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## POTTER PRIMER Local muggles make their Book 7 predictions.

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BY GILLAN LUDLOW

It's that time of year--the time when kids become giddy and the air is filled with magic.

No, it's not Christmas--it's the release of J.K. Rowling's seventh and final Harry Potter book, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows."

As we all know, Rowling has stated that two main characters in Book 7 are going to die. Before the book hits stores on Saturday, children, teens and adults are forming their own opinions on who they will be.



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"I'm hoping Harry will die, because it will be a good way to bring closure to the series," said Courtney Buzzard, a rising junior at Stafford High School.

However, others are hoping that maybe Harry Potter will have that fairytale ending we have all been wanting for him.

"I'm hoping that Harry goes back to school and that Ron and Hermione are together," said rising Stafford junior Elysia Gherlone.

"There will undoubtedly be a huge battle with Voldemort. I'm hoping that Harry doesn't die, but by the title, I don't know what to think."

Some speculation seems to be whether Potter is one of Voldemort's Horcruxes--meaning the dark lord hid a fragment of his soul in the young wizard.

Buzzard said she thought Potter and his nemesis could meet their fates together.

"If Harry dies, Voldemort will also be killed, because that would be the last bit of his soul."

Or, if not, is Potter just a boy who keeps getting in the way of Lord Voldemort's diabolical plans?

There is one other question dwelling on people's minds as the seventh book's release looms closer: What will become of J.K. Rowling after the magical world of Harry Potter slowly fades away? Better yet, what will become of Harry Potter fans across the globe?

Don't be expecting another Harry Potter book to be popping up out of the blue. Rowling has made it clear there will

be nothing left in the wizarding world after Book 7.

A fan asked Rowling on her Web site if she was going to write anything else after Harry Potter was finished. Her only response was that she had some old stuff in a drawer that she may or may not pick up and continue.

After the book's release, all that fans will have left are two movies. When comparing the books and movies, most fans are happier with the books. That is only because the books can be as detailed as Rowling wants; a movie that included every single detail would just become a bore.

The verdict is still out on the just-released fifth film, "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix" (see Page 7 for our reviewer's take). However, some Potter purists expressed their discontent with the fourth movie, "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire."

Perhaps this is due to the fact that it had a new director. Chris Columbus, the director of the first two movies, made them flow with the books' plot lines, putting fans at ease and making them feel like they really were at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. In "Goblet of Fire" (directed by Mike Newell), some fans felt that scenes were wasteful, and that the time could have been spent on details that were never explained.

"It's not like I hated the movie, but I think a few more things could have made it much better," said 17-year-old Spotsylvania County resident Matt Rooney.

"If the movie had been just a little bit longer, they could have included the Quidditch match, when the Weasleys picked up Harry from the Dursleys', and we could have seen more of the love affair between Hermione and Krum," said Rooney.

We can only hope that the directors of the final movies will satisfy fans' desires and restore the magical feel to the film series that it once had.

But however the movies turn out, as the book series closes, fans owe J.K. Rowling a debt of gratitude for enthralling the world with the adventures of a young boy, who makes us wish we had his life.

Gillan Ludlow is a senior at Stafford High School.

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