

Harry Potter Book Review by Mia

The Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling will always have a special place in my heart as it was the series that first got me into reading. However, over the years, my knowledge of the Harry Potter series had become altered heavily by the movies, and I had forgotten many of the details from the books. As a result, when it popped up in my recommended list of books, I chose to revisit the novels in the form of audiobooks, starting with *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*.

The plot centers around the story of an orphaned boy named Harry Potter. On his eleventh birthday, he learns that he has magical powers that mark him as a wizard and is admitted to one of the most prestigious wizarding schools, Hogwarts. As he explores the wizarding world, he makes lasting friendships and uncovers terrible secrets. Throughout the novel, the relationships take center stage, and they are what create such a compelling narrative. Every interaction felt real and like something the characters would actually do, making me more attached to each person in the book.

As a first-time audiobook user, I highly recommend using audio recordings when you experience a rut in reading, and I think it is an extremely valuable tool. Also, I still felt the same suspense and excitement when listening to the novel as I did when reading. The first book explores themes of friendship, family, and love, and Rowling excellently builds out the wizarding world with her descriptions. The magic system is extremely comprehensible, and I love how she sets the plot of her story within the real world, making it even more believable. Furthermore, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* introduces Hogwarts through the eyes of Harry, who knows as much about magic as a new reader. As a result, Rowling is able to evoke the same emotions of astonishment that Harry feels in the reader and introduce different school traditions in a way that does not feel like excess exposition.

Also, the author creates suspense and feelings of surprise throughout her writing, crafting believable red herrings before uncovering the true story. Consequently, every reveal feels even more impactful. Her books are also extremely smart as every detail she introduces is symbolic and has importance later. As a reader who is revisiting the series, I now notice little details that foreshadow plotlines in books to come that were overlooked on my first read.

At first, I was hesitant to reread the Harry Potter series, but I think there is much to gain in revisiting the books, especially after being influenced by the movies. The characters in the novel are much more fleshed out, and Rowling is able to embed their motivations throughout each chapter, keeping their characterization consistent. Moreover, each character has more depth added to them, and Potter himself is much more witty than I remember, which was a pleasant surprise that expanded on his personality.

Additionally, Rowling creates a fresh and creative narrative with themes that are often overdone, using allegories to represent complex emotions that I had originally skimmed over at first read. I highly recommend *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* if you have never read the series or are thinking about revisiting the books. Rowling's writing will not disappoint and will leave you craving more.