

Name _____



Sorting Choices

When Harry Potter arrived at Hogwarts, he was both excited and nervous. He had heard about the Sorting Hat, a magical hat that placed new students into one of four houses: Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, or Slytherin. The idea that a hat could decide his future seemed strange to Harry. Did the Sorting Hat know something about him that he didn't?

As he sat on the stool, the Sorting Hat whispered in his ear. "Ah, difficult. Very difficult. Plenty of courage, I see. Not a bad mind, either. There's talent, oh my goodness, yes—and a thirst to prove yourself. So where shall I put you?" The Hat considered putting him in Slytherin, a house known for ambitious and cunning students. But Harry had already met Draco Malfoy, a Slytherin boy who was rude and mean. He didn't want to be like that. "Not Slytherin, not Slytherin," Harry thought desperately.

The Sorting Hat paused. "Are you sure? You could be great, you know. It's all here in your head. And Slytherin will help you on the way to greatness, there's no doubt about that." But Harry refused. He wanted to be in Gryffindor, where his new friend Ron Weasley was sorted. He wanted to be brave and stand up for what was right. Finally, the Hat made its decision. "Well, if you're sure... better be GRYFFINDOR!"

This moment showed that Harry had a choice in shaping his future. Even though the Sorting Hat could see his abilities, it was his own decision that mattered most. Dumbledore later told Harry that "it is our choices, far more than our abilities, that show what we truly are." The Sorting Hat might have seen Harry's potential for Slytherin, but in the end, his heart and values led him to Gryffindor.

Harry learned that destiny wasn't written for him—he had the power to choose who he wanted to become. This idea stayed with him as he faced new challenges, reminding him that choices define a person more than anything else.