

Tuesday 4th February Reading Comprehension
Extract taken from Chapter 9 of Harry Potter and Philosopher's Stone.

In this extract, Malfoy challenges Harry to a midnight duel

Fred and George had hardly disappeared when someone far less welcome turned up: Malfoy, flanked by Crabbe and Coyle.

'Having a last meal, Potter? When are you getting the train back to the Muggles?'

'You're a lot braver now you're back on the ground and you've got your little friends with you,' said Harry coolly. There was of course nothing at all little about Crabbe and Goyle, but as the High Table was full of teachers, neither of them could do more than crack their knuckles and scowl.

'I'd take you on any time on my own,' said Malfoy. 'Tonight, if you want. Wizard's duel. Wands only — no contact. What's the matter? Never heard of a wizard's duel before, I suppose?'

'Of course he has,' said Ron, wheeling round. 'I'm his second, who's yours?'

Malfoy looked at Crabbe and Coyle, sizing them up.

'Crabbe,' he said. 'Midnight all right? We'll meet you in the trophy room, that's always unlocked.'

When Malfoy had gone, Ron and Harry looked at each other.

'What is a wizard's duel?' said Harry. 'And what do you mean, you're my second?'

'Well, a second's there to take over if you die,' said Ron casually, getting started at last on his cold pie. Catching the look on Harry's face, he added quickly, 'but people only die in duels, you know, with real wizards. The most you and Malfoy'll be able to do is send sparks at each other. Neither of you knows enough magic to do any real damage. I bet he expected you to refuse, anyway.'



‘And what if I wave my wand and nothing happens?’

‘Throw it away and punch him on the nose,’ Ron suggested.

‘Excuse me.’

They both looked up. It was Hermione Granger. ■

‘Can’t a person eat in peace in this place?’ said Ron.

Hermione ignored him and spoke to Harry.

‘I couldn’t help overhearing what you and Malfoy were saying —

‘Bet you could,’ Ron muttered.

‘— and you mustn’t go wandering around the school at night, think of the points you’ll lose Gryffindor if you’re caught, and you’re bound to be. It’s really very selfish of you.’

‘And it’s really none of your business,’ said Harry.

‘Goodbye,’ said Ron.

Questions

1. Why was Harry safe from Crabbe and Goyle at the start?
2. What is a duel?
3. Why did Malfoy ‘look at Crabbe and Goyle, sizing them up’?
4. Where is the duel going to take place and why in that particular place?
5. What impressions do you get of Hermione’s character from this extract? Remember to back up your ideas with reference to the text.