Discussion Questions for *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* by J.K. Rowling

(Some questions adapted from www.scholastic.com and www.hp-lexicon.org)

1. A favorite part of *Order of the Phoenix* comes when Percy sends Ron a letter to warn him off Harry, part of which reads:

   …I gather that you are still seeing a lot of Harry Potter. I must tell you, Ron, that nothing could put you in danger of losing your badge more than continued fraternization with that boy….It may be that you are afraid to sever ties with Potter – I know that he can be unbalanced and, for all I know, violent…

Ron gives the letter to Harry to read, and when Harry finishes it, he looks up:

   “Well,” he said, trying to sound as though he found the whole thing a joke, “if you want to – er – what is it? …. Oh yeah, – ‘sever ties’ with me, I swear I won’t get violent.”

   “Give it back,” said Ron, holding out his hand. “He is – “ Ron said jerkily, tearing Percy’s letter in half, “the world’s” – he tore it into quarters – “biggest” – he tore it into eighths – “git.” He threw the pieces into the fire.

It’s a poignant reflection on Harry’s personality that he tries to make a joke to Ron, while no doubt secretly fearing that a brother’s opinion is more important than his own friendship. It’s also a touching reflection on Ron that he immediately lets Harry reads the letter and tears it up and burns it without giving it a second’s thought. And it’s also a glimpse into Hermione’s feelings for Ron, as after this episode she agrees to correct their homework when she had been refusing and scolding them about falling behind.

Do you have a favorite scene or line in *Order of the Phoenix*?

Another favorite passage is when the advance guard from the order come to Privet Drive:

   Harry descended the stairs, very conscious of everybody still staring at him, stowing his wand into the back pocket of his jeans as he came.

   “Don’t put your wand there, boy!” roared Moody. “What if it ignited? Better wizards than you have lost buttocks, you know!”

   “Who d’you know who’s lost a buttock?” the violet-haired woman asked Mad Eye interestingly.

2. When Harry and Dudley encounter the Dementors, what do you guess are the worst memories Dudley has?

3. Harry is flabbergasted to discover that Mrs. Figg is a squib. Was Dumbledore right to keep this information from Harry once Harry found out about being a wizard?

4. Elements that come into play in later books are introduced in *Order of the Phoenix*. Can you think of some examples? [The vanishing cabinet the Weasley twins shove Montague into.] [Only ask if everyone has read all the books.]
5. On the Hogwarts Express, when Luna says she doesn’t know who Neville is, he says, “I’m nobody.” “No you’re not,” said Ginny sharply. What does it say about Ginny that she recognizes that there’s more to Neville and sticks up for him?

6. This line appears in chapter 24: “The only other sound was the slight squeaking of one of Madam Pince’s shoes as the librarian prowled the aisles menacingly, breathing down the necks of those touching her precious books.” In chapter 29:

   Madame Pince was swooping down upon them, her shriveled face contorted with rage. “Chocolate in the library!” she screamed. “Out – out – OUT!”

   And whipping out her wand, she caused Harry’s books, bag, and ink bottle to chase him and Ginny from the library, whacking them repeatedly over the head as they ran.

   Do you think the author had a bad experience with a school librarian?

7. Do you think there’s any truth to Professor Trelawny’s prediction that Harry will “live to a ripe old age, become Minister of Magic, and have twelve children”?

8. In the pensieve, Harry relives Snape’s memory of when James hung Snape upside down in front of their classmates. Chapter 28 ends with “What was making Harry feel so horrified and unhappy was not being shouted at or having jars thrown at him – it was that he knew how it felt to be humiliated in the middle of a circle of onlookers, knew exactly how Snape had felt as his father had taunted him, and that judging from what he had just seen, his father had been every bit as arrogant as Snape had always told him.” What are we to make of this incident?

9. During the battle at the ministry, Dumbledore says to Voldemort, “It was foolish to come here tonight, Tom.” What is Dumbledore trying to accomplish in using the Dark Lord’s real name?

10. Order members know that Voldemort is trying to get his hands on that Prophecy in the Department of Mysteries. Should someone have told Harry more about this, and that Voldemort might try to affect his mind to get the Prophecy? If they had, would Sirius still be alive?

11. Any thought about or comments on the prophecy?

   The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches…Born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies…and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not…And either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives.

12. Does it seem odd to you that Harry never opened the package containing the two-way mirror that Sirius gave him?

13. Do you have any questions or additional comments?