

CHARACTERIZE: Harry Potter's glasses characterize

Oxford English Dictionaries "into" → integral; cannot be removed

- ① †1.1 trans. To engrave, imprint, impress; to inscribe, write; to define in form or outline; also fig.; = character v. 1. Obs. → cover art; negative assoc.
- ‡2.2 To represent, portray, figure; = character v. 2. Obs. → movie (public/personal perception)
- ② 3.3 To describe or delineate the character or peculiar qualities of (a person or thing). → Harry's glasses are the usual unusual thing about him
- 5.5 To impart character to; also absol. → Self v. Family

Dictionary.com

- ③ 3. to attribute character to: to characterize him as a coward. → superhero v. everyman
- Edinburgh "cub reporter" press conference, ITV, 16 July 2005

Bethan Roberts reporting for The Times Educational Supplement - In the second book, if you see a basilisk and you are wearing glasses, will they protect you? And if they do, why did Moaning Myrtle die, and if they don't, why not?

- ① JK Rowling: That is a really good question. And I have been asked that before. I had to decide the glasses couldn't protect you. I just had to, because obviously there would be quite a few people at Hogwarts who were wearing glasses and I thought that might cause me plot difficulties, so I decided that glasses alone wouldn't protect you.
- But as you know, I had Justin protected by the camera lens, so I think I am open for criticism a matter of convenience there, but the way I explained to myself he was looking through several lenses and wasn't actually seeing the thing directly, it wasn't through his eyeline, when you look through a camera you are looking through the lens, it is a little distorted. You can argue with me on that and I wouldn't blame you but that is how I explained it to my self at the time. → glasses don't distort → clarify instead

Eun Ji An for Raincoast.com, Canada - I was wondering why Harry had glasses?

- ③ JK Rowling: Because I had glasses all through my childhood and I was sick and tired of the person in the books who wore the glasses was always the brainy one and it really irritated me and I wanted to read about a hero wearing glasses. → ≠ stereotype

- ② It also has a symbolic function, Harry is the eyes on to the books in the sense that it is always Harry's point of view, so there was also that, you know, facet of him wearing glasses.

↳ But 3rd person pov, not 1st → glasses = filter/separation

Now, can I ask you: are there any special wizarding powers in your world that depend on the wizard using their eyes to do something? Bit like ...

Also, glasses & eyes don't really belong to Harry → doesn't have complete ownership over own identity

... Well because everyone always goes on about how Harry's got Lily Potter's eyes. Aren't you smart? There is something, maybe, coming about that. I'm going to say no more, very clever.

Boquet, Tim. "J.K. Rowling: The Wizard Behind Harry Potter," *Reader's Digest*, December 2000

② She's thrilled with Stephen Fry's taped version of the books, outraged that an Italian dust jacket shows Harry minus his glasses. "Don't they understand that they are the clue to his vulnerability?"
Harry doesn't always see/understand
→ visual depiction
→ imperfect sight
→ physical & mental
http://www.top10-best.com/d/top_10_best_daniel_radcliffe_quotes.html

It's good to be back filming. I just put on my glasses and then I became Harry again.

-DANIEL RADCLIFFE

Glasses = Harry
→ Difference between actor & character
→ can be separated

Fred Topel daniel-radcliffe-looks-back-ten-years-of-being-harry-potter

① One thing I did take I did ask for. I would have stolen it had they not given it to me. But I did ask for it and they complied, was the glasses. I've got two sets of the glasses. One from the first movie, which are tiny now, and one from the last movie. And there both the lens-less pairs, because that's the ones we used more often, so they're the ones I associated more with Harry. Yeah, those would be my souvenirs.

buildings - roman
↓
coming-of-age

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets Script

↳ Note, this doesn't happen in the book

No filter → not real → all "real-world" glasses are illegit (fantasy v. reality)

DRACO [to Harry, who's disguised as Goyle but still wearing his glasses] Why are you wearing glasses?

MALFOY

HARRY [Quickly removes his glasses] Um... reading.

POTTER

③ DRACO *↳ Physical, not personality that leads to suspicion → Physical >*
Reading? [Harry nods] I didn't know you could read. *→ Stereotype (movie)*

MALFOY

Factors Associated with Spectacle-Wear Compliance in School-Aged Mexican Children

① "Our experience in Mexico and elsewhere has suggested that such round frames ("Harry Potter" glasses) are often less appealing to children concerned about appearances." (927)

↳ natural ugly/unappealing

Men in Cloaks and High-heeled Boots, Men Wielding Pink Umbrellas: Witchy Masculinities in the Harry Potter novels

It is sometimes difficult to differentiate the characters described in the books from the charming and handsome actors who play them in the film versions of the texts, but in the novels, Harry and his friends are often described in ways that are not conventionally attractive. When we meet Harry in HPSS, he is described as "small and skinny for his age" (20) and as having hair that grows "all over the place" (21). His glasses are taped together because Dudley has punched him in the nose so many times and, according to Gallardo and Smith, he "inhabits 'feminine' spaces" such as the cupboard under the stairs (197).

→ glasses make him less manly
→ ≠ stereotypical hero

Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter

revenge, and so on. Apart from the ongoing progressive plot featuring the struggle of good and evil, the bulk of the Harry Potter volumes contain a chain of everyday episodes, albeit generously seasoned with magic. In all of these, Harry is allowed to be brilliant, even though the triviality of adventures somewhat dilute the heroic nature of our hero. The ordinariness of Harry is magnificently emphasized by his name, which clearly stands out as plain and unpretentious beside Dumbledore, McGonagall, or Draco Malfoy. While these associative names are used to contribute to their bearers' individualities, Harry's name underscores his Everyman nature. Contemporary characters are not meant as examples for young readers to admire, but as equal subjectivities. While Harry is undoubtedly more lucky than most of us, his exceptionality is balanced by his more down-to-earth qualities, including his poor sight. Yet, with his old-fashioned, broken glasses Harry sees better than any other Hogwarts student, a quality especially appreciated by the members of his Quidditch team. Through Quidditch the novels adhere to the sports novels, another excellent genre to empower the child who is initially inept but eventually wins the competition.

The naughty-boy story is also prominent. The protagonist's strength is his intrinsic goodness, which allows him to perform pranks without being punished. Harry repeatedly breaks school rules, but since he does so with the best

②
opposite of "peculiarities" (even Muggles wear glasses)
Both literally and metaphorically
→ "sees" through plots

Father's untidy hair

Harry is accessible/related

"Magic" can't solve everything

→ Irony as seeker (quester)

Rowling reminds the reader that Harry bears a striking resemblance to his father; new acquaintances repeatedly remark on how Harry looks like James, though he has Lily's eyes. The first time Hagrid speaks to Harry, he observes, "Yeh look a lot like yer dad, but yeh've got your mum's eyes" (*Sorcerer's Stone* 47). Harry sees the resemblance for himself when he views his father in the Mirror of Erised later in *Sorcerer's Stone*: "[His father] wore glasses, and his hair was very untidy. It stuck up in the back, just as Harry's did" (208). Rowling's attention to this resemblance foregrounds the child as a trace of his parents, a key theme that runs throughout the books. All children carry forward from the past physical characteristics, names, stories, habits learned, and as Voldemort's followers are quick to observe blood. Harry takes comfort and strength from his biological connection to parents he does not remember, and this importance does not diminish as the books progress through his years at Hogwarts. On several occasions, Harry seeks out traces of his parents. The Mirror of Erised offers one such opportunity, and, in *Azkaban*, Harry perversely relishes the chance to hear his parents' voices when the Dementors approach him. He even manages to eavesdrop on Snape's memory of his parents, an experience that complicates his idealization of his father. In her work on the Pensieve and memory in the series, LuAnn McCracken Fletcher observes that Snape uses the Pensieve to facilitate emotional repression; Harry, in contrast, seeks counsel to address the confusion he feels after encountering a negative view of his father in the Pensieve. This is yet another example of Harry negotiating a healthy relationship to the past in contrast to Snape and, more extremely, Voldemort. Fletcher surely will revisit her argument in light of Snape's dying act in the final book, in which he passes on to Harry a moving series of memories that reveal his abiding love for Lily Potter. Indeed, Snape asks Harry to look at him—surely so that he may look one last time into those eyes. Thus, while it is the resemblance to his father that is most often commented upon, it may well be Harry having his mother's eyes that ultimately makes the most difference.

Harry Potter and the Gift of Time by Virginia Zimmerman

eyes still belong to Lily
↓
no separate identity for Harry

* Everyman
② nature v. nurture
glasses = father = pureblood
↳ eyes = mother = muggle born

→ quest for identity

→ glasses = nature v. learned behavior
↳ "Snape's Worst Memory"
→ disillusionment

→ outward v. inward
↳ "Love" = mom/ defining characteristic

[HTML] Psychosocial impact of amblyopia and its treatment: a multidisciplinary study
 K Koklanis, LA Abel, R Aroni - Clinical & experimental ..., 2006 - Wiley Online Library
 ... Hence, both the patch and glasses, not necessarily in combination, caused feelings of stigma.
 However, children were better able to make positive associations with glasses. For example,
 a few children thought they were 'smarter' and 'faster' with their glasses. ...

3

↳ common stereotype

①
 For the glasses-wearer
 v.
 societal perception

What do kids think about kids in eyeglasses?

Results: Eighty subjects between the ages of 6 and 10 years participated. The average (\pm SD) age of the subjects was 8.3 ± 1.3 years, 42 (53%) were females, 51 (64%) were whites, 21 (26%) were blacks, and 30 (38%) wore glasses. The spectacle wearer appeared smarter (0.66, CI = 0.60-0.71) and more honest (0.57, CI = 0.50-0.64), and children who wore glasses looked smarter regardless of whether the child picking wore glasses. Both boys (0.66, CI = 0.68-0.79) and girls (0.77, CI = 0.71-0.82) thought that boys looked better at playing sports.

glasses attribute to "character"

↳ Quidditch ③

Discussion: The old adage 'Boys never make passes at lasses who wear glasses' may be outmoded, but glasses may tend to make children look smarter and slightly more honest to their peers.

"Be still, and know that I am God" *

Trevor Maher

"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps. 46:10)

IF THERE IS one thing that is emphasised in this present age, it is the constant restlessness of people. Transport and travel have greatly improved, and costs have been reduced, enabling people to move around in a way previous generations would never have been able to imagine. The roads of Britain alone have to cope with twenty-seven million private cars, and, in addition to those who travel by car, there are others who travel by coach, train and plane. Even though the terrorism of last September has curbed air travel to some extent, the fear and uncertainty that such events bring serve only to heighten the restless spirit in men and women

This is the second of a short series of articles by Brother Trevor Maher that we are reprinting to mark his valuable contribution to the *Testimony* over many years. This article is from 2002.

and design, or have the latest development facilities, etc.

An extreme example of this was seen in relation to the Harry Potter series of children's fantasy novels, the first of which was made into a film that appeared at the end of 2001. The school-boy hero, Harry Potter, was portrayed wearing glasses, so one of the major UK multiple retail chains of opticians brought out a range of Harry Potter glasses. It was afterwards reported that there was an upsurge of children going for eye tests, many of whom were very upset because they did not fail the test and could not therefore qualify to wear the glasses!

There is no doubt also that the introduction of credit cards into society in the twentieth century encouraged and sustained this desire for change, this restless spirit. The Credit Card Research Group reported that in the UK in December 2001 almost £20 billion, that is, £7,300 per second, was spent via credit cards.

Now the problem for ecclesias and individual brethren and sisters is that this restless spirit, this desire for change, this attitude of 'I don't have to accept it' and 'Why wait?' can and does permeate our lives and activities. Our attitude to the ecclesial environment, practices and activities is influenced by the world. If we have that restless

However, cannot fake eye exam (some things are fixed) ↳ change not always possible (or positive)
 when "other" status = special norm changes = "other" becomes norm ↳ social stereotypes redefined

The desire for change

This restless spirit permeates attitudes and almost every aspect of life. Clothes, furniture, decorations, homes, cars—all manner of possessions are changed at frequent intervals, not because they are worn out or broken or cease to function, but because people want change. They see it as their right to change anything in their lives that they want to.

This restless spirit is harnessed by the commercial enterprises of this world, and encouraged and manipulated for profit. One of the largest soft-drinks corporations in the world has as its

Restlessness defines the hero/quester, but is both positive & negative

Modern hero: occasional failure = desirable

Glasses now becoming ideal/desirable
 ↳ Just like Radcliffe wearing lens-less pairs!
 (even though Mexico study found children find them unattractive)

4

Sorcerer's Stone

Rita Skeeter also keeps her glasses in animal skins form
↳ integral to identity

"Instead he was smiling at a rather severe-looking woman who was wearing square glasses exactly the shape of the markings the cat had had around its eyes." (9)

Not typical hero

They get their own sentence → different from purely physical descriptors

"Harry had a thin face, knobby knees, black hair, and bright green eyes. He wore round glasses held together with a lot of Scotch tape because of all the times Dudley had punched him on the nose." (20)

↳ change by environment

"Once, Aunt Petunia, tired of Harry coming back from the barbers looking as though he hadn't been at all, had taken a pair of kitchen scissors and cut his hair so short he was almost bald except for his bangs, which she left 'to hide that horrible scar.' Dudley had laughed himself silly at Harry, who spent a sleepless night imagining school the next day, where he was already laughed at for his baggy clothes and taped glasses. Next morning, however, he had gotten up to find his hair exactly as it had been before Aunt Petunia had sheared it off." (24)

Tries to disguise scar (other notable feature)

Glasses cause stigma → label him as an outsider

"At school, Harry had no one. Everybody knew that Dudley's gang hated that odd Harry Potter in his baggy clothes and broken glasses, and nobody liked to disagree with Dudley's gang." (30)

"She had dark red hair and her eyes—her eyes are just like mine, Harry thought, edging a little closer to the glass. Bright green—exactly the same shape... He wore glasses, and his hair was very untidy. It stuck up at the back, just as Harry's did." (208)

Always separated

his eyes by glasses and his parents by the mirror

internal monologue ~~focus~~ when connecting to mom, not dad

"Strange how nearsighted being invisible can make you," said Dumbledore" (213)

"Something gold was glinting just above him. The Snitch! He tried to catch it, but his arms were too heavy. He blinked. It wasn't the Snitch at all. It was a pair of glasses. How strange." (295)

metaphorical sight → focus on a single goal/ideal = tunnel vision

Prisoner of Azkaban

Most notable feature of Dumbledore's face

↳ but not valuable / desirable
Height changes w/ age, hair is permanent marker of identity

"Harry, though still rather small and skinny for his age, had grown a few inches over the last year. His jet-black hair, however, was just as it always had been—stubbornly untidy, whatever he did to it. The eyes behind his glasses were bright green, and on his forehead, clearly visible through his hair, was a thin scar, shaped like a bolt of lightning." (6)

"...he put Hagrid's card up next to Ron's and Hermione's, grinning more broadly than ever... Deciding that he'd worry about the Hogsmeade form when he woke up, Harry got back into bed and reached up to cross off another day on the chart he'd made for himself, counting down the days left until his return to Hogwarts. Then he took off his glasses and lay down; eyes open, facing his three birthday cards. Extremely unusual though he was, at that moment Harry Potter felt just like everyone else—glad, for the first time in his life, that it was his birthday." (14-15)

"I've had an idea, Harry! Give me your glasses, quick!" He handed them to her, and as the team watched in amazement, Hermione tapped them with her wand and said, 'Impervius!' 'There!' she said, handing them back to Harry. 'They'll repel water!'... Hermione's spell had done the trick. Harry was still numb with cold, still wetter than he'd ever been in his life, but he could see." (177)

Removal of glasses = removal of worries → temporary clarity / joy

Both mother's eyes & scar somewhat obscured → two things that save him in DH

Takes off his glasses to feel normal

↳ "peculiar"

↳ Sight = necessity; more important than other physical issues

Chamber of Secrets:

"[Harry] fell, face forward, onto ~~the~~ cold stone and felt the bridge of his glasses snap. Dizzy and bruised, covered in soot, he got gingerly to his feet, holding his broken glasses up to his eyes. He was quite alone, but where he was, he had no idea." (49) → Reliant

"Mr. Weasley took Harry's glasses, gave them a tap of his wand, and returned them, good as new." (56) → no "Oculus Reparo." nonverbal magic

- "The basilisk was moving toward Harry; he could hear its heavy body slithering heavily across the dusty floor. Eyes still tightly shut, Harry began to run blindly sideways, his hands outstretched, feeling his way — Voldemort was laughing — (318)
- ↳ Always had bad sight, but useless w/o eyes
- ③ "He couldn't help it — he opened his eyes wide enough to squint at what was going on." (318)
- ↳ natural human curiosity
 ↳ Desire for sight overwhelming; reliant — but also admirable
 ↳ refuses to be ignorant of issues

Other examples of sight/glass:

- Mad-Eye Moody → fake eye gives additional power, but stolen by Barty Crouch Jr., and Umbridge (key to stolen identity & "seeing" purity of blood/spying) → weakness
- Eye-Glass → enemy/danger slowly becomes clear; never useful/ignored by fake Moody
- Mirror of Erised → Desires shown in glass; always one level of separation/removal
- Basilisk → Monster that kills those of impure blood who "see" it. (closing your eyes → Denial → Key to survival)

② Removes glass at zoo

→ Harry has more accurate, [but always partially obscured] sight than any other character (thinks it's Snape; Slytherin's heir is Draco, Sirius evil, Karkaroff & Krum, lured to Dept. of Mysteries, Snape kills Dumbledore, like a pig to the slaughter v. Horcruxes)

③ ^{seeing} ^{striking} ^{of} ^{issues} Harry becomes disillusioned. (nature v. nurture)

↳ Curses more harm than good (obsession)

Order of the Phoenix

- No mention of James' glasses in "Snape's worst memory": "Amusing man, your father, wasn't he?"

"What was making Harry feel so horrified & unhappy was not being said Snape, shaking Harry so hard he shouted at or having jars thrown at him — it was that he knew how it felt, glasses slipped down his nose." (649)

↳ to be humiliated in the middle of a circle of onlookers, knew exactly how Snape felt as his father had taunted him, & that judging from what he had just seen, he had been every bit as arrogant as Snape had always told him." (650) ⑥

In "Heaven" / Kings Cross Station / Purgatory Harry is no longer vulnerable → no earthly weakness (glasses)

Deathly Hallows

"He sat up. His body appeared unscathed. He touched his face. He was not wearing glasses anymore." (706) HP DH

Dumbledore still wearing glasses

"Dumbledore sat down in one of them, and Harry fell into the other, staring at his old headmaster's face. Dumbledore's long silver hair and beard, the piercingly blue eyes behind half-moon spectacles, the crooked nose: Everything was as he had remembered it. And yet..." (707)

"He was lying facedown on the ground again. The smell of the forest filled his nostrils. He could feel the cold hard ground beneath his cheek, and the hinge of his glasses, which had been knocked sideways by the fall, cutting into his temple." (724)

No longer necessary (a 'part of him' in death) First thing he feels upon returning to earth → glasses ground him in reality

"He was thrown one, twice, three times into the air: His glasses flew off and he felt his wand slide a little beneath his robes, but he kept himself floppy and lifeless, and when he fell to the ground for the last time, the clearing echoed with jeers and shrieks of laughter." (727)

Death Eaters want him to be recognizable

"Someone slammed Harry's glasses back onto his face with deliberate force, but the enormous hands that lifted him into the air were exceedingly gentle." (727)

"Look...at...me..." he whispered.

Father's resemblance / glasses no longer get in the way

The green eyes found the black, but after a second, something in the depths of the dark pair seemed to vanish, leaving them fixed, blank, and empty." (658)

"I thought you wore glasses, Potter?" breathed Greyback. 'I found glasses!' yelled one of the Snatchers skulking in the background. 'There was glasses in the tent, Greyback, wait-' And seconds later Harry's glasses had been rammed back onto his face." (453)

Besides Scar, glasses are clearly identifying characteristic

all the more heroic for it

Again, violently reunited w/ glasses

Also brings up questions of gender
Hermione changes hair & teeth. Harry does nothing
cool = fantasy
word = reality
Right after tattoos

testa-manial
'Harry, your eyesight really is awful,' said Hermione, as she put on glasses (52)

"Had he known that it was he who stood there, he would have wondered who was wearing his glasses" (458)

Clutter & dark colors surround mirror (ideal v. real)



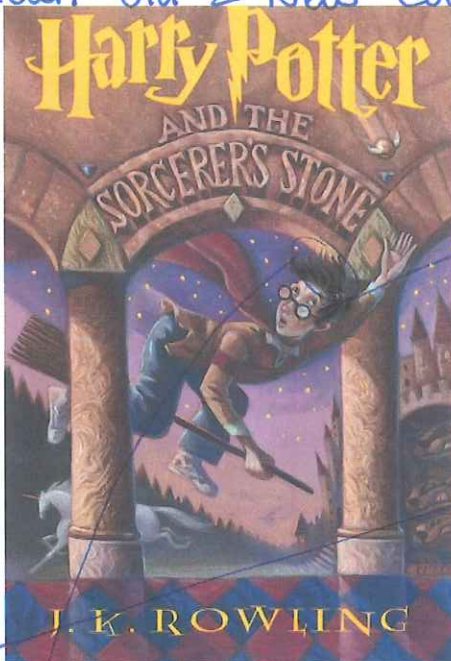
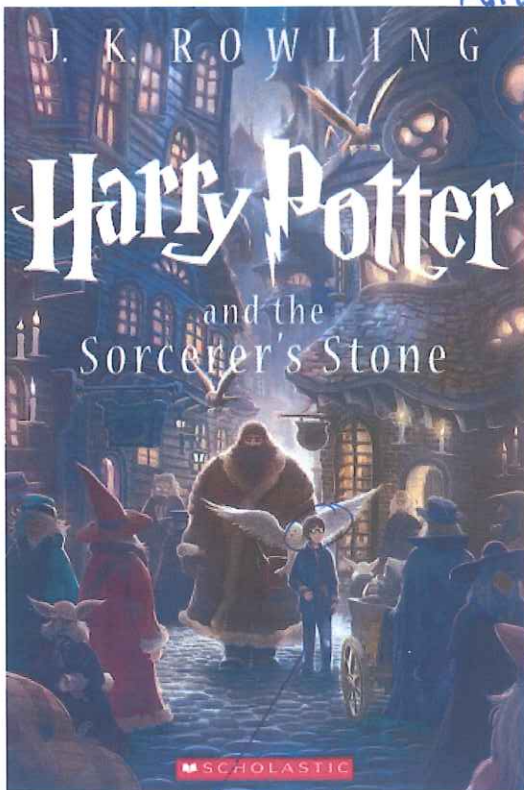
Only father wears glasses

Hair and other physical features are not actually that similar.

Round v. oval frames

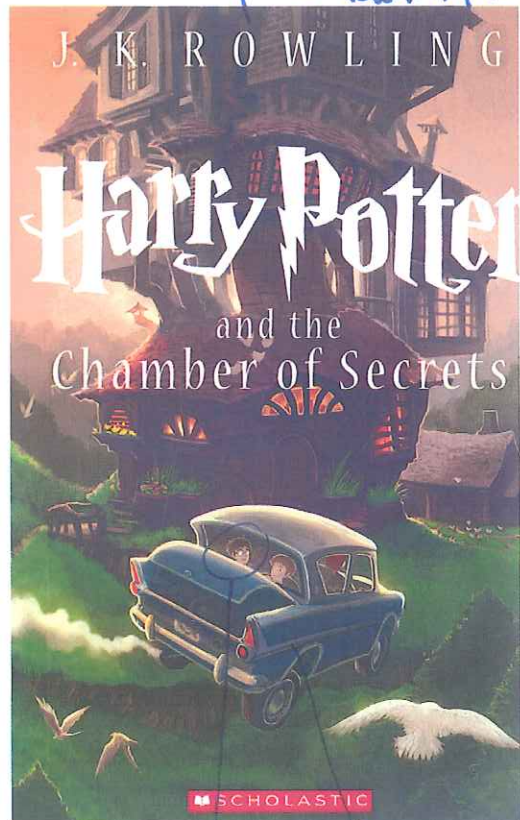
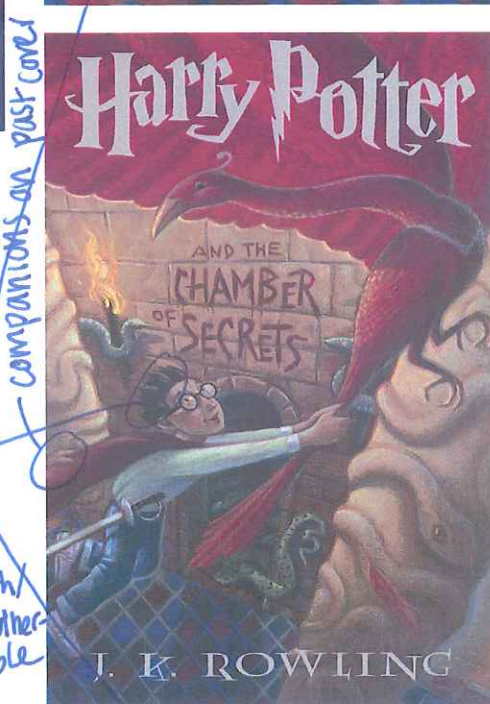
Mother = touch/emotion

images blurry on edges (blind to surroundings)



Not actually using glasses (3)

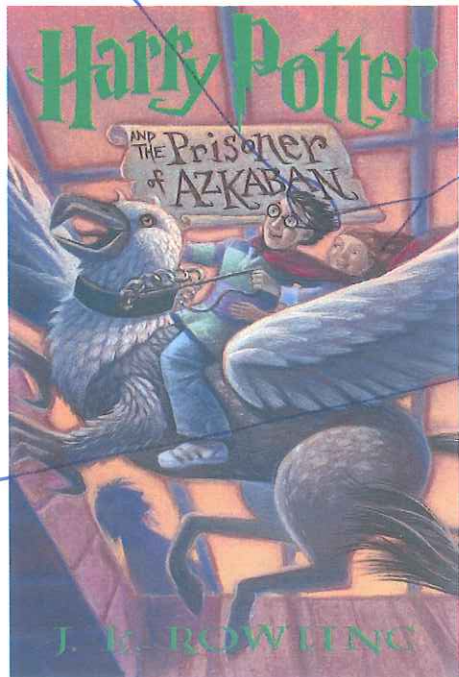
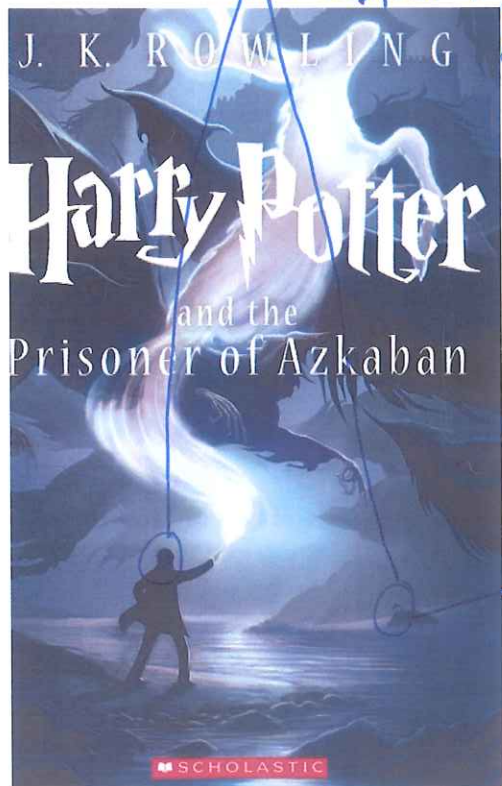
Much more background/clutter in new covers; Harry is no longer focal point (2)
- glasses alone identify him



Hero now dwarfed in his own cover
only glasses visible in new covers
Old covers all have hair blowing to reveal scar

companions on past covers

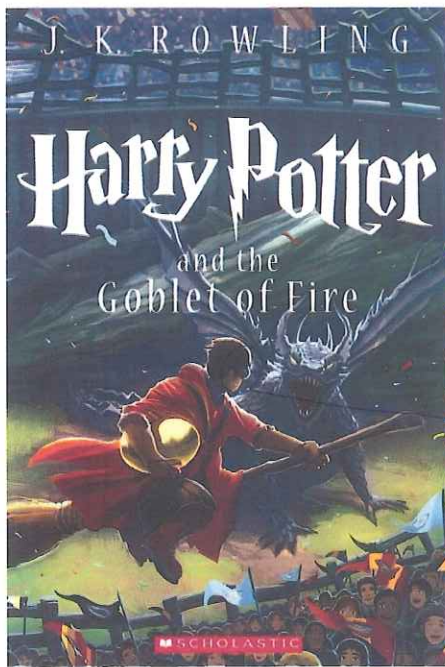
Future Harry's glasses can't be seen; past's can
↳ past = youth/vulnerable



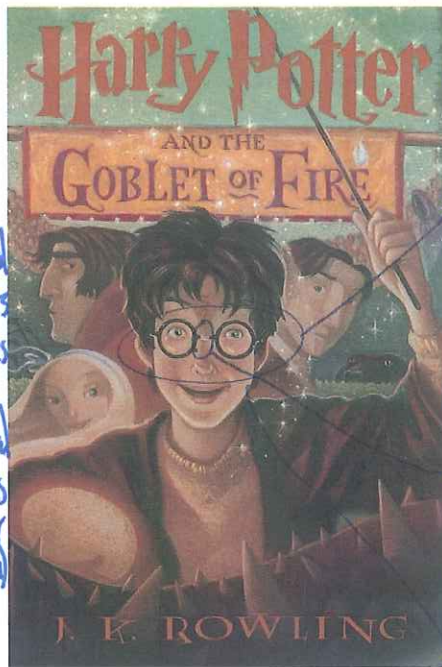
Now shares cover (progressively more social)

Glasses often so reflective that his actual eyes can't be seen

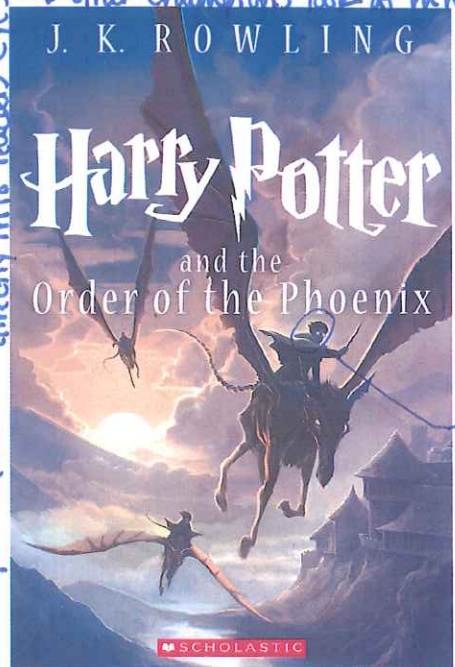
Harry in backseat v. front on British cover
↓
decreased control / autonomy
→ "Hero" role downplayed



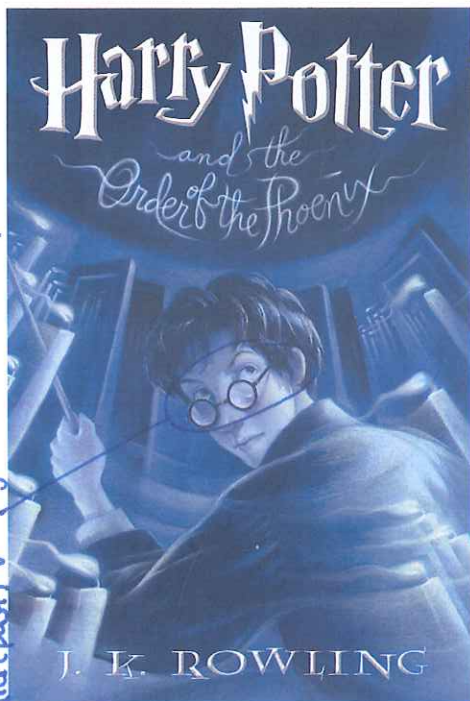
Special sports glasses & special (fans cheer below)



only time he stares directly into readers eyes
② hope & weak

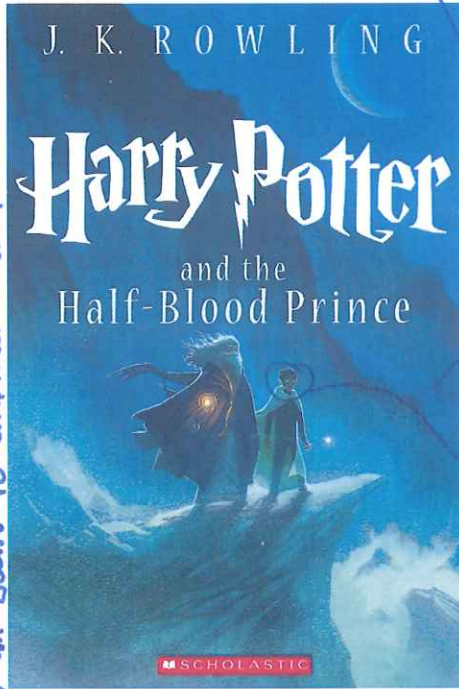


glasses obscure actual face

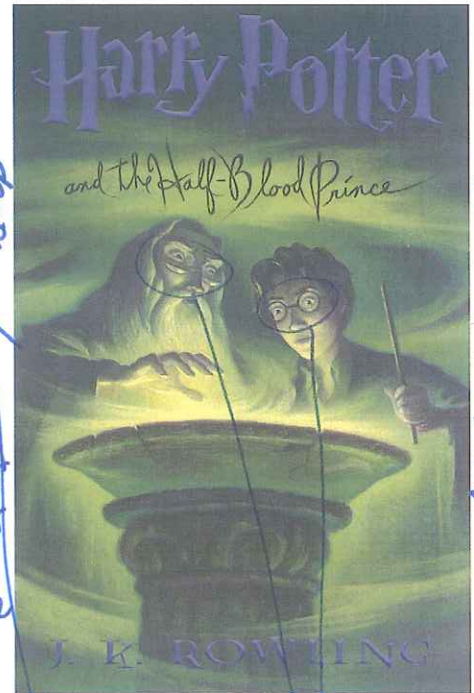


glancing over shoulder / Again, glasses not actually used
this book looks backword (cast)

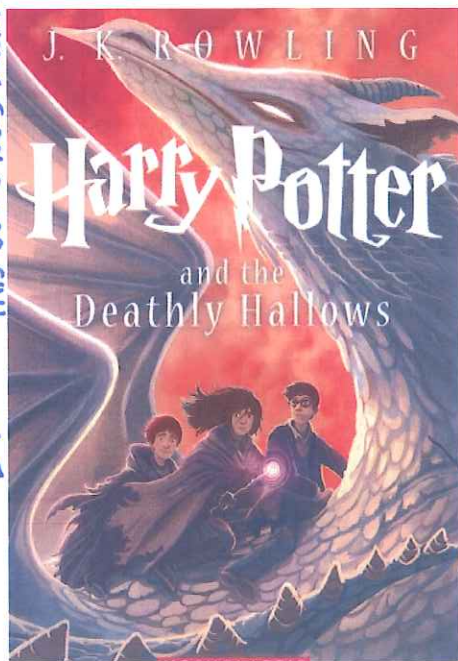
new covers all seem to emphasize companions/lovers



Action v. build-up
only light part of face

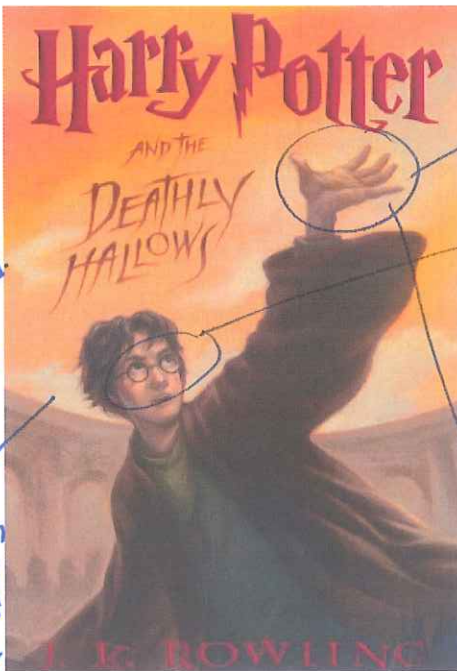


not alone again



Individual v. Trio

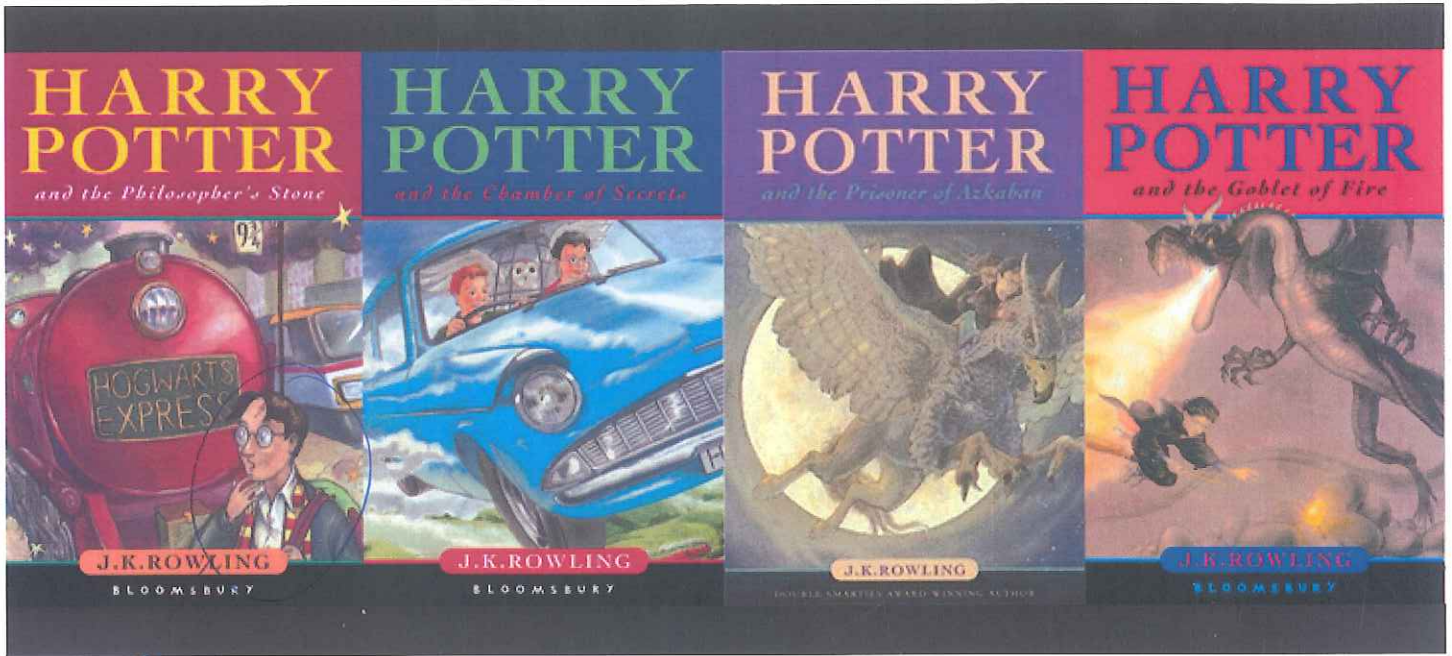
Again, Harry small v. beast



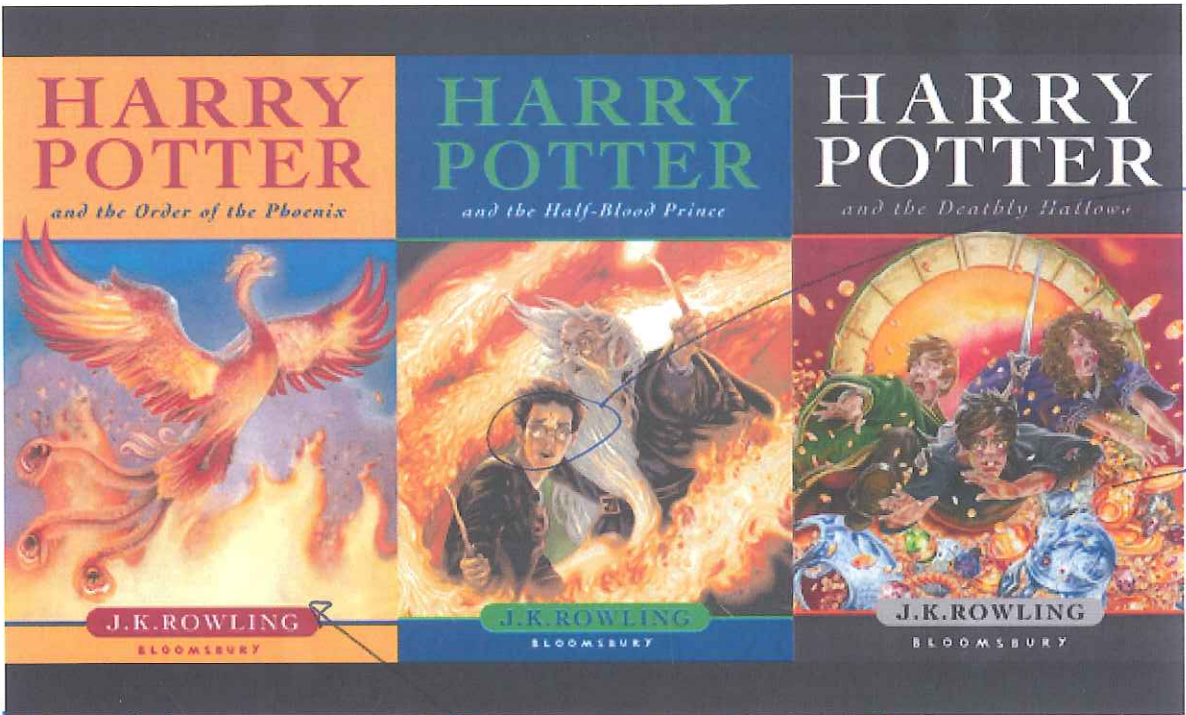
Alone again; hand out stretched in quest (conclusion)
Mothers green eyes can clearly be seen behind glasses
No longer visible in new covers
Harry clutches a magical creature/object in every other cover -> now defines self not reliant @

Both using glasses to "see" into the Pensieve
-> gain knowledge
glasses = wisdom

British Kid Covers



Most cartoonish
most exaggerated
glasses
↳ least transparent

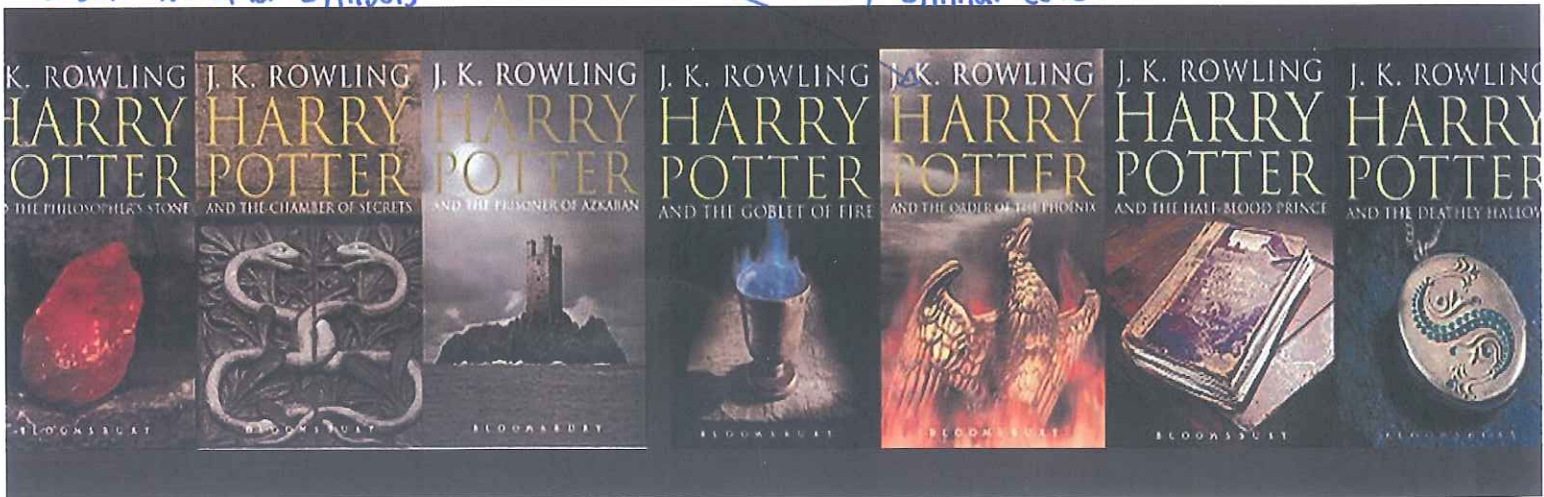


Adult covers ①
don't rely on characters
(and therefore glasses)
↳ but still other symbols

Fire/danger reflected in Harry's glasses

Harry always in forefront

only similar covers



British Adult Covers