

# Elements of the Fantasy Genre



## What is the fantasy genre?

The fantasy genre is a type of fiction. Fantasy stories are imaginative. They are entirely made up and include events that could not occur in real life. Fantasy stories usually involve witchcraft or magic and often take place in an undiscovered setting or unknown world. Still, they often include elements of the real-world and this can sometimes help the reader to connect or relate to the text. Authors write fantasy stories to entertain the reader often transporting them to another magical world.



## The Magic

Magic or other supernatural elements are often included in the fantasy genre. Creatures or characters can have special powers and will learn how to use or to master their powers. Sometimes it's an object that is magical, like a precious gem, cup, wand or sword. This unique item may be specifically linked to the creature or character who uses it.

## The Characters

There are usually several character types in the fantasy genre:

- The hero (male) or heroine (female) is the main character. They are considered the 'good' character. The reader supports and gets behind this character. The reader feels empathy for the main character as they battle against the villain of the story. Generally, the main character will be a young boy or girl with positive traits. They are kind and gentle with an inner strength to work hard to overcome the problem or conflict they face.

- The villain is the one who is causing the problem or conflict. They tend to be described as being ugly and having negative traits, which matches their nature. They can be bossy and vile to others.
- The side-kick is essential to the story and helps the hero or heroine reach their goal. This character shows true friendship and is often very funny!
- Other characters, like mythical creatures, dragons, elves and unicorns, are often in fantasy stories. Sometimes they help the hero or heroine on their journey and have special powers, like being able to talk.



### The Quest (or Journey)

The hero or heroine will need to go on a quest or adventure in a fantasy story. This is usually linked to the problem or conflict that needs to be overcome.

The lead character will physically need to move from one point to another, like searching for a secret cave that holds a special elixir or journeying into a scary, dark forest to find the wise witch who can solve their problem.

Often the character's personality will change during the journey. At the beginning of the story they may be timid or downtrodden, but by the end of the quest they are brave and confident. The main character will go on a personality journey and would have mastered their special ability and new found strength.

### The Setting

The setting in the fantasy genre can be an imaginative place, an outdoor setting like the woods or somewhere familiar to the reader, like a school. A great example of this could be a story that is based in a magical school. Being set in a school, most readers would be able to relate to the story having experienced certain scenarios that would happen in the story themselves. Things like having to do lots of homework, taking the bus, making friends or even getting into trouble for something they didn't do. However, the school in this story would have some special magical features such as magic-related lessons, floating classrooms or perhaps having a big friendly dragon as the class pet! Can you think of other examples in the fantasy genre where the setting is familiar to the reader?

### Examples of fantasy stories:

#### **Harry Potter**

by J.K. Rowling

#### **The Chronicles of Narnia**

by C.S. Lewis

#### **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory**

by Roald Dahl

#### **Peter Pan**

by J. M. Barrie

#### **Princess Bride**

by William Goldman



Please note: the listed books above are not endorsed by Twinkl, they are simply examples of how the fantasy genre can be used when teaching this topic.

# Questions

1. What is the fantasy genre?

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2. Look at the first paragraph. Write the words that explains what 'fiction' means.

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3. Fill in the gaps.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_, which means they are \_\_\_\_\_ made up. These \_\_\_\_\_  
will include \_\_\_\_\_ that could \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

4. List the main four elements of fantasy.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Why is the villain usually 'described as being ugly' and not beautiful in a fantasy story?

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6. The hero or heroine will physically go on a journey or quest but often something in them changes along the way. What is it and how does it change?

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7. Draw lines to match each element to its description. Fill in the boxes of the two missing descriptions.

The Magic

The hero or heroine will need to go on a quest, adventure or journey in a fantasy story. This is usually linked to the problem or conflict that needs to be overcome.

The Characters

The Quest

The setting, in the fantasy genre, can be somewhere completely made up, an outdoor setting like the woods or somewhere familiar to the reader, like a school.

The Setting

8. A setting can be completely made up or familiar to the reader. Explain.

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# Answers

1. What is the fantasy genre?

**The fantasy genre is a type of fiction.**

2. Look at the first paragraph. Write the words that explains what 'fiction' means.

**Imaginative, entirely made up and could not happen in real life.**

3. Fill in the gaps.

The **fantasy genre** is a **type of fiction**. **Fantasy stories** are **imaginative**, which means they are **entirely** made up. These **stories** will include **events** that could **not happen** in real **life**.

4. List the main four elements of fantasy.

**1. The Magic**

**2. The Characters**

**3. The setting**

**4. The Quest**

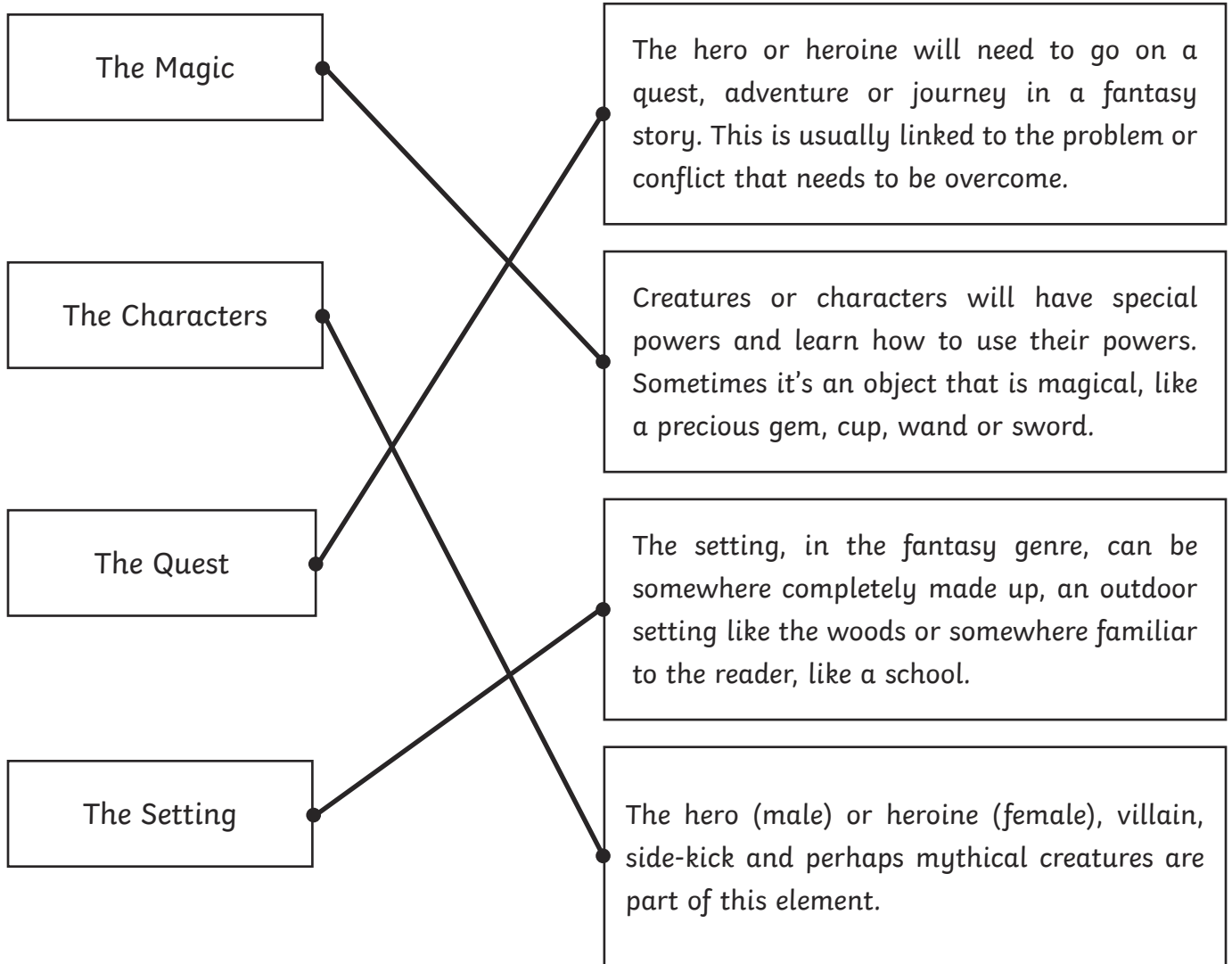
5. Why is the villain usually 'described as being ugly' and not beautiful in a fantasy story?

**Often the villain is described as being ugly and not beautiful in a fantasy story because it makes it easier for the reader to understand who is going to cause the problem. Their looks are associated with their bad nature.**

6. The hero or heroine will physically go on a journey or quest but often something in them changes along the way. What is it and how does it change?

**Often, on a quest a hero or heroine's personality will change. They may start off timid or downtrodden at the beginning of the story, but by the end of the quest they are brave and confident. They would have mastered their special ability.**

7. Draw lines to match each element to its description. Fill in the boxes of the two missing descriptions.



8. A setting can be completely made up or familiar to the reader. Explain.

**Fantasy can include either a completely made-up setting or somewhere familiar to the reader. The author may create a new world, like in Lord of the Rings, where the setting is not familiar at all. But the author may choose to use a setting like Hogwarts, which is familiar but still very different. Readers are more likely to relate to the familiar setting of a school.**