

An extract from Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

“Righ’ then, Harry,” said Hagrid, “I reckon he migh’ let yeh ride him!” This was more than Harry had bargained for. He was used to a broomstick; but he wasn’t sure a Hippogriff would be quite the same. “Yeh climb up there, jus’ behind the wing joint,” said Hagrid, “an’ mind yeh don’ pull any of his feathers out, he won’ like that ...” Harry put his foot on the top of Buckbeak’s wing and hoisted himself onto his back. Buckbeak stood up. Harry wasn’t sure where to hold on; everything in front of him was covered in feathers. “Go on, then!” roared Hagrid, slapping the Hippogriff’s hindquarters. Without warning, twelve-foot wings flapped open on either side of Harry; he just had time to seize the Hippogriff around the neck before he was soaring upwards.

It was nothing like a broomstick, and Harry knew which one he preferred; the Hippogriff’s wings were beating uncomfortably on either side of him, catching him under his legs and making him feel he was about to be thrown off; the glossy feathers slipped under his fingers and he didn’t dare get a stronger grip; instead of the smooth action of his Nimbus Two Thousand, he now felt himself rocking backwards and forwards as the hindquarters of the Hippogriff rose and fell with his wings. Buckbeak flew him once around the paddock and then headed back to the ground; this was the bit Harry had been dreading; he leant back as the smooth neck lowered, feeling he was going to slip off over the beak; then he felt a heavy thud as the four ill-assorted feet hit the ground, and just managed to hold on and push himself straight again. “Good work, Harry!” roared Hagrid, as everyone except Malfoy, Crabbe and Goyle cheered, “OK, who else wants a go?”.

Oak National Academy

Emboldened by Harry’s success, the rest of the class climbed cautiously into the paddock. Hagrid untied the Hippogriffs one by one, and soon people were bowing nervously, all over the paddock. Neville ran repeatedly backwards from his, which didn’t seem to want to bend its knees. Ron and Hermione practised on the chestnut, while Harry watched. Malfoy, Crabbe and Goyle had taken over Buckbeak. He had bowed to Malfoy, who was now patting his beak, looking disdainful. “This is very easy,” Malfoy drawled, loud enough for Harry to hear him. “I knew it must have been, if Potter could do it ... I bet you’re not dangerous at all, are you?” he said to the Hippogriff. “Are you, you ugly great brute?” It happened in a flash of steely talons; Malfoy let out a high-pitched scream and next moment, Hagrid was wrestling Buckbeak back into his collar as he strained to get at Malfoy, who lay curled in the grass, blood blossoming over his robes. “I’m dying!” Malfoy yelled, as the class panicked “I’m dying, look at me. It’s killed me.”

“Yer not dyin’!” said Hagrid, who had gone very white. “Someone help me – gotta get him outta here –,” Hermione ran to open the gate while Hagrid lifted Malfoy easily. As they passed, Harry saw that there was a long, deep gash in Malfoy’s arm; blood splattered the grass and Hagrid ran with him, up the slope towards the castle. Very shaken, the Care of Magical Creatures class followed at a walk. The Slytherins were all shouting about Hagrid. “They should sack him straight away!” said Pansy Parkinson, who was in tears. “It was Malfoy’s fault!” snapped Dean Thomas. Crabbe and Goyle flexed their muscles threateningly. They all climbed the stone steps into the deserted Entrance Hall. “I’m going to see if he’s OK!” said Pansy, and they all watched her run up the marble staircase. The Slytherins, still muttering about Hagrid, headed away in the direction of their dungeon common room. Harry, Ron and Hermione proceeded upstairs to Gryffindor Tower “D’you think he’ll be all right?” said Hermione nervously. “Course he will, Madam Pomfrey can mend cuts in about a second,” said Harry, who had had far worse injuries mended magically by the matron. “That was a really bad thing to happen in Hagrid’s first class, though, wasn’t it?” said Ron, looking worried “Trust Malfoy to mess things up for him ..”

- 1) How big are the Hippogriff’s wings?
- 2) What part of the Hippogriff did Harry hold on to?
- 3) How many times did Buckbeak take Harry round the paddock?
- 4) Who praised Buckbeak after Harry had landed?
- 5) Which character ran away from their Hippogriff?
- 6) Who opened the gate to let Hagrid let Malfoy out?
- 7) What was the name of the class the children were taking part in?
- 8) Tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is true or false.

	True	False
Dean Thomas blames Hagrid for Malfoy getting hurt.		
Pansy ran up the stairs to check on Malfoy.		
Hagrid struggled to lift Malfoy.		
It was Hagrid's first class.		

- 9) Why did Buckbeak hurt Malfoy?

10) Where did Hagrid take Malfoy? Tick one.

Gryffindor Tower	<input type="checkbox"/>
The castle	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entrance Hall	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dungeon common room	<input type="checkbox"/>