Discussion Questions for *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* by J.K. Rowling

1. In the first chapter, Voldemort is torturing the muggle studies professor. Draco keeps looking up at her. Voldemort kids him about babysitting Tonks and Lupin’s kids and about not taking muggle studies. What do you think is going through Draco’s mind during this chapter?

2. In Dumbledore’s obituary, Doge says, “He died as he lived: working always for the greater good.” We find out later on that Dumbledore used this phrase in a letter to Grindelwald as a youth and that it becomes Grindelwald’s motto.

   Aberforth later rants about it: “[A]t last, my brother had an *equal* to talk to, someone just as bright and talented as he was. And looking after Ariana took a backseat then, while they were hatching all their plans for a new Wizarding order, and looking for *Hallows*, and whatever else it was they were so interested in. Grand plans for the benefit of all Wizardkind, and if one young girl got neglected, what did that matter, when Albus was working for the greater good?”

   At Harry’s imagined King’s Cross, Dumbledore says, “Oh, I had a few scruples. I assuaged my conscience with empty words. It would all be for the greater good, and any harm done would be repaid a hundredfold in befits for wizards.”

   What is the significance of the phrase “for the greater good”?

3. Harry thinks back to when he asked Dumbledore what he saw when he looked in the Mirror of Erised. “I see myself holding a pair of thick, woolen socks,” Dumbledore told him, but Harry suspects that was not an honest answer. What do you think Dumbledore saw when he looked in the mirror of Erised? [Ariana alive, presumably]

4. Early in the book, Harry thinks “[T]hey had always discussed Harry, Harry’s past, Harry’s future, Harry’s plans…” This seems like a real moment of maturity and clarity for Harry, that he realizes how self focused his whole life has been. Can you think of other instances that show how much Harry has changed?

5. Any comments on Dudley’s “different personality”?

6. At the end of Ch. 3, Aunt Petunia stops to look back at Harry. “For a moment, Harry had the strangest feeling that she wanted to say something to him: She gave him an odd, tremulous look and seemed to teeter on the edge of speech, but then, with a little jerk of her head, she bustled out of the room after her husband and son.” What did you think was she considering saying to Harry?

7. We find out that the deluminator has other uses. Has Dumbledore been using the Deluminator to watch Harry since Harry was left at the Dursleys as a baby?

8. Any comments on Kreacher’s tale, and his transformation, in Chapter 10?
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9. What are we to make of roles of Rita Skeeter and Dolores Umbridge in this book? Did either learn any lessons from what happened in books four and five?

10. After the Tale of the Three Brothers, Hermione says, “I think you’re right. It’s just a morality tale, it’s obvious which gift is best, which one you’d choose — “ The three of them spoke at the same time; Hermione said, “the Cloak,” Ron said, “the wand,” and Harry said, “the stone.” What does this say about each of them?

11. Part of Rowling’s talent as an author is to have us laughing and crying at the same time. For example:

   During the terrifying scene where the seven Harry Potters and their guards try to escape the Death Eaters, Hedwig is killed, Harry nearly plummets to earth in the motorcycle’s sidecar, and Hagrid falls with a Death Eater. Harry yells, “*Accio Hagrid!*” Can you imagine summoning Hagrid?

   When Harry finds his mother’s letter. “She had made her ‘g’s the same way he did: He searched through the letter for every one of them, and each felt like a friendly little wave glimpsed from behind a veil.”

   When Ron returns and saves Harry and destroys the locket despite the images Voldemort sends out of it.

     “I’m sorry,” he said in a thick voice. “I’m sorry I left. I know I was a – a –”

     He looked around at the darkness, as if hoping a bad enough word would swoop down upon him and claim him.

     “You’ve sort of made up for it tonight,” said Harry. “Getting the sword. Finishing off the Horcrux. Saving my life.”

     “That makes me sound a lot cooler than I was,” Ron mumbled.

     “Stuff like that always sounds cooler than it really was,” said Harry. “I’ve been trying to tell you that for years.”

   When Harry, Ron, and Hermione are worrying about whether Luna is still alive. “Don’t say that, don’t say it!” squealed Hermione. “She must be alive, she must!” “Then she’ll be in Azkaban, I expect,” said Ron. Whether she survives the place, though…Loads don’t…” “She will,” said Harry. He could not bear to contemplate the alternative. “She’s tough, Luna, much tougher than you’d think. She’s probably teaching all the inmates about Wrackspurts and Nargles.”

   Does anyone else have any favorite parts you’d like to mention?

12. At the end of Ch. 22, Harry says “Voldemort’s after the Elder Wand” even though he knows the name is Taboo. Why does he let his anger get the better of him at this point?
13. What is up with that albino peacock? Is it just a red herring from Rowling, trying to make us think it’s a patronus?

14. What do you think about Pettigrew’s death?

15. How has Neville changed since the first book? How has Draco?

16. What do you think of the end of Chapter 36? What do you think of the epilogue? Do you suppose, 19 years later, Kreacher is still with Harry and Ginnie?

17. Are there any questions you would like to ask, or things you’d like to discuss?