpret the text in their own way. To interpret and analyse a text, and draw interferences is expanding and developing the students' abilities (Lazar, 1993; Koutsompou, 2015). After the sorting is conducted, the pairs should answer this question: "Is there a link between money, power and blood purity and if so, how does it affect the characters?" Finally, a plenary discussion can be conducted by each of the groups presenting their thoughts and answers one by one. Such a collaborative and plenary discussion can make the students' original thoughts and ideas grow further, as suggested by Langer (2011).

Why?

The aim in this task is for the students to sort the characters into categories and to get a deeper understanding of some of the factors that can affect social class, such as money, family, power and, in relation to *Harry Potter*, blood status. The aim is also for the students to draw links between the different factors. As stated before, according to Fulcher and Scott (2003), the stratification system is built on who has the most advantages and disadvantages in relation to life chances. Giddens and Birdsall (2001) also argue how Weber's theory on class has its roots in economic power. Moreover, Giddens and Birdsall (2001) define "class" as a group who share common economic resources (p. 282). This definition indicates that money matters a great deal for the upholding of the class system. By sorting the characters into richer and poorer, most power and least power, the students may notice that some individuals or groups hold fewer life chances based on these factors. Moreover, the students should try to draw links between the different categories, for instance, poor, least power and little or no blood purity. Such an evaluation can help the students' reflection on the characters' social class. In this activity, the students may critically assess the literature and discuss and reflect upon their thoughts in terms of English fiction texts, as stipulated in the curriculum (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019e).

6 Sum-up and conclusion

For this thesis, the goal was to examine to what extent the *Harry Potter* book series can be used to make students reflect about social class. As one of the three core elements in the Norwegian curriculum for English, the use of English literature is essential in the ESL classroom. Furthermore, the curriculum requires the teachers to communicate six core

values, which every learner should adapt to their skills and knowledge. Two of the core values have been significant to this thesis. By combining English literacy and central themes within identity, cultural diversity and human dignity, the students will have a chance to examine inequalities and reflect on their thoughts on social classes. As shown, the use of social devaluing classes and discrimination in *Harry Potter* is clear. The terms pure-blood, half-blood and mudblood, can easily be connected to social strata such as upper class, middle class and lower class. Quotes and excerpts from the books show that there are quite a few evidence of classism among the wizards. Throughout the books, there are examples of the wizards with less magical blood, also have fewer life chances and are less privileged. Some characters, for instance, Draco Malfoy, is an example of an upper class wizard. On several occasions, he demonstrates prejudice and discrimination towards other wizards by insulting their blood purity, economy or lifestyle. However, Draco is not the only example of how social class, discrimination and prejudice are displayed in wizarding society. For instance, house-elves, goblins and giants, are only some example of characters in the wizarding world with fewer advantages and fewer privileges. The quotes used to demonstrate this, show a substantial inequality between the wizards and what is characterised as non-human creatures. By treating the creatures like animals, objects and freaks, the wizards create a clear division in the magical world. As shown, links can also be drawn between house-elves and slavery, which is a strong example of inequality between beings.

As we know, both discrimination and slavery are still with us in 2020. To teach learners about these current issues, literature can be a useful teaching tool. The activities developed for this thesis are based on a critical literary approach, a reader-response approach and a discussion-based approach. The discussion-approach will provide them with collaborative work that builds an envisionment, the readers-response approach will test their personal opinions and knowledge, and the critical literacy approach will challenge them to interpret themes that shape our society. By using these three approaches, the students will critically assess, develop and interpret their ideas about social class. Even though not all the activities are directly linked to social class, each of the activities can help the students noticing important elements, such as discrimination and stereotyping. As seen, discrimination and stereotyping can be grounds for the inequalities that divide society into social classes. By reading and doing tasks, the students will be able to use their interpretative abilities. This will further help educate them as whole persons and to grow as human beings. The activities also strengthen their communicative skills and their language

learning skills, as they are challenged to discuss and use their second language, English, to make themselves understood. As shown, the *Harry Potter* book series can help the students to reflect about social class and by that become more aware of the inequality that exists in society. The battle of equal rights for everyone, regardless of gender, status, economy, race and sexual orientation is still fought in the world.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Activity 1: Discussion tasks – Reading material

Read and discuss

<u>Task 1</u>
Excerpt from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Rowling, 1997, pp. 59-61)

In the back of the shop, a boy with a pale, pointed face was standing on a footstool while a second witch pinned up his long black robes. Madam Malkin stood Harry on a stool next to him, slipped a long robe over his head and began to pin it to the right length.
'Hullo,' said the boy, 'Hogwarts too?'
'Yes,' said Harry.
'My father's next door buying my books and mother's up the street looking at wands,' said the boy. He had a bored, drawling voice. 'Then I'm going to drag them off to look at racing brooms. I don't see why first-years can't have their own. I think I'll bully father into getting me one and I'll smuggle it in somehow.'
Harry was strongly reminded of Dudley.
'Have you got your own broom?' the boy went on.
'No,' said Harry.
'Play Quidditch at all?'
'No,' Harry said again, wondering what on earth Quidditch could be.
'I do – Father says it's a crime if I'm not picked to play for my house, and I must say, I agree. Know what house you'll be in yet?'
'No,' said Harry, feeling more stupid by the minute.
'Well, no one really knows until they get there, do they, but I know I'll be in Slytherin, all our family have been – imagine being in Hufflepuff, I think I'd leave, wouldn't you?'
'Mmm,' said Harry, wishing he could say something a bit more interesting.
'I say, look at that man!' said the boy suddenly, nodding towards the front window. Hagrid was standing there, grinning at Harry and pointing at two large ice-creams to show he couldn't come in.
'That's Hagrid,' said Harry, pleased to know something the boy didn't.
'He works at Hogwarts.'
'Oh,' said the boy, 'I've heard of him. He's a sort of servant, isn't he?'
'He's the gamekeeper,' said Harry. He was liking the boy less and less every second.
'Yes, exactly. I heard he's a sort of savage – lives in a hut in the school grounds and every now and then he gets drunk, tries to do magic and ends up setting fire to his bed.'
'I think he's brilliant,' said Harry coldly.
'Do you?' said the boy, with a slight sneer.
'Why is he with you? Where are your parents?'
'They're dead,' said Harry shortly.
He didn't feel much like going into the matter with this boy.

'Oh, sorry,' said the other, not sounding sorry at all.

'But they were *our* kind, weren't they?'

'They were a witch and wizard, if that's what you mean.'

'I really don't think they should let the other sort in, do you? They're just not the same, they've never been brought up to know our ways. Some of them have never even heard of Hogwarts until they get the letter, imagine. I think they should keep it in the old wizarding families. What's your surname, anyway?'

Task 2

Excerpt from
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (Rowling, 1998, pp. 86).

'I'm the new Slytherin Seeker, Weasley,' said Malfoy, smugly.

'Everyone's just been admiring the brooms my father's bought our team.'

Ron gaped, open-mouthed, at the seven superb broomsticks in front of him.

'Good, aren't they?' said Malfoy smoothly. 'But perhaps the Gryffindor team will be able to raise some gold and get new brooms, too. You could raffle off those Cleansweep Fives, I expect a museum would bid for them.'

The Slytherin team howled with laughter.

'At least no one on the Gryffindor team had to buy their way in,' said Hermione sharply.

'They got in on pure talent.'

The smug look on Malfoy's face flickered.

'No one asked your opinion, you filthy little Mudblood,' he spat.

Harry knew at once that Malfoy had said something really bad because there was an instant uproar at his words.

…

Excerpt from
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (Rowling, 1998, pp. 89).

'Malfoy called Hermione something. It must've been really bad, because everyone went mad.'

'It was bad,' said Ron hoarsely, emerging over the table top, looking pale and sweaty.

'Malfoy called her "Mudblood", Hagrid –' Ron dived out of sight again as a fresh wave of slugs made their appearance. Hagrid looked outraged.

'He didn'!' he growled at Hermione.

'He did,' she said. 'But I don't know what it means. I could tell it was really rude, of course.'

'It's about the most insulting thing he could think of,' gasped Ron, coming back up.

'Mudblood's a really foul name for someone who was Muggle-born – you know, non-magic parents. There are some wizards – like Malfoy's family – who think they're better than everyone else because they're what people call pure-blood.' He gave a small burp, and a single slug fell into his outstretched hand. He threw it into the basin and continued, 'I mean,

the rest of us know it doesn't make any difference at all. Look at Neville Longbottom – he's pure-blood and he can hardly stand a cauldron the right way up.'

'An' they haven't invented a spell our Hermione can't do,' said Hagrid proudly, making Hermione go a brilliant shade of magenta.

'It's a disgusting thing to call someone,' said Ron, wiping his sweaty brow with a shaking hand. 'Dirty blood, see. Common blood. It's mad. Most wizards these days are half-blood anyway. If we hadn't married Muggles we'd've died out.'

Understanding the characters – Reading material

Excerpt from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Rowling, 1997, pp. 81-82)

Three boys entered and Harry recognised the middle one at once: it was the pale boy from Madam Malkin's robe shop. He was looking at Harry with a lot more interest than he'd shown back in Diagon Alley.

'Is it true?' he said. 'They're saying all down the train that Harry Potter's in this compartment. So it's you, is it?'

'Yes,' said Harry. He was looking at the other boys. Both of them were thickset and looked extremely mean. Standing either side of the pale boy they looked like bodyguards.

'Oh, this is Crabbe and this is Goyle,' said the pale boy carelessly, noticing where Harry was looking. 'And my name's Malfoy, Draco Malfoy.

' Ron gave a slight cough, which might have been hiding a snigger. Draco Malfoy looked at him.

'Think my name's funny, do you? No need to ask who you are. My father told me all the Weasleys have red hair, freckles and more children than they can afford.'

He turned back to Harry.

'You'll soon find out some wizarding families are much better than others, Potter. You don't want to go making friends with the wrong sort. I can help you there.'

He held out his hand to shake Harry's, but Harry didn't take it. 'I think I can tell who the wrong sort are for myself, thanks,' he said coolly.

Draco Malfoy didn't go red, but a pink tinge appeared in his pale cheeks.

'I'd be careful if I were you, Potter,' he said slowly. 'Unless you're a bit politer you'll go the same way as your parents. They didn't know what was good for them, either. You hang around with riff-raff like the Weasleys and that Hagrid and it'll rub off on you.'

Both Harry and Ron stood up. Ron's face was as red as his hair.

'Say that again,' he said.

'Oh, you're going to fight us, are you?' Malfoy sneered. 'Unless you get out now,' said Harry, more bravely than he felt, because Crabbe and Goyle were a lot bigger than him or Ron.

'But we don't feel like leaving, do we, boys? We've eaten all our food and you still seem to have some.'

Goyle reached towards the Chocolate Frogs next to Ron – Ron leapt forward, but before he'd so much as touched Goyle, Goyle let out a horrible yell.

Scabbers the rat was hanging off his finger, sharp little teeth sunk deep into Goyle's knuckle – Crabbe and Malfoy backed away as Goyle swung Scabbers round and round, howling, and when Scabbers finally flew off and hit the window, all three of them disappeared at once. Perhaps they thought there were more rats lurking among the sweets, or perhaps they'd heard footsteps, because a second later, Hermione Granger had come in.

Excerpt from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Rowling, 1997, pp. 163-164)

Someone had poked Ron in the back of the head. It was Malfoy. 'Oh, sorry, Weasley, didn't see you there.'

Malfoy grinned broadly at Crabbe and Goyle.

'Wonder how long Potter's going to stay on his broom this time? Anyone want a bet? What about you, Weasley?'

Ron didn't answer; Snape had just awarded Hufflepuff a penalty because George Weasley had hit a Bludger at him. Hermione, who had all her fingers crossed in her lap, was squinting fixedly at Harry, who was circling the game like a hawk, looking for the Snitch.

'You know how I think they choose people for the Gryffindor team?' said Malfoy loudly a few minutes later, as Snape awarded Hufflepuff another penalty for no reason at all. 'It's people they feel sorry for. See, there's Potter, who's got no parents, then there's the Weasleys, who've got no money – you should be on the team, Longbottom, you've got no brains.'

Neville went bright red but turned in his seat to face Malfoy. 'I'm worth twelve of you, Malfoy,' he stammered.

Malfoy, Crabbe and Goyle howled with laughter, but Ron, still not daring to take his eyes from the game, said, 'You tell him, Neville.'

'Longbottom, if brains were gold you'd be poorer than Weasley, and that's saying something.'

Ron's nerves were already stretched to breaking point with anxiety about Harry. 'I'm warning you, Malfoy – one more word –'

'Ron!' said Hermione suddenly. 'Harry –!'

'What? Where?' Harry had suddenly gone into a spectacular dive, which drew gasps and cheers from the crowd. Hermione stood up, her crossed fingers in her mouth, as Harry streaked towards the ground like a bullet.

'You're in luck, Weasley, Potter's obviously spotted some money on the ground!' said Malfoy.

Ron snapped. Before Malfoy knew what was happening, Ron was on top of him, wrestling him to the ground. Neville hesitated, then clambered over the back of his seat to help.

Appendix 3 – Activity 2: Understanding the characters - Adjective list

Understanding the characters – Adjective list

Read the material for activity 3. Use the adjective list to fill in the adjectives you think are appropriate for:

a) Ron Weasley
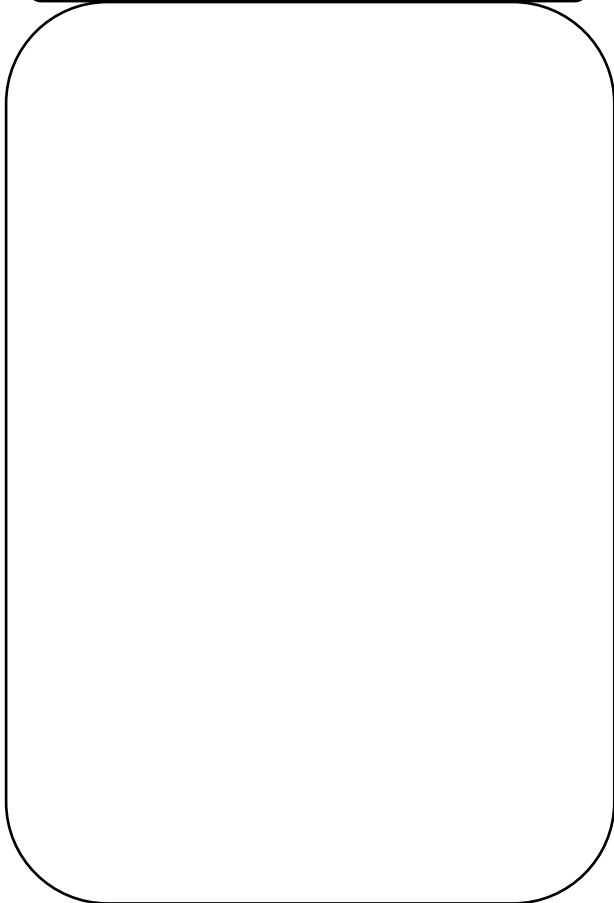b) Draco Malfoy

You may also use other adjectives if you want to.

Appearance adjectives list	Positive Personality adjectives list	Negative Personality adjectives list	Condition adjectives list	Colour adjectives list
attractive	aggressive	angry	alive	ashy
bald	agreeable	bewildered	better	black
beautiful	ambitious	clumsy	careful	blue
chubby	brave	defeated	clever	grey
clean	calm	embarrassed	dead	green
dazzling	delightful	fierce	easy	icy
drab	eager	grumpy	famous	lemon
elegant	faithful	helpless	gifted	mango
fancy	gentle	itchy	hallowed	orange
fit	happy	jealous	helpful	purple
flabby	jolly	lazy	important	red
glamorous	kind	mysterious	inexpensive	salmon
gorgeous	lively	nervous	mealy	white
handsome	nice	obnoxious	mushy	yellow
long	obedient	panicky	odd	
magnificent	polite	pitiful	poor	
muscular	proud	repulsive	powerful	
plain	silly	scary	rich	
plump	thankful	thoughtless	shy	
quaint	victorious	uptight	tender	
scruffy	witty	worried	unimportant	
shapely	wonderful		uninterested	
short	zealous		vast	
skinny			wrong	
stocky				
ugly				
unkempt				
unsightly				

Source: PaperRater. *List of Adjectives.* https://www.paperrater.com/page/lists-of-adjectives
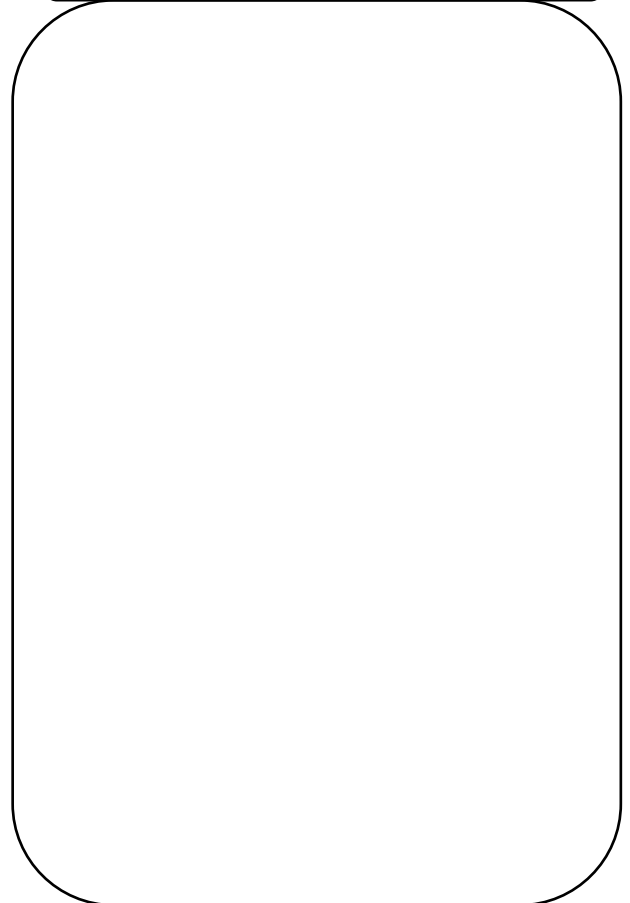
Task 3: Understanding the characters – Fill the jars with adjectives

Ron Weasly	Draco Malfoy

- Which adjectives have your group used, and why have you chosen them?
- Have you chosen any similar adjective?
- What can it mean if you have chosen similar adjectives?

Sorting task – Reading material

Excerpt from *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (Rowling, 1998, pp. 50-51)

Well, well, well – Arthur Weasley.'

It was Mr Malfoy. He stood with his hand on Draco's shoulder, sneering in just the same way.

'Lucius,' said Mr Weasley, nodding coldly.

'Busy time at the Ministry, I hear,' said Mr Malfoy. 'All those raids ... I hope they're paying you overtime?'

He reached into Ginny's cauldron and extracted, from amidst the glossy Lockhart books, a very old, very battered copy of A Beginner's Guide to Transfiguration.

'Obviously not,' he said. 'Dear me, what's the use of being a disgrace to the name of wizard if they don't even pay you well for it?' Mr Weasley flushed darker than either Ron or Ginny. 'We have a very different idea of what disgraces the name of wizard, Malfoy,' he said.

'Clearly,' said Mr Malfoy, his pale eyes straying to Mr and Mrs Granger, who were watching apprehensively. 'The company you keep, Weasley ... and I thought your family could sink no lower –'

There was a thud of metal as Ginny's cauldron went flying; Mr Weasley had thrown himself at Mr Malfoy, knocking him backwards into a bookshelf. Dozens of heavy spellbooks came thundering down on all their heads; there was a yell of 'Get him, Dad!' from Fred or George; Mrs Weasley was shrieking, 'No, Arthur, no!'; the crowd stampeded backwards, knocking more shelves over; 'Gentlemen, please – please!' cried the assistant and then, louder than all, 'Break it up, there, gents, break it up –'

Hagrid was wading towards them through the sea of books. In an instant he had pulled Mr Weasley and Mr Malfoy apart. Mr Weasley had a cut lip and Mr Malfoy had been hit in the eye by an Encyclopedia of Toadstools. He was still holding Ginny's old transfiguration book. He thrust it at her, his eyes glittering with malice.

'Here, girl – take your book – it's the best your father can give you –

' Pulling himself out of Hagrid's grip he beckoned to Draco and swept from the shop.

'Yeh should've ignored him, Arthur,' said Hagrid, almost lifting Mr Weasley off his feet as he straightened his robes. 'Rotten ter the core, the whole family, everyone knows that. No Malfoy's worth listenin' ter. Bad blood, that's what it is. Come on now – let's get outta here.'

Sorting task

Task 1

a) Sort these characters into blood purity:

Lucius Malfoy, Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, Ron Weasley, Ginny Weasley, Draco Malfoy, Rebus Hagrid, Arthur Weasley.

Muggle-born	Half-blood	Pure-blood

b) Answer these questions:
   a. Does blood purity matter in the magical world?
   b. How does blood purity effect the characters of *Harry Potter*?

Task 2

a) Sort these characters into richer and poorer:

Lucius Malfoy, Harry Potter, Dobby the house-elf, Hermione Granger, Ron Weasley, Ginny Weasley, Draco Malfoy, Rebus Hagrid, Arthur Weasley.

Richer	Neither rich nor poor	Poorer

b) Answer these questions:
   a. Does money matter in the magical world?
   b. How does money effect the characters of *Harry Potter*?

Task 3

a) Rank the following characters as who has the most power and who has the least power in the wizard community.

Lucius Malfoy, Harry Potter, Dobby the house-elf, Hermione Granger, Ron Weasley, Ginny Weasley, Draco Malfoy, Rebus Hagrid, Arthur Weasley.

Most power	Neither	Least power

a) Answer these questions:
   a. Does power matter in the magical world?
   b. How does power effect the characters of *Harry Potter*?