In my research paper, I will be asking the question: what are the stereotypes associated with the different houses in Hogwarts: School of Witchcraft and Wizardy? With that question I will be able to explore exactly why there are stereotypes and how that affects society in the real world and in the fictional world of Harry Potter.

Stereotypes are literally everywhere and we see them everyday without realizing it. People are aware that there are stereotypes, but they like to say, “No, I do not believe in that, I make up my own standards and judgments about people”. If you were to walk into a high school lunchroom, you would be able to see all the different cliques and stereotypes very well. At my high school there was: the cool kid table, the party kid table, the band geeks, the thespians, the normal kid table, and the jocks. All of those distinctions are made because we, as human beings, categorize people into groups. There are many explanations of why we categorize people and group people, but truly there is no purpose. It only leaves us stuck where we are, afraid to branch off into other groups of people because we feel like we may not belong or are too scared.

The first time Harry stepped foot into Hogwarts: School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, he became aware of which house he did not want to be in. Word was that Slytherin only produced evil witches and wizards and he did not want to be apart of that. He did not know that one of the bravest men he would ever meet was in that house during his time at Hogwarts, but because it was a well-known fact that evil wizards were Slytherin he disregarded that house. During the actual sorting ceremony he told the Sorting Hat not to put him in Slytherin and the hat listened to him, putting Harry in the ever courageous and brave Gryffindor house.

During the sorting ceremony Neville, is described as stumbling to the stool and then carelessly not taking off the hat after he was sorted into the Gryffindor house. The stereotype of Gryffindor is brave and courageous, and at the time everyone was wondering how Neville ended up in Gryffindor.

Throughout all the novels, the readers see all of the characters develop into the houses they were sorted in. At the same time, we see outliers in all of the houses, just as we see people going away from what we consider then norm in today’s society. Stereotypes are an interesting subject matter because without the fuel from people there would be no stereotypes. The differences that we see between people and the Hogwart’s houses do not actually exist, we think of them in our minds and make them become reality. If we make differences in our head then there will be differences, the catch is that we have to make differences. When we evaluate subjects and people we make differentiations, which in turn makes us, categorize them leading to stereotypical groups.

When thinking about stereotypes and the status quo that people feel like they must live up to, it is extremely frustrating to me. There is absolutely no reason to tell people how they must fit into a group and conform to some pattern when they do not want to. One of the benefits about the houses in Hogwarts is that the Sorting Hat truly does see your inner character and sorts you into the corresponding house, but at the same time why does there need to be different houses because then you click off into your own little world.

In my research paper I am going to explore why there are stereotypes, what they truly mean and what they do to this world and in *Harry Potter*. The houses in *Harry Potter* are important because they show what characteristics are needed to get into that house and how there are people who deviate from what their houses standards are.