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Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

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Rowling, J.K.. *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. Illustrated by Mary Grandpere. Arthur A. Levine Books/ Scholastic Press, 2003. ISBN 043935806. \$29.99. 870 pp.

Reviewer: Emily Fry

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Adventure stories;

Subject: Potter, Harry (Fictitious character)--Juvenile fiction; Friendship in adolescence--Juvenile fiction; Wizards--Juvenile fiction; Books—Reviews;

Harry Potter's summer break from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry is anything but a holiday. He is trapped in the muggle world that is inhabited by the beastly Dursley family, with no idea what is happening with He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named and his friends. Suddenly, his connections to the wizarding world are restored in a frightful encounter with two dementors from Azkaban. Harry's defense against the dementors earns him a hearing in front of a Ministry of Magic committee and lands him into the hands of the Order of the Phoenix. While Harry makes it back to Hogwarts in one piece, he faces yet more challenges in the form of the new Defense against the Dark Arts teacher, his upcoming Ordinary Wizarding Level exams, and the disturbing nightmares of corridors. In Harry's time of peril, he is forced to rely on his dreaded nemesis, Snape, in the hopes that he can help Harry learn how to conquer his greatest challenge. Into the fray is also added a pinch of romance, beloved characters from past books, teenage angst, and answers to questions that Harry has always needed.

The first portion of this book moved along slowly as Rowling built up the plot line and each of the different characters. With the slowness of the action the reader may be tempted to skim pages. While this will help the reader move to more exciting things, the reader will miss out on the many little details that Rowling inserts in her chapters, such as a garbage bin spitting out trash that didn't taste good. This book lives up to the hype that surrounded its release and shows off Rowling's maturing writing style. What makes this fifth book different is that the American copies still contain all of the British slang that has always been replaced with American slang in the previous books. The original slang adds a lively color to the text, but can cause some confusion. Dark subject matter is included in each of the chapters and the reader discovers more about the first war with Lord Voldemort and comes face-to-face with the cruelty of the Death Eaters, making this a book better suited for older children. Beware getting towards the end of the book late at night, because the suspense will suck you in and you won't be able to stop reading until the very bitter end!