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Reading Harry Potter: A Journey into Students' Understanding of Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract: Implementing education for sustainable development (SD) into higher education requires curricular changes, embodying various constraints. Therefore, exploring students' understanding of sustainable development goals (SDGs) is part of the initial steps. In doing this, students' reflections on literary works can yield valuable insights and guide what and how to teach for effective ESD practices. This study investigated university students' understanding of SDGs through their reflections on a literary work. A mixed-methods research design was employed, collecting data from senior English literature students at a Turkish state university. Qualitative data were collected through an open-ended survey and students' term papers, while quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire. The survey and term papers showed divergent results regarding students' understanding of SDGs. Although the survey indicated a restricted understanding, the term papers showed a more nuanced understanding. The quantitative findings also suggested that students had a systems perspective related to SDGs. Moreover, the term paper findings showed that students focused primarily on characters and settings while clarifying and elaborating their associations. Literary texts can be valuable tools to gain more insights into students' understanding of SDGs, as they provide explicit and implicit instances in which essential plot elements construct rich and meaningful contexts.

Keywords: literary text; *Harry Potter*; higher education; education for sustainable development; English as an academic language; fantasy literature; sustainable development goals

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1. Introduction

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times…" writes Dickens [1] (p. 5) in his novel *A Tale of Two Cities* to describe the late 18th century, specifically the years leading up to the French Revolution, contrasting Paris and London. From a Dickensian perspective, these words highlight the impressive duality that persists in the 21st century mainly because, while the scientific and technological developments in this century have substantially transformed our lives and increased our productivity, these changes have also come with a heavy price, evidenced by their highly adverse effects on our planet's organic and inorganic entities [2]. Worse, ecological catastrophes, unaffordable population growth, the ever-growing need for energy, worsening social and economic disparities, and proliferating armed conflicts indicate an unpleasant future for our planet.

The concept of sustainability has been circulated in popular, academic, and political discourses. In its simplest form, it is defined as "an approach to meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own" [3] (p. 16). As a response to the pressing need to bring sustainability into the foreground by providing solutions for major global problems, the United Nations (UN) announced the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

in 2015 while calling for joint action to build peace, increase prosperity, and create a livable world.

The UN's global attempt requires substantial changes in social behaviors and attitudes [4–6]. In line with this, quality education (Goal 4) is significant in achieving these goals and a key to such societal changes [7]. Accordingly, the aim is that, by 2030, everyone on the planet will acquire a body of knowledge and skills, "through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development." [8] (p. 14).

Given that education systems must accommodate their goals to meet social and global needs [9], it is strongly emphasized that sustainability issues should be incorporated into all levels of education [10]. Thus, higher education institutions have a privileged role in ensuring sustainability, as these institutions reshape future generations' attitudes and behaviors through educating future teachers, decision-makers, and leaders, along with other human resources required to promote sustainability [11–13]. Additionally, there is a growing trend of conceptualizing higher education institutions as "sites of sustainability research," given their role in setting examples for sustainable practices within communities [14]. Hence, various departments and programs have started including courses or modules to inform their students about sustainability.

1.1. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Higher Education

In the landscape of SDGs, educating people about sustainability is highly prioritized, mainly through formal schooling. In line with this, ESD was initiated to align teaching and learning practices within a given education system toward SDGs. UNESCO [15] delineates ESD as follows:

> [It] means including key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption. It also requires participatory teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behavior and take action for sustainable development. Education for Sustainable Development consequently promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios, and making decisions in a collaborative way. (p. 1)

This basic framework of ESD allows higher education institutions and departments to integrate SDG-related themes, topics, and subjects when and where necessary into their curricula, with an aim to instill students with essential knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes to take an active role in the decision-making and application processes at all levels. UNESCO's conceptualization of ESD also requires a comprehensive perspective, emphasizing the interconnected nature of SDGs rather than regarding them as isolated components. That is to say, it suggests that social, ecological, and economic dimensions of SDGs should be addressed together, with a specific focus on their interrelatedness and without attaching much importance to certain goals [16]. Given that SDGs are a global initiative addressing the most pressing environmental, social, and economic challenges facing the world today, it is necessary to understand the interconnectedness of these dimensions and how they impact each other. Therefore, ESD should focus on imbuing students with knowledge and abilities to make connections between the main dimensions of SDGs and gain a more holistic understanding of the issues at hand [17–20].

Despite the overall consensus on the interdisciplinary, learner-centered, participatory, and transformative nature of ESD practices, there are still debates on what is taught and how it is taught about SDGs [21]. These debates stem from the novelty of ESD for educational institutions and its broad nature. Additionally, given the context-bound nature of higher education worldwide, the lack of national curricula and frameworks for integrating SDGs into departmental courses makes ESD a complicated and practitioner-

based initiative. For instance, teaching strategies and methods used in geography or engineering departments for SDGs may not be suited well to philosophy or sociology departments. Similarly, as the research on the curricular changes and implementations related to ESD is still in its infancy, faculties "innovate and experiment in when and how to teach sustainability" [14] (p. 139). Previous studies emphasize this issue and show that integrating SDGs into higher education is slower than at other levels of education [21–23]. Therefore, academic staff in higher education institutions often divorce from traditional teaching methods and reshape their teaching practices, considering all these while integrating SDGs into their teaching practices [24,25]. In addition to these problems, implementing ESD in higher education often faces limitations and hindrances across various levels (e.g., institutional, curricular, departmental, etc.) [23]. Although these constraints are often downplayed, they undermine the effectiveness of ESD practices, requiring the exploration of alternative ways for better practices. Educators should actively seek second-best chances to incorporate SDGs into teaching practices in such cases [23]. Similarly, such ESD models recognize limitations and consider the current state of unsustainability in ESD [4].

Empirical studies underpin the aforementioned theoretical views on constraints [4,23]. These studies indicated that insufficient institutional and curriculum support [26], financial problems [27,28], the lack of conceptual and, consequently, methodological unity within the research and practice of ESD [29], misconceptions about sustainability [30], impositions on certain perspectives on students rather than fostering them to develop their own viewpoints [23,31,32], students' lack of sensitivity, disengagement, boredom, and demotivation for sustainability [26,33], academic staff's lack of professional development of sustainability [34], and lack of interest [35] are among the common constraints against ESD in higher education. Other studies also showed that a lack of understanding of SDGs and divergences between students' and academic staff's understanding of SDGs [17,27,36–38] also appeared as a critical problem for effective ESD practices in higher education. Considering these constraints and problems, ESD requires integrating innovative methods and techniques into teaching practices, such as project work, free work, scenic play, discussion, and teamwork [34,39]. With all these in mind, it is significant to identify and analyze those limitations to establish strategies to transition ESD from its current unsustainable stage to a more sustainable one. As such, delving into university students' understanding of SDGs is part of the initial steps to be taken because their understanding guides what to teach and how to teach.

1.2. The Current State of ESD in the Turkish Educational Context

Türkiye has been making efforts to implement policies on sustainable development across various domains since the 1990s [40,41]. While the initial sustainability policies emerged in 1996, sustainable development as a critical concept gained prominence in the 10th National Development Plan in 2013 [42], with a particular focus on livable places and sustainable environments. However, it was not until 2019 that SDGs as a whole were referred to and included in the 11th National Development Plan [43]. Considering the nearly three-decade timeline, it is evident that policies, implementations, and actions related to SDGs have progressed at a slow and insufficient pace.

Ramifications of problems with sustainability policies lead to a notable lack of a robust connection between ESD and national strategies in Türkiye [41]. In the 2019 strategic plan endorsed by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), "being sensitive to the environment and the rights of all living beings" is incorporated among the core values [44] (p. 40), and the criticality of raising "social awareness about the function of education in sustainable economic development" [44] (p. 33) is underlined. Similarly, in the 2023 Education Vision, it is enunciated that "increasing social welfare and our country's social, cultural, and sustainable economic development starts from preschool, which is the first step of the education system" [45] (p. 79). However, neither of these documents put forward clear and to-the-point actions or steps specifically focusing on ESD and SDGs. Therefore, in the Turkish national education system (primary, secondary, and high schools), ESD

practices are often actualized through certain SDGs-related topics integrated into the most relevant units in coursebooks. Hence, in higher education, ESD remains a problematic concept. Quality education is highly prioritized in the National Higher Education Goals for 2022 [46]. Yet, this document does not refer to SDGs and ESD in undergraduate and postgraduate education [41]. The Council of Higher Education (CoHE) updated and refined national teacher education curricula in 2018 to fill this gap, and an elective course on sustainable development and education was created [47].

The national literature on ESD reveals valuable insights that can be grouped into two categories: first, limitations and barriers to ESD practices, and second, addressees as the focal point of ESD practices. For the first category, previous studies indicated that, although the number of universities has rapidly increased in Turkey, many new universities suffer from a lack of academic staff (in quantity and quality) and financial problems, which reduce the quality of teaching, learning, and research practices, thereby making higher education unsustainable [48–50]. In addition, the lack of educational policies that regulate curricula in higher education and teaching practices for sustainability also exacerbates problems related to ESD practices [41]. Other studies also showed that academic programs predominantly utilizing monodisciplinary approaches and academic staff's inclination to discipline-centric attitudes have impeded their involvement with sustainability and their focus on local problems [50]. As for the second category, around one-third of the academic research on sustainable development directly focuses on higher education [51]. However, most of these studies center around teacher education and pre-service teachers from different disciplines rather than delving into other academic domains and the experiences of university students. The results of these pre-service teacher-focused studies revealed that students needed to enhance and deepen their understanding and knowledge of sustainable development [52–54], as they primarily associated SDGs with a particular aspect [41,55].

These problems underlined in previous research mainly stem from research and teaching practices concerning sustainable development in Turkish higher education, which are heavily anchored in academic staff's initiatives and choices. However, there is a paucity of studies focusing on integrating SDGs into departmental curricula, particularly in non-ELT departments where English is not the medium of instruction. SDG-integrated courses in such contexts have great potential to create socially responsible and globally aware graduates equipped to address the challenges of SD. This initiative aligns with UNESCO's recommendations advocating for cross-curricular ESD integration in language learning programs, asserting that these programs "provide excellent opportunities to develop a global orientation to sustainability studies. This is particularly true at higher-grade levels when current publications in the second language can be used as source material" [56] (p. 36). This perspective accentuates that departments where the English language is used academically as the medium of instruction are well-suited environments for integrating SDGs into curricula and imbuing students with knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes toward sustainability [57]. In translating this perspective into practical application, an essential step involves delving into students' current understanding of SDGs, mainly because the thorough delineation of their existing understanding assumes a pivotal role in the transformative process of reshaping and revising higher education curricula, ultimately working towards the cultivation of a unified and comprehensive understanding of sustainability [4].

The national literature on SDGs in the Turkish higher education context provides valuable insights into students' understanding of sustainability, yet much of the research is limited to students' responses to scaled items. This limitation is critical because responding to closed-ended questions is often simpler than explaining concepts or terms in writing or orally [58,59], and thus, such a response mode may yield more concise but potentially less insightful responses. Particular studies underpin this view, suggesting students' in-depth understanding of only a certain number of SDGs [38]. Given that curriculum refers to successfully conveying what is planned to differing degrees to different students

using appropriate materials and actions of legitimated bodies of knowledge [60,61], exploring the intricacies of students' understanding of SDGs is essential for planning what to expand, exclude, and integrate into the curriculum and to what extent.

1.3. ESD and Literary Texts

Theoretical and empirical studies on English language teaching and learning indicate the versatility of using literary texts [62]. Using such texts to teach or learn language skills has long been embraced in ELT [63]. Given that literature provides insights into humanity's cultural heritage by capturing the zeitgeist and the essence of society and humans [64,65], these texts have increasingly been used since the last decade to decolonize language teaching practices [66], improve learners' skills in various literacies [67], critical thinking skills [68], and to integrate interculturality [69,70] and environmental issues [71] into language teaching practices.

Using literary works to incorporate various critical issues in language teaching is heavily anchored in meaning-making in reading, which is shaped by the context of the text, reader, and learning activities [72]. That is to say, organizing learning contexts with appropriate pedagogical aims can steer reading processes in particular ways [73]. From this standpoint, literary texts can be used to shape and influence perceptions of nature and humanity [74,75], simply because any story whose characters and actions exemplify sustainable behavior can produce positive dispositions toward behavioral change among readers [76]. Therefore, literary texts have the potential to be valuable tools, emphasizing the appreciation for nature, the importance of caring for the environment, and the practice of sustainable living, offering valuable insights and educational opportunities for students [77]. This, in essence, requires systems thinking that is

> the mental habit of looking at things as a whole. It is 'holistic thinking'. It is the type of thinking that enables us to think of multiple processes happening together in 'at-once-ness' and helps us avoid the pitfalls of linear thinking. System thinking is to learn to look at various entities and individuals as connected together into network of relationships even as they appear separate, and isolated. [78] (p. 55)

Reading literary texts today requires a process that falls into what we should consider "systems thinking" because of the situatedness of the activity of reading itself that is framed within theoretical and practical formulations. From an ecocritical perspective, literary texts incorporate deep and rich accounts of the non-human, and thus, reading such works has great potential to reshape the reader's beliefs and attitudes toward sustainability issues [79]. Thus, such a complex procedure of systems thinking in literacy and literary reading encapsulates issues of development, personal, local, societal, or global, as an issue of holism, composed of sub-systems including beliefs, practices, agendas, and ideologies that necessitate holistic as well as in-depth interrogation of all parts of the (sub)system. Methodologically, "Systems analysis is done by down a given object of study or problem into its constituents, parts and factors and by analyzing their interrelations as parts of the whole" [80] (p. 4). In short, this paper ascribed that, when students read within systems thinking, they perceived the SDGs in the text as interrelated subsets, rather than within a monolithic reading, during which they observed one SDG at a time without considering their interrelationships within and outside the various realities offered in the text extending to the realities of the world in which we live.

The literature on literary texts and SDGs/ESD is divided into three groups. The first group involves studies analyzing texts regarding SDG-related themes and suggesting ways to use these texts [79,81]. The second group revolves around theoretical studies discussing how literary texts and SDGs can be linked [82,83]. The third group focuses on practical applications, seeking ways to integrate literary texts and ESD into either language or literature teaching practices. Despite the paucity of research on the third group, previous studies provide evidence of the practicality of using such texts to teach SDGs.

Research also indicates that course contents, students' expectations, and their boredom appeared as challenges in the absence of appropriate institutional policies and syllabi and underscored the need for natural points of departures that facilitate students' reflections on sustainability [84]. Studying literature to understand society and sustainability helped university students learn how to make sense of their society and provided them with opportunities to address and confront economic, ecological, and social issues [84]. Furthermore, certain studies indicated that literary texts and discussions in line with the literature circle principles led to changes in students' understanding of SDGs from a future-oriented concept to an issue requiring immediate action [74]. Similarly, a study articulating a literary-oriented and discussion-based course design for pre-service teachers showed that literary texts were valuable tools that increased students' ecocritical awareness and competence [62]. Additionally, a study examining the influence of a literature-centered SDGs course on the empathetic mindset of university students revealed that studying literary works to foster empathetic thinking positively impacted students' willingness to engage in meaningful actions for environmental conservation [85]. Furthermore, students' reflections on these literary texts and their responses to questions related to these texts yielded valuable data for gaining a deeper understanding of their mindsets regarding ESD. Literary texts are ideal springboard resources for raising awareness of SDGs as they incorporate the creative aspects of the language, conveying values and counter-values, and, thus, immersing in these texts through close reading has a discernible impact on students' thought processes [86]. In short, while a body of empirical studies shows that using literary texts in tertiary education deepened students' understanding of SDGs by creating a positive attitude toward them, such a discovery-oriented approach to textual analysis prepared students and teachers to take action to mitigate the effects of serious global problems [87].

2. The Present Study

This study addresses university students' in-depth understanding of SDGs through their reflections on *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, so that meaningful curricular changes can be made and SDGs can be effectively implemented into courses. In doing so, this study seeks answers to the following research questions:

1. In general, how do students perceive SDGs, and with what elements do they associate SDGs?
2. According to the findings of the survey and term paper, in what ways do university students' understanding of the SDGs differ?
3. What SDGs are discernible in the novel, and how do students interpret and explain the representation of these goals within the narrative?
4. What basic plot elements (i.e., characters, setting, and objects) in the novel are identified as being related to SDGs?

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

Given that delving into students' understanding of SDGs entails in-depth analysis [58], a mixed-methods research design in triangulation mode was deemed the best course of action to seek answers to the research questions. This research design allows the researcher to mitigate the limitations inherent in one method by utilizing the strengths of another [88] and to collect diverse but complementary data to better understand the phenomenon in question [89,90]. This way of inquiry aligns with unraveling the insights embedded in students' term papers concerning their grasp of SDGs and validating the qualitative results.

3.2. Context and Participants

This study was carried out at a state university in southwestern Türkiye. One hundred and twenty-one students (58 females and 63 males) enrolled in a BA-level Fantasy Literature and Harry Potter course. The course was an elective two-credit course, meeting 100 min per week. All the participants were senior students majoring in English Language and Literature. In addition, approximately half of the participants enrolled in the English language teaching certificate program and received pedagogical training to work as English language teachers. Throughout their undergraduate education, all participants used English as the medium of instruction. The departmental curriculum did not involve any courses or instruction directly related to SDGs. Therefore, most participants did not previously participate in projects, seminars, or courses related to SDGs, and less than 5% had previously participated in courses or seminars about SDGs. Participants' demographics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants' demographics.

Variables	Descriptors	n	%
Sex	Female	58	47.9
	Male	63	52.1
Age	23–25	99	81.8
	26–29	16	13.3
	Over 30	6	4.9
Previous participation in courses, seminars, projects, etc., on SDGs	No	116	95.9
	Yes	5	4.1
Previous knowledge about the SDGs	Not knowledgeable	66	54.4
	Somewhat knowledgeable	45	37.2
	Knowledgeable	10	8.4
Enrollment in the English language teaching certificate program	No	70	57.9
	Yes	51	42.1
Sources of information on SDGs *	Social media (Instagram, X, etc.)	80	31.62
	Websites	78	30.83
	Friends and social environment	28	11.06
	Books	23	9.09
	Ads and public service ads (non-broadcast)	20	7.91
	Conventional media (TV, newspapers, radio)	20	7.91
	Undergraduate courses	4	1.58

* Participants were allowed to choose multiple options while responding to this item.

The literary text read by the participants in this study was titled *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. Two main reasons led the researchers to choose this text. First, because the study aimed to focus on reading fiction to identify SDGs inherent in a literary text, the text came conveniently as it was already in the syllabus of the BA-level program where the first and the third writers of the present paper worked. Second, the text has widespread popularity, universal themes, accessibility, readability, educational potential, and alignment with values and morality, all creating a conducive environment for analyzing students' understanding of SDGs. However, the researchers were also aware that the text was criticized for various reasons in the salient literature as well as on social network sites due to its probable antisemitic features and exacerbation of social inequality, mainly due to the author's problematic stance on gender identity. Thus, these issues were also shared with the participants following the data collection process and as an extension to the analyses and discussion of the text in the classroom as the students were informed about the problematic issues surrounding the content and apprehension of the text. Furthermore, as far as the content of this paper is concerned, because the aim of the study was not to present a literary analysis of the text, such issues had to be dealt with in other studies that

focused on the textual properties, rather than how readers responded to it by connecting its content with external reality.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

This study employed qualitative and quantitative data collection tools following the principles of a mixed-methods research design. In addition to students' term papers, a survey involving open-ended questions and a questionnaire collecting students' perceptions of SDGs were used as the primary data collection tools. First, a survey that included three open-ended questions was administered (see Appendix A.1), and the participants were asked to explain in their own words what the term SD means to them. After that, students' term papers were collected through an assignment. Before the assignment, the instructor provided a guideline for the participants and informed them about the requirements and objectives by giving clear instructions and a template containing a table to fill in. Following the guidelines, students were asked to visit the UN's official website and read about SDGs to acquaint themselves with these goals. Then, they were asked to analyze *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* regarding these goals and write a well-organized essay on the representations of these goals in the novel (see Appendix A.2). Participants were given twenty days to complete and submit their papers.

Quantitative data were collected through the SDGs perception questionnaire found in the relevant literature [17] after students submitted their term papers. This quantitative tool measured whether individuals perceived SD as a monolithic phenomenon, each separate from the rest, or in terms of systems thinking, that is to say, as encompassing various intertwined and interconnected elements. In the aforementioned study, the Cronbach's alpha value of the tool was found to be 0.870 for systems thinking perspectives and 0.808 for monolithic perspectives [17]. In our study, it was found to be 0.816 for systems thinking perspectives and 0.820 for monolithic perspectives, confirming the questionnaire's reliability [91].

Qualitative data were analyzed following six phases of the reflexive thematic analysis, using Atlas 23 software [92]. The researchers engaged in multiple readings to familiarize themselves with and immerse themselves in the data. Subsequently, the entire dataset underwent a systematic examination to generate codes. These codes were then organized into initial themes. The analysis progressed with reviewing, reorganizing, and labeling these themes. The final step involved contextualizing the data. During this process, irrelevant and ambiguous survey responses were excluded to enhance data quality. A peer debriefing technique was employed to ensure the trustworthiness of data analysis and interpretations. Another professional reviewed and checked the data analysis results [93]. Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) edition 23. Normality checks were initially conducted through descriptive statistics. Parametric tests were applied to compare mean scores after confirming normal distribution through skewness (0.698 for monolithic perspectives and −0.176 for systems thinking perspectives) and kurtosis values (−0.005 for monolithic perspectives and −0.261 for systems thinking perspectives) within the range of ±1.5 [94].

4. Findings

4.1. Survey Findings

The content analysis of students' responses to survey questions provided valuable insights into their overall conceptualization of SD, revealing a distinct distribution of themes across environmental (f = 153, 15.93%), social (f = 130, 38.35%), economic (f = 56, 16.52%), and notional dimensions (f = 56, 13.83%) of SD, respectively (see Table 2). As shown, the environmental dimension emerged as a predominant dimension and comprised the largest portion of the conceptual framework, encompassing more than one-third of the coded responses. The prominence of the environmental dimension, both in terms of quantity and variety of the descriptors, indicates students' substantial emphasis

on environmental considerations within the context of SD and underscores that students mainly associated SD with the urgent need to safeguard the planet through sustainable practices.

Table 2. Overall conceptual framework of SD.

Dimension	Themes	Codes/Descriptors	f	%
Environmental dimension	Resource management	saving natural resources, recycling, reusing, no waste	54	15.93
	Environmental conservation	protecting nature/world, creating a livable planet, action for climate crisis/change	52	15.34
	Sustainable living	eco-friendly lifestyle, a balance between nature and humans, disseminating clean/renewable energy	47	13.86
		Total	153	45.13
Social dimension	Caring for future generations	considering the next generations, meeting their needs, developing for future generations, a better world for future generations	49	14.46
	Social development and equalities	ensuring social progress, justice for all, promoting equality, increasing social welfare	44	12.98
	Quality of life	healthcare, better education, improving living conditions, better living conditions, social well-being	23	6.78
	Peace and harmony	peace, collaboration, unity	14	4.13
		Total	130	38.35
Economic dimension	Strong economy	economic growth, economic prosperity, economically strong institutions, solutions for economic problems, decrease in unemployment	40	11.80
	Reasonable consumption and production	responsible consumption, reasonable production, consumption habits	16	4.72
		Total	56	16.52
		Cumulative Total	339	100

Please see Supplementary Materials for further details. Authors' own design.

The social dimension of SD is the second concept that holds a significant position within students' conceptualization of SD, representing approximately one-third of the codes, indicating a strong commitment to social issues in the pursuit of SD. In the literature, this dimension is characterized by a multifaceted approach encompassing various aspects of human life and community dynamics. However, the social dimension of SD that emerged from students' responses is manifested through thematic clusters, with primary emphasis on caring for future generations (f = 49, 14.46%), social development, and equality (f = 44, 12.98%). Additionally, the dimension incorporates codes related to quality of life (f = 23, 6.78%) and peace and harmony (f = 14, 4.13%). The prominence of these themes within the social dimension of SD indicates students' internalized understanding of the role of social issues in achieving SD. Students' remarks about quality of life, peace, and harmony also show their understanding of how social well-being and social harmony play a crucial role in implementing SD.

The findings indicate relatively narrow variations in frequency and codes within the economic dimension, compared to the environmental and social dimensions. As shown in Table 2, the economic dimension of SD occupies 16.52% of the total coded responses, which signifies a comparatively lower emphasis within the overall framework. The strong economy (f = 40, 11.80%) is the predominant theme in the economic dimension. Code variations and frequency within this theme indicate that students mainly associated the economic dimension with such general expressions as economic growth, economic prosperity, and economically strong institutions. Therefore, this finding shows that students regarded the economic dimension as an integral part of SD and that there was a need for a robust economic framework. In addition to the overarching theme of the strong economy, reasonable consumption and production (f = 16, 4.72%) also emerged as the second theme from the responses, underscoring the importance of integrating sustainable practices into economic activities. However, the low representation of this theme also indicates that

students had difficulty relating the need to balance economic growth with environmental and social considerations. The underrepresentation of the economic dimension also indicates a problematic understanding of SDGs, singling out environmental and social dimensions and overlooking the broader economic dimension and other interrelated aspects. The following quotes vividly illustrate this problem:

> Sustainable development aims to balance the present needs of society with the protection of natural resources and the environment while also considering future generations' needs. (Student 15)

> Sustainable development is a model for building a future where future generations can have the same or better opportunities by carefully using natural resources to meet today's needs. It is aimed to ensure that future generations inherit a better world. (Student 60)

As these quotes exemplify, the great majority of the students' responses lacked establishing links between the three main dimensions of SDGs. Only a few students explained the interconnected nature of SD. Therefore, survey findings indicated a paucity of systems thinking perspectives in students' understanding of SDGs.

4.2. Term Paper Findings

Students' term papers were analyzed in phases. In the first phase, each term paper underwent a comprehensive multiple reading to identify and document SDGs that students referenced. In the second phase, all the term papers were meticulously investigated through iterative readings to delineate with what essential plot elements (i.e., characters, setting/places, symbols/objects) students stated associated, clarified, or exemplified SDGs. This analytical process thus moved beyond an overarching exploration of SDG identification to a nuanced examination of the narrative components through which students articulated their understanding of and engagement with SD themes embedded in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. In this way, the breadth of SDGs, along with the depth and context in which these goals were interwoven into the fabric of the literary work, were analyzed.

From this standpoint, examining students' term papers provides a more profound understanding of their conceptualization of SD within the framework of SDGs. Table 3 shows the results of students' term paper analysis, providing information about which SDGs they identified in the novel and with what essential plot elements (i.e., characters, setting and places, objects, and symbols) they associated these SDGs. The overall results reveal that students identified a substantial number of SDGs falling into the social dimension (f = 397, 60.07%) and relatively fewer SDGs related to economic (f = 157, 23.74%) and environmental dimensions (f = 80, 12.10%), while examining the novel.

Students' papers showed that, as the most overarching aspect of SDGs, the social dimension was represented through Goal 10 (f = 95, 14.38%), Goal 4 (f = 85, 12.86%), Goal 5 (f = 85, 11.35%), Goal 16 (f = 70, 10.59%), Goal 17 (f = 52, 7.87%), and Goal 11 (f = 20, 3.02%), respectively. Furthermore, SDGs within this dimension were mainly exemplified or clarified through characters (f = 194, 29.36%) and settings/places (f = 190, 28.75%). For instance, while explaining Goal 5, most students supported their views by referring to the main female characters, such as Hermione Granger and Minerva McGonagall. Only a few students clarified Goal 5 through relatively minor characters, such as Angelina Johnson and Lily Potter.

> In my opinion, Hermione's portrayal as a female character challenges traditional gender roles through her exceptional academic performance and display of intelligence and talent. (Student 8)

> Professor McGonagall is displayed as a strong female character and holds an important administrative position in Hogwarts. I think this is a good example of gender equality. (Student 27)

Similarly, students mainly exemplified issues related to Goal 10 through negative attitudes or behaviors of main characters, such as Draco Malfoy or the members of the Dursley family.

> For Goal 10, the Dursleys' house shows us many examples of inequalities. For example, Dudley is always bullying Harry … Vernon and Petunia also mistreat him and make him do the housework just because they don't like his parents. (Student 16)

> The best example that can be given for Goal 10 is that Draco Malfoy comes from a rich, class-conscious family. Because of this, he despises non-pureblood wizards and poor ones. (Student 39)

Students also clarified Goals 4 and 16 mainly through setting/places in their term papers. However, in doing this, they often focused on Hogwarts (for Goals 4 and 16) and the Ministry of Magic (only for Goal 16) as the places that most represented these two SDGs.

> In the book, Hogwarts is shown as a strong institution where good education, peace, and justice are valued and encouraged. Many teachers in the school try to teach these values to students. (Student 21)

> The Ministry of Magic is the strongest institution in the novel. It is the protector of the order and peace in the wizarding world. Therefore, its existence represents the importance of strong institutions for keeping peace and secure justice. (Student 14)

As shown in Table 3, the economic dimension emerged as the second aspect of SDGs that students addressed in the novel, covering more than one-fourth of the total codes. Although students addressed each SDG related to this dimension, findings show that they mainly pertained to Goal 1 (f = 46, 6.95%), Goal 3 (f = 39, 5.90%), Goal 2 (f = 38, 5.75%), Goal 8 (f = 28, 4.23%), and Goal 12 (f = 27, 4.08%), respectively, and that Goal 9 (f = 6, 0.91%) appeared as the least-touched-upon aspect. In addition, although students associated SDGs with the economic dimension through literary characters (f = 110, 16.63%) and settings/places (f = 72, 10.89%) in the novel, the margin between these two essential plot elements was broader than that of the social dimension findings. Accordingly, students specified Goals 1 and 3 substantially through characters, such as members of the Weasley family (for Goal 1) and Madam Pomfrey (for Goal 3), as exemplified in the following quotes from the students' term papers:

> For Goal 1, Ron Weasley and the Weasley family provide good examples because we can see the effects of poverty in different ways. For example, Ron often wears second-hand clothes, and his family lives in a weird and old house. (Student 52)

> Madam Pomfrey cures students' injuries and illnesses using magic, and details about her in the novel show that Goal 3 is supported at Hogwarts. (Student 57)

Within the economic dimension, Goal 8 is the SDG most represented in settings and places. This goal is only associated with two critical locations: Gringotts, a bank in the wizarding world, and Diagon Alley, the shopping area. The following quotes vividly illustrate how students associated these places with Goal 8:

> Economic growth and decent work are emphasized through the goblin-run bank, the Gringotts, in the book… Working as bank employees is also a perfect job for goblins, and they do their jobs properly. (Student 65)

> Diagon Alley is the most obvious example of Goal 8. It is one of the largest economic settlements of the wizarding world. This place serves as a shopping area where the wizarding community can find their needs. (Student 41)

Table 3. Distribution of SDGs regarding essential plot elements in the novel *.

Dimensions	SDGs	Characters		Settings and Places		Objects and Symbols		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Social dimension	Goal 4	15	2.27	68	10.29	2	0.30	85	12.86
	Goal 5	69	10.44	6	0.91	–	–	75	11.35
	Goal 10	51	7.72	35	5.30	9	–	95	14.38
	Goal 11	–	–	18	2.72	2	0.30	20	3.02
	Goal 16	14	2.12	56	8.47	–	–	70	10.59
	Goal 17	45	6.81	7	1.06	–	–	52	7.87
	Total	194	29.36	190	28.75	13	1.96	397	60.07
Economic dimension	Goal 1	42	6.35	4	0.60	–	–	46	6.95
	Goal 2	22	3.33	16	2.42	–	–	38	5.75
	Goal 3	30	4.54	8	1.21	1	0.15	39	5.90
	Goal 8	3	0.45	25	3.78	–	–	28	4.23
	Goal 9	1	0.15	5	0.76	–	–	6	0.91
	Goal 12	12	1.81	14	2.12	1	0.15	27	4.08
	Total	110	16.63	72	10.89	2	0.30	184	27.83
Environmental dimension	Goal 6	–	–	1	0.15	–	–	1	0.15
	Goal 7	–	–	12	1.81	10	1.52	22	3.33
	Goal 13	–	–	–	–	5	0.76	5	0.76
	Goal 14	–	–	2	0.30	–	–	2	0.30
	Goal 15	22	3.33	28	4.24	–	–	50	7.56
	Total	22	3.33	43	6.50	15	2.26	80	12.10
Cumulative Total		326	49.32	305	46.14	30	4.54	661	100

* This categorization of SDGs into social, environmental, and economic dimensions is based on Yılmaz-Fındık et al. (2021) and Arikan and Zorba (2024) [41,87]. Please see Supplementary Materials for further details. Authors' own design.

The environmental dimension emerged as the least represented aspect that students addressed in their term papers, incorporating 80 instances and covering 12.10% of the total codes. As shown in Table 3, students' associations with SDGs were clustered around Goal 15 (f = 50, 7.56%) and Goal 7 (f = 22, 3.33%) and involved few instances related to Goals 6 (f = 1, 0.15%), 14 (f = 2, 0.30%), and 13 (f = 5, 0.76%). However, regarding the essential plot elements, the findings revealed a different pattern, unlike the ones that emerged in the social and economic dimensions. In their term papers, students clarified or exemplified issues related to the environmental dimension mainly through settings/places (f = 43, 6.50%). Goal 7 was only clarified and exemplified through settings/places and objects/symbols, whereas Goal 15 was mainly explained by combining characters with settings/places. In doing this, students primarily referred to Rubeus Hagrid (character) and Hogwarts, particularly the Forbidden Forest (settings/places), as the following quotes exemplify:

> Dangerous magical creatures despised by the wizarding community are valued in Hogwarts, especially Hagrid, who loves such creatures and protects them. This shows how biodiversity is cared for in Hogwarts. (Student 32)

> The Forbidden Forest and its inhabitants also represent wild, untamed magical creatures essential for the ecosystem. This place is forbidden for students to protect both them and those living beings in the forest. (Student 26)

Furthermore, this dimension also incorporates the most instances related to objects/symbols (f = 15, 2.26%), and students generally referred to the put-outer and broomsticks as objects/symbols while clarifying the environmental dimension of SDGs.

> Goal 7 is about clean energy, which can be related to Dumbledore's put-outer as lights around can be turned off or on using this device. Therefore, saving energy and preventing energy waste in the wizarding world is possible. (Student 62)

> Broomsticks are the magical means of transportation in the wizarding world. As described in the novel, it is an eco-friendly way of transportation without harmful emissions. (Student 37)

Contrasting with the survey, the term paper analysis offers valuable insights into students' understanding of SDGs. While the survey highlights a significant gap in students' grasp of the systems thinking perspective, the term paper analysis uncovers intricate interconnections across SDGs' environmental, economic, and social dimensions. These insights are particularly notable in the associations drawn with characters and locations from the novel. The findings showed that students associated Harry Potter, as a character, and fictional locations like Hogwarts and Gringotts with all three dimensions of SDGs. Students also highly associate social and economic dimensions with one another, primarily referencing the members of the Dursley and the Weasley families (see Supplementary Materials for further details). Such associations indicate a systems thinking perspective in students' understanding of SDGs regarding certain characters and places. Students' remarks in their term papers also provide instances for the systems thinking perspectives, as the following quotes exemplify:

> In the book, there are various examples of most of the SDGs. As the protagonist, Harry's experiences while living with the Dursleys, we see good examples of eradicating poverty (Goal 1), ensuring hunger zero (Goal 2), and promoting responsible consumption and production (Goal 11). Also, his experiences in Hogwarts involve examples related to quality education (Goal 4) and life on land (Goal 15). Therefore, by reflecting on Harry's experiences, we can better understand the urgent need to work towards achieving these goals and create a world where everyone can thrive. (Student 19)

> In the novel, certain characters can be directly associated with certain SDGs. The Weasley family, especially Ron Weasley, is a good example of Goal 1 (No poverty), Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities), and Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production). They are known for their poverty, so Ron is teased at school by bad boys like Malfoy. Besides, Malfoy mocks Ron, saying, "you couldn't afford half the handle… I suppose you and your brothers have to save up twig by twig". This is also a good example of economic discrimination. Ron has to reuse his older brothers' clothes because the Weasleys cannot afford many things. (Student 48)

4.3. Quantitative Findings

Due to the contradicting results that emerged from the survey and term paper findings, students were asked to complete the SDGs perception questionnaire to better understand whether they perceive SD as a monolithic construct, heavily based on certain dimensions, or as a complex whole, encompassing various intertwined and interconnected elements. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics about monolithic and systems thinking perspectives on SD and the results of the analysis of the mean differences.

The mean score for monolithic perspectives was 2.28 (SD = 0.935), whereas, for systems thinking perspectives, it was found to be 4.24 (SD = 0.453). The mean difference analysis revealed a high difference in t-value ($t = -19.335$), indicating a statistically significant difference between the two perspectives ($p < 0.01$). The substantial discrepancy between systems thinking and monolithic perspectives suggests that the great majority of the students embraced the systems thinking perspective. Furthermore, these findings underpinned the qualitative results, particularly those that emerged from term paper analysis, and show that students perceive SDGs as an intricate construct comprising interrelated economic, environmental, and social aspects.

Table 4. Descriptives and mean differences.

	Descriptives			Mean Differences					
	M	**SD**	**St. Error Mean**	**Mean**	**SD**	**St. Error Mean**	***t***	**Sig. (2-Tailed)**	**Cohen's *d***
MP *	2.28	0.935	0.085	−0.960	1.115	0.101	−19.335	0.000 ***	1.75
ST **	4.24	0.453	0.041						

* MP stands for monolithic perspective. ** ST stands for systems thinking perspective. *** $p < 0.01$.

In addition, the correlation analysis was carried out to understand the interrelation between systems thinking and monolithic perspectives. Table 5 presents correlations between monolithic and systems thinking perspectives. The correlation coefficient (r = −0.192) indicates a weak negative correlation between the two perspectives, which is statistically significant ($p = 0.035$). This finding suggests that as students' inclination towards monolithic perspectives decreases, they tend to increase their propensity towards systems thinking perspectives. Besides, this finding is critical as it suggests a consistent and opposite association between these two perspectives despite the weak correlation. Therefore, these findings suggest a clear perception among students of systems thinking perspectives concerning SDGs rather than monolithic views.

Table 5. The correlation analysis.

		Monolithic Perspective	**Systems Thinking**
Monolithic Perspective	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	−0.192 * 0.035 **
Systems Thinking		−0.192 * 0.035 **	1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). ** $p < 0.05$.

Lastly, to the mean differences between monolithic and systems thinking perspectives, the independent t-test results also showed no statistically significant differences between males and females in terms of monolithic and systems thinking perspectives (please see the Supplementary Materials for further details). This result indicates that sex is not a variable for having monolithic or system thinking perspectives toward SDGs.

5. Discussion

Implementing ESD practices within higher education inherently embodies various constraints and renders its current status unsustainable. Therefore, creating second-best chances to reduce such constraints plays a critical role in effective ESD practices [23]. In such a case, identifying and examining these constraints is significant in deciding the steps to be followed to create second-best chances. Therefore, conducting an inquiry into students' understanding, perception, knowledge, and awareness appears as the point of departure for future actions as it can yield valuable insights, fostering a deeper comprehension of the prevailing circumstances. Accordingly, this study investigated university students' understanding of SDGs. Following the principles of mixed-methods research design, this study draws from qualitative and quantitative data.

The survey findings revealed that students primarily associated SDGs with themes related to environmental and social issues. Despite references to the economic dimension, students' remarks generally lacked substantive consideration of these dimensions and their interrelations. The tendency toward prioritizing environmental and social dimensions and overlooking economic and notional dimensions in defining SDGs also manifests itself in interrelating these dimensions with all the others. Students struggled to explain these dimensions holistically and to elucidate the SDGs' interconnected and intertwined nature in their responses to survey questions. These findings concur with previous studies that revealed undergraduate students have a problematic understanding of SDGs in a Turkish context [38,41,52–55]. However, it might also stem from the nature of the survey

mode. Since students were unfamiliar with SDGs, they might find the open-ended survey questions decontextualized and subtle, and responding to such questions in their own words in a short time might be difficult for them. Despite their usefulness, open-ended surveys implicitly urge participants to respond briefly and concisely, which leads to the removal of context from concepts [95]. Therefore, as a complex and interdisciplinary scholarly field, sustainability studies often require different research approaches, and mixed methods designs have great potential for deepening and extending our knowledge about sustainability issues [96,97]. Additionally, as shown in Table 1, students' primary sources of information on SDGs heavily relied on social media. Given that SDGs in social media are mainly portrayed from the environmental dimension [98,99], and social media is infamous for the dissemination of overgeneralizations and misinformation [100] about such issues, students' reliance on social media as their primary source of information might be the cause of problems in students' overall conceptual framework of SDGs.

Compared to the survey findings, term paper findings revealed a different portrait of the distribution of SDG dimensions. While analyzing the novel, students identified a considerable number of elements related to the social dimension of SDGs and relatively fewer elements related to economic and environmental dimensions (see Table 3). Although overall results showed the existence of instances for each SDG, students' associations clustered around certain goals for each dimension. These findings suggest that the tool and mode of data collection play a critical role in gaining valuable insights into their understanding of SDG. In the case of literary works, findings showed that such texts are valuable tools to gain more insights into students' understanding of SDGs, as they provide myriad explicit and implicit instances in which essential plot elements (i.e., characters, settings, symbols) construct rich and meaningful contexts. As students reflected on the text from the perspective of SDGs, they actively engaged with the text, co-constructing meaning in the transaction between the reader, the text, and the context, creating a space of engagement with the text that helped them think out of the box [72,101]. This also aligns with the extension principle of education as sustainability [102]. Accordingly, when reflecting on the novel from the perspective of SDGs, students extended their initial understanding and associated different instances in the novel with SDGs. In line with this, the analysis of students' associations of SDGs with plot elements also indicated that they primarily benefitted from characters and settings/places when clarifying or exemplifying SDG elements. This finding suggests that students focused on more tangible elements when elaborating their associations. It also concurs with similar studies, indicating that such tangible elements as themes and main characters serve as initial reference points when students reflect on literary texts from the perspective of SDGs [87].

Additionally, contrary to the survey findings, the analysis of students' term papers also indicated a more nuanced understanding of SDGs. The findings indicated that they had a systems thinking perspective, rather than associating SDGs with certain concepts. The systems thinking perspective emphasizes identifying and recognizing the intertwined relations between SDGs' social, economic, and environmental dimensions. From this stance, although survey findings indicated a monolithic understanding due to limited or loose connections between the main dimensions of SDGs, term paper analysis revealed that students established links between SDGs focusing on characters and settings/places. Therefore, literary works can be used as a point of departure for gaining a deeper insight into students' understanding of SDGs and, thus, education responsive to SDGs [74,86].

The qualitative data collected in two ways revealed divergences in students' understanding of SDGs. A quantitative data collection instrument was administered to test whether students had systems thinking or monolithic perspectives on SDGs. These findings underpinned the results emerging from term paper analysis. Quantitative findings showed negative correlations between systems thinking and monolithic perspectives. In addition, mean difference analysis also indicated a statistically significant difference, suggesting that the majority of students embraced the systems thinking perspective.

Lastly, as for the book selection, it is known that Rowling is criticized for antisemitism and the stereotypical depiction of racial minorities, and such attitudes are out of the scope of SDGs. However, controversial texts can be a valuable means to bring about positive changes in students' understanding of other cultures, while leading to a greater ability to reflect on their culturally determined way of thinking [103]. Such sensitive issues depicted in literary works may help students take a distanced perspective, leading to emotional engagement while experiencing otherness and stimulating a sense of shared humanity and human rights [104,105]. Holding this stance, it can be said that those allegedly controversial issues subtly or clearly depicted in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* or any other literary work can also be used to transform students' understanding of sustainability and SDGs.

6. Conclusions and Implications

This study investigated university students' understanding of SDGs, derived from data collected from fourth-grade students enrolled in the English language and literature department at a state university in Türkiye. Findings indicated divergences between survey and term paper results, in line with the first and second research questions. The survey findings revealed a restricted understanding of SDGs, primarily clustered around environmental and social dimensions, whereas term paper findings indicated a deeper understanding of SDGs and evidence for a systems thinking perspective. The quantitative findings verified students' systems thinking perspective in their understanding of SDGs. As for the second and third research questions, the findings showed that students identified a substantial number of SDGs falling into the social dimension, and that Goal 10, Goal 4, Goal 5, and Goal 16 appeared as the most represented SDGs in their term papers. Additionally, term paper analysis also revealed that students clarified or exemplified SDGs by primarily referring to characters and settings. Certain goals were primarily associated with characters (e.g., Goals 1, 5, 10, and 17), while others are more closely linked to settings (e.g., Goals 4, 8, 12, 15, and 16).

Given that this study was carried out with senior English language and literature department students and each department may have different contextual and instructional variables within higher education institutions, it is hard to draw broad generalizations from these findings. Yet, the comprehensive depiction of students' understanding of SDGs and the method employed to reveal this understanding in this study may serve as practical guidance for administrators, educators, or practitioners looking for alternative approaches to gain deeper insights into their students' understanding of SDGs.

Based on these findings, this study suggests several pedagogical implications. First, rather than using survey questions involving open-ended but general questions, students' reflections on literary texts with which they are familiar should be used to gain insights into their understanding of SDGs. In doing this, the descriptions and targets of SDGs presented in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (https://sdgs.un.org/, accessed on 31 May 2023) can be utilized as an initial grid that helps students associate elements in literary texts with SDGs. Second, our findings showed that students focus on tangible plot elements, such as characters or settings, when reflecting on SDGs in a literary text. Therefore, these elements may serve as the point of departure while integrating SDGs into literature teaching classes. Third, given that online sources, mainly social media, appeared as participants' primary sources of information, there is a need for reliable online platforms and social media services to provide various resources catering to university students' needs and interests. Themes, characters, settings, and other elements in literary works can be utilized to instill students of literature departments with a multi-dimensional understanding of SDGs and the value of literary works for teaching sustainability. Fourth, participants' demographic makeup also showed that undergraduate courses are not among students' primary sources of information. Therefore, there is an urgent need for curricular changes that integrate SDGs into departmental courses in higher education. Higher education institutions are critical agents of change, so educating future decision-

makers about curricular changes is essential for initiating and disseminating positive attitudes and behaviors toward sustainability. With these points in mind, further studies should investigate how to merge literature teaching with SDGs.

Although research in literary studies predominantly focuses on textual analysis, our study led tertiary students to read against the grain to discover SDG issues in the text. Following such an analytical procedure with tertiary students that turns literary reading into a close reading procedure for SDGs, we are reminded that literary reading is socially, culturally, politically, and individually an activity that can help raise awareness towards global issues such as SDGs. Ultimately, as the results suggest, many students communicated with the text by reading between the lines and noticed what often goes unnoticed: that literary texts, even the merely fictitious ones, are, in fact, full of messages that have direct reflections of our real-world problems. To that end, tertiary students expressed keen enthusiasm for implementing similar reading procedures that they practiced in this course into their future learning and teaching activities, since many of these students want to work as teachers. Thus, similar literary reading procedures can be a valid part of the curricula of literature programs offered to young adults and adults worldwide.

We do not argue that our students left this activity with their conceptualizations of literature or global issues fully transformed as though in Harry Potter's magical world. However, they observed that even the truly magical world of fiction contains issues related to our lived experiences. While noticing some details about SDGs and recognizing the importance of these issues, they noted that their tertiary classrooms could be arenas for exploring their natural world in economic, ecological, and political crises.

Supplementary Materials: The following supporting information can be downloaded at: https://www.mdpi.com/article/10.3390/su16114874/s1, Table S1. Distribution of SDGs and Rationale; Table S2. Survey Findings about Overall Conceptual Framework of SD (detailed); Table S3. Frequencies of SDGs Related to the Characters; Table S4. Frequencies of SDGs Related to the Settings; Table S5. Frequencies of SDGs Related to the Objects; Table S6. Item Statistics; Table S7. Skewness and Kurtosis Values; Table S8. Reliability Statistics; Table S9. Mean Difference Statistics; Table S10. Correlation Statistics; Table S11. Group Statistics (Males and Females); Table S12. Mean Differences Between Males and Females (The Independent t-test Results.

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Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy reasons.

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Appendix A

Appendix A.1. Prompt and Open-Ended Survey Questions

1. How would you describe the concept of sustainability in your own words?
2. What does sustainable development mean to you?
3. How would you outline the scope and focus of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

Appendix A.2. Term Paper Instructions

1. Visit the website given below to read about Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). https://sdgs.un.org/goals (accessed on 31 May 2023).
2. Write an essay that explores the alignment of SDGs in Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone. Analyze how themes, characters, events, etc. in the book reflect or relate to specific SDGs.
3. Word limits: min. 750 words–max. 1.250 words (exclusive of titles and references).
4. Plagiarized papers will get zero "0". Papers involving (partly or entirely) sentences written by an AI tool will also be considered plagiarized.
5. Please write essays abiding by the essay writing rules. Briefly speaking, each essay must have a title that briefly represents the essay's focus. Each essay should begin with a well-organized introductory paragraph involving an appropriately written thesis statement. In each essay, the body section must involve at least three paragraphs (this number may increase depending on your thesis statement and how you deal with the topic). Each essay must end with a concluding paragraph.
6. Please support your opinions by referring to specific details in the book (dialogues, characters, particular scenes etc.). Please do not overly use quotations to increase the word count in your essays. Unnecessary, irrelevant quotations or details will not be considered. If you use resources in your essays please follow APA 7 rules.

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