

J.K. Rowling

Name:

Joanne Rowling

Born:

31st July 1965

Place of birth:

Gloucestershire, UK

Occupation:

Writer, Author



Biography

J.K. Rowling is the best-selling living author in the UK and her books are popular all over the world. Rowling has described writers such as Jane Austen and C.S. Lewis as her sources of inspiration.

She was born Joanne Rowling on 31st July 1965, in Gloucestershire. She enjoyed writing fantasy stories from an early age, reading them to her younger sister. As a teenager, Rowling began studying French and Classics at Exeter University. Having graduated, she moved to London to work as a researcher for Amnesty International, an organisation which works to protect human rights around the world. She later moved to Manchester, where she worked at the Chamber of Commerce.

It was in 1990, when Joanne was on a delayed train journey from Manchester to London that the idea for a series of books came into her head. During the writing of the first Harry Potter book, Joanne's mother died, greatly affecting her writing. Rowling decided to introduce more detail about the loss of the main character's parents as she knew how it felt. Rowling used

her life as inspiration for many other ideas in the book, for example, her parents met at Kings Cross Station, which is where Harry Potter catches the train to school, and Joanne shares her birthday with Harry.

After living and working as an English teacher in Portugal, Rowling moved to Edinburgh with her daughter, who is named after one of Joanne's favourite writers. Those early days of living in Scotland weren't easy for Rowling - she had no job but dedicated her time to finishing her book. When the story was finally completed, it was sent to 12 different publishing houses, all of which turned it down. In 1997, the book was finally published by Bloomsbury under the name J.K. Rowling. As Joanne didn't have a middle name, she incorporated

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her grandmother's name, 'Kathleen' into her initials. Her real name wasn't used as the publishers didn't think that boys would want to read a book written by a female author. Shortly after being published, the book won its first award and proved to be hugely popular. She later released the sequel, 'Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets', followed by 'Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban'. It was the fourth book in the series, 'Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire', which broke sales records in both the UK and America. Rowling was also named Author of the Year at the 2000 British Book Awards and awarded an OBE for services to children's literature.

The final book in the series, 'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows', was released in 2007 and became the fastest-selling book in history, selling millions of copies on the first day of release. The books were made into hugely successful films and have captured the imaginations of children and adults all around the world. Since the end of the Harry Potter stories, Rowling has written other books linked to the series. She has also written stories for adults and continues to embark on other projects.

Today, original copies of 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' sell for around AUD \$33 000 and the series has been translated into 65 languages.

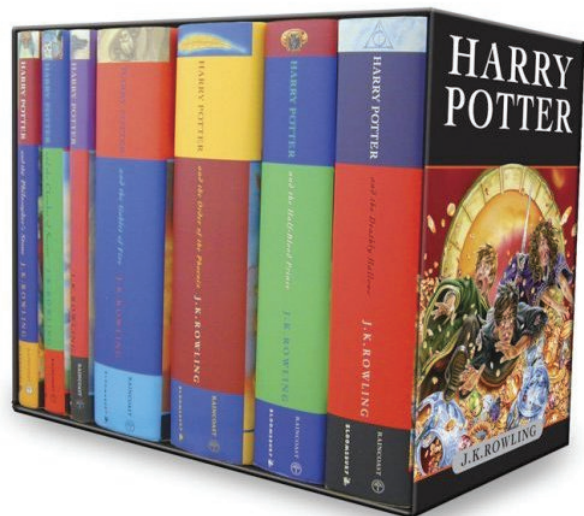


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Questions

Answer the questions in full sentences.

1. When and where was she born?

2. Name one of Rowling's favourite authors.

3. Which university did Joanne study at?

4. Explain why she moved to London.

5. Where did Joanne come up with the idea for the Harry Potter series?

6. Can you explain how the death of her own mother affected her writing?

7. Give two other ways in which she has used her own life experiences in the Harry Potter books.

8. What did the publishers think about Joanne's full name being printed on her books?

9. What could one of the original copies of 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' sell for?

10. If you have read all of the Harry Potter books, which is your favourite and why?

Answers

1. When and where was she born?
She was born on 31st July 1965, in Gloucestershire.
2. Name one of Rowling's favourite authors.
(Jane Austin/C.S. Lewis) is one of Rowling's favourite authors.
3. Which university did Joanne study at?
Joanne studied at Exeter University.
4. Explain why she moved to London.
She moved to London to work as a researcher for Amnesty International.
5. Where did Joanne come up with the idea for the Harry Potter series?
Joanne was on a delayed train journey from Manchester to London when the idea for the Harry Potter series came into her head.
6. Can you explain how the death of her own mother affected her writing?
Rowling decided to introduce more detail about the loss of the main character's parents as she knew how it felt.
7. Give two other ways in which she has used her own life experiences in the Harry Potter books.
Her parents met at Kings Cross Station, which is where Harry Potter catches the train to school. Joanne also shares her birthday with Harry.
8. What did the publishers think about Joanne's full name being printed on her books?
The publishers didn't think that boys would want to read a book written by a female author.
9. What could one of the original copies of 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' sell for?
Today, original copies of 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' now sell for around AUD \$33 000.
10. If you have read all of the Harry Potter books, which is your favourite and why?
Own answers.